

CHILDREN'S EYE EXAMS

What could be more important than your child's vision?

Since 80% of a child's learning is based on vision, excellent sight and eye health are critical to a child's development.

But, surprisingly, one in five children entering school has a vision disorder and one in six children has been misdiagnosed with a learning disability when in fact they have a correctable vision problem. Not knowing any differently, many of these children accept poor vision and other eye problems as normal. If left unchecked, serious long-term effects can result.

Not all children's eye conditions have obvious symptoms. The best way to protect your child's eye health is to book an eye exam with our optometrist at Mona Vision.

Kid's eye exams are FREE with a valid BC medical card.

BEYOND EYE SCREENINGS IN SCHOOL

Near vision is not tested in the simple eye screenings offered in schools—and near vision is especially important for reading books and seeing the computer screen clearly. Also, some of the most common children's vision problems such as eye coordination, lazy eye, and farsightedness can be missed in an eye screening.

Children's Eyes are More Sensitive

Children's eyes are naturally more sensitive to environmental factors that can be damaging to their eyes:

- The average child receives three times the annual UV exposure than an adult.
- The lens of the eye of a child under age 10 allows more than six times the amount of UV radiation to penetrate than an adult's eye.
- When you protect the skin around your eyes—and everywhere else—during the first 18 years of your life, the risk of cancer is likely to be reduced by 50%. This means that in addition to regular eye exams, you should make sure your children's eyes and skin are protected from UV rays whenever they are outside—protect your children's eyes from the sun with UV-blocking lenses, such as Transitions lenses, wide-brimmed hats covering the eyes, ears, face and neck, and sunscreen.

HEALTHY SIGHT CHECKLIST

- Visit an eye doctor regularly for a complete eye exam.
- Maintain a balanced diet high in beta-carotene and take vitamin supplements, if recommended
- Exercise regularly
- Drink eight to ten glasses of water a day to hydrate your body and eyes
- Make a conscious effort to periodically rest your eyes and blink frequently – especially when reading, working on a computer or watching television
- Avoid rubbing your eyes
- Wear sunscreen and UV-protective clothing, such as a wide-brimmed hat
- Select everyday eyewear, like Transitions lenses, that automatically block 100 percent of UV rays and help to reduce distracting glare

COMMON SIGNS OF CHILDREN'S VISION PROBLEMS

Preserving healthy sight for a lifetime begins with early detection. Common signs of possible vision problems in school-aged children include:

- Holds reading materials too close to the eyes
- Uses fingers to trace words when reading
- Exhibits lack of attention or fatigue during school
- Constantly rubs the eyes
- Continuously squints
- Complains about headaches
- Turns or tilts the head to use one eye only
- Shows extreme light sensitivity
- Has irritated or teary eyes

More than 80 per cent of a child's learning is based on vision. If vision problems remain untreated, kids who are packed with potential are left lagging behind in learning. They may even become withdrawn or disruptive.

Not everyone makes the connection. Some children with poor eyesight are mistakenly labelled learning-disabled. In fact, one out of six children diagnosed with a learning disability actually has a correctable vision problem.

If detected, these conditions can be corrected by an eye doctor (optometrist or ophthalmologist). Eye doctors often prescribe corrective lenses or vision therapy, enabling young children to rapidly catch up to their pals.