

# READY FOR SCHOOL



## CHILDREN'S VISION

### The Equation is Simple: Good Vision = Better Learning

#### HOW IMPORTANT IS GOOD VISION TO LEARNING?

Good vision is an important part of education. Many experts believe 80 percent of learning is done through a child's eyes. Reading, computer usage and chalkboard work are all visual tasks students perform every day. A child's eyes are always in use in the classroom. Therefore, when a child's vision is not working properly learning and class participation will suffer.

#### WHAT IS GOOD VISION?

Good vision includes visual acuity, eye health, visual integration and visual skills such as eye teaming, eye focusing and eye motility.

- Visual acuity - the ability of the eyes to see and distinguish fine details, the clarity of vision
- Visual integration - the ability to process and integrate visual information so we can understand what we see
- Eye teaming - the ability of the eyes to work properly together
- Eye focusing - the ability of the eyes to easily focus and shift focus to near and distant points.
- Eye motility - the eyes ability to move together

#### WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNDETECTED/UNTREATED VISION PROBLEMS?

Children with undetected vision problems are sometimes inaccurately diagnosed with attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). When vision is difficult, it requires greater effort than normal leading the child to avoid close work. It may appear the child is daydreaming.

#### IS YOUR CHILD STRUGGLING IN CLASS?

Many children with undetected vision problems struggle in the classroom. These symptoms include:

- Trouble finishing written assignments
- Losing their place when reading
- A short attention span when doing close work
- Skipping words when reading
- Having greater potential than grades may indicate

#### InfantSEE® and VISION USA

The AOA is committed to improving the quality and availability of eye and vision care. As part of that commitment, Optometry's Charity™ - the AOA Foundation, manages public health programs to increase access to care:

**InfantSEE®** provides one-time, no-cost eye health and vision assessments for all babies six to 12 months of age.

Visit [www.infantsee.org](http://www.infantsee.org) or call 888-396-EYES (3937) for more information.

**VISION USA** provides basic eye health and vision care services free of charge to uninsured, low-income people and their families. Call **800-766-4466**, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., CST, Monday through Friday, for more information.



American Optometric Association

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## GLOSSARY OF COMMON VISION CONDITIONS

**AMBLYOPIA**, also known as “lazy eye,” is loss or lack of development of clear vision in just one eye. The cause is the lack of use of that eye in early childhood.

**ASTIGMATISM** is a vision condition that causes blurred vision due either to the irregular shape of the cornea, the clear front cover of the eye, or sometimes the curvature of the lens inside the eye.

**COLOR DEFICIENCY** is the inability to distinguish certain shades of colors or, in more severe cases, see colors at all. Color deficiencies are almost always hereditary and affect one in 12 boys, but only one in 200 girls.

**CONVERGENCE INSUFFICIENCY** is an eye coordination problem in which the eyes have a tendency to drift outward when reading or doing close work.

**HYPEROPIA** is often called farsightedness. This vision condition occurs when distant objects are usually seen clearly, but close objects do not come into proper focus.

**MYOPIA** or nearsightedness is when the images of distant objects appear blurred. The eyeball is too long for the normal focusing power of the eye.

**STRABISMUS** is condition in which both eyes do not look at the same place at the same time. It is sometimes referred to as crossed eyes. Poor eye muscle control usually causes crossed-eyes.

## RECOMMENDED EYE EXAM SCHEDULE

PATIENT AGE	RISK FREE	AT RISK
Birth to 24 months	At 6 months of age	By 6 months of age or as recommended
2 to 5 years	At 3 years of age	At 3 years of age or as recommended
6 to 18 years	Before first grade and every two years thereafter	Annually or as recommended

Children considered at risk for the development of eye and vision problems may need additional testing or more frequent re-evaluation. A doctor of optometry can discuss potential risk factors with you.

Start the school year off right, schedule a comprehensive eye exam for your child.

For more information on children’s vision issues or to find a local optometrist, visit [www.aoa.org](http://www.aoa.org).

