

August is
CHILDREN'S
EYE HEALTH
& SAFETY
Month

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Many children across the country are beginning a new school year and healthy vision is critical for a successful academic year.

An untreated eye disease or condition can worsen over time and lead to other serious problems, which become more difficult to correct. Vision problems that can affect children include Amblyopia (“lazy eye”), Strabismus (“crossed eyes”), and the most common forms of refractive error: myopia (nearsightedness) and hyperopia (farsightedness).

Prevent Blindness and the National Optometric Association (NOA) are teaming up to declare August as Children’s Eye Health and Safety Awareness Month to educate parents and caregivers on the steps to ensure that students have healthy vision.

(Source: preventblindness.org)



Does my child need vision screening?

Vision screening is one of many services that meet critical needs of children and is an essential service to eliminate poor vision and eye health problems as a barrier to academic and classroom success.

A child may be at higher risk of developing a vision problem if he or she:

- was born prematurely (less than 32 weeks completed gestation)
- has a family history of vision disorders, such as childhood cataract, amblyopia (lazy eye), misaligned eyes, eye tumors, or wore glasses before first grade
- has had an eye injury (problems resulting from childhood eye injuries may develop much later in life)
- ☺ has been diagnosed with a problem that could affect his or her physical, mental and/or, emotional development

As children are returning to school, consider adding a trip to the eye care provider as part of the family's annual wellness checklist. The earlier a vision disorder can be identified and treated, the stronger start to learning and development a child will have.

(Source: preventblindness.org)



HOW TO RECOGNIZE IF A CHILD IS EXPERIENCING VISION PROBLEMS



Did you know that about 80% of what children learn in school is taught visually? This means that if a child has an undetected and uncorrected vision problem, it will affect the child's development and performance in school.

Below are some warning signs that a child may be experiencing vision problems:

- Tilting the head or squinting to see the class board better or when watching TV
- Frequent eye rubbing when trying to concentrate on something
- Holding a book too close to their eyes or often sitting close to the TV
- Consistently using their fingers to guide their eyes when reading
- Closing one eye to read or watch TV
- Excessive tearing without any tear-causing stimuli
- Eye discomfort when using a computer or any digital device
- Sensitivity to light, which sometimes is accompanied by headache or nausea
- Wandering eyes

Knowing about a child's eye health and safety can make a big difference to a child's eye health. Please consult with an eye care provider if you suspect a child may be having difficulty with their vision.

(Source: Vision Resource Center | vrcberks.org)



ERGONOMIC TIPS TO REDUCE EYE STRAIN

Children are not immune to developing tired, dry eyes from concentrating on digital devices for extended periods of time. Good ergonomics is as important as resting the eyes periodically. We tend to use digital devices at certain distances and angles that may lead to eyestrain.

To encourage good posture and better habits, follow these tips to optimize a workspace:

- Make sure laptops and tablets are viewed at arm's length
- The computer monitor should be positioned at eye level
- Reduce the glare by positioning the light source behind your back, not behind the computer screen
- Adjust the brightness and contrast on the screen so that it feels comfortable on the eyes
- Put down the device 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime. Blue light may disrupt sleep. Or switch to "night mode" or a similar mode to reduce blue light exposure.

Lastly, make sure children spend some time outdoors. Several studies suggest that spending time outdoors, especially in early childhood, can slow the progression of nearsightedness.

(Source: [eyesmart.org](https://www.eyesmart.org))

