

See to Reader

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For more on children's vision, visit www.nechildrensvision.org.



Getting at the root of reading problems

Throughout grade school, the demands placed on children in the classroom are great. However, no task is more challenging in those early years of school than learning to read.

Reading requires children to accurately use all of their language, decoding, phonetic, and visual skills to successfully recognize words and gather meaning from the written text. Unfortunately, about 20% of school-aged children struggle to read. Some of these children suffer from learning disabilities or dyslexia, the inability of the brain's verbal language or auditory processing centers to accurately decode print or phonetically make the connection between the word's written symbols and their appropriate sounds. However, a large portion of children struggling to read are not dyslexic at all; their phonetic awareness and language processing skills are fine. It's their vision that is interfering with their ability to read.

Vision plays a vital role in the reading process. First of all, children must have crisp, sharp eyesight in order to see the print clearly. School vision screenings routinely check children's sharpness of vision at distance--measured by the 20/20 line on the eye chart--and refer children for glasses if they have blurry far-away vision and can't see the board from the back of the room. Unfortunately, this is all school vision screenings are designed to check, and children's vision involves so much more.

For success in school, children must have other equally important visual skills besides their sharpness of sight, or visual acuity. They must also be able to coordinate their eye movements as a team. They must be able to follow a line of print without losing their place. They must be able to maintain clear focus as they read or make quick focusing changes when looking up to the board and back to their desks. And they must be able to interpret and accurately process what they are seeing. If children have inadequate visual skills in any of these areas, they can experience great difficulty in school, especially in reading.

Children who lack good basic visual skills often struggle in school unnecessarily. Their "hidden" vision problem is keeping them from performing at grade level, yet teachers and parents often fail to make the connection between poor reading and the child's vision.

Schedule an appointment with an eye care professional to evaluate your child's vision. Nebraska requires any child entering school for the first time to have a vision evaluation. It also makes good sense to have your child's eyes checked regularly no matter what their age. Just like dental appointments and doctor checkups - make vision exams part of your preventive health and wellness program for your child.

Source: Children's Vision Information Network (www.childrensvision.com)



Suggested Books About Vision

For more books, visit the NFCV Bookstore at www.nechildrensvision.org/NFCVShop.htm

Picture Books

The Eye Book
by Dr. Seuss

Bumposaurus
by Penny McKinlay

The Goody-Good Glasses (Veggietales)
by John Trauscht

Whose Eyes Are These?: A Look at Animal Eyes - Big, Round, and Narrow
by Peg Hall

My Travelin' Eye
by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw

Arthur's Eyes by Marc Brown

Princess Peepers by Pam Calvert

The Good Luck Glasses
by Sara London

Glasses, Glasses, Oh What Do I See?
by Karen Smith Stair

The Patch by Justina Chen Headley

Blueberry Eyes
by Monica Driscoll Beatty

I Need Glasses - My Visit to the Optometrist
by Virginia Dooley

Vision Fact:

Your dog's or cat's eyes glow in the dark because of tapetum, silver "mirrors" in the back of its eyes. This gives them superior night vision.

Chapter Books

Agapanthus Hum and the Eyeglasses
by Joy Cowley

From Anna by Jean Little

Poor Girl, Rich Girl
by Johniece Marshall Wilson

Nonfiction

The Eyes Have It: The Secrets of Eyes and Seeing (The Gross and Goofy Body)
by Melissa Stewart

Eyes and Ears by Seymour Simon

Young Genius: Eyes by Kate Lennard

My Eyes: My Body
by Lloyd G. Douglas

Take Care Of Your Eyes (Rookie Read-About Health)
by Don L. Curry

Taking Care of My Eyes
by Terri DeGezelle

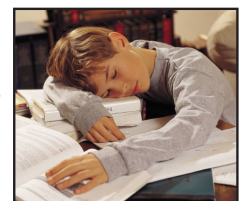
Let's Talk About Needing Glasses
by Diane Shaughnessy

Color is in the Eye of the Beholder
by Arlene Evans

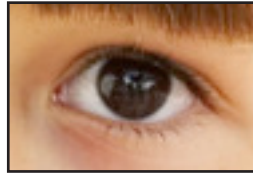
Eyes/ojos (Let's Read about Our Bodies/Conozcamos Nuestro Cuerpo) (Spanish Edition)
by Gregg Anderson

Warning Signs of a Potential Vision Problem

- Child becomes easily distracted
- Avoids near tasks
- Has emotional outbursts
- Poor self image
- Shows aggressive behavior
- Low comprehension
- Poor concentration
- Fails to complete assignments
- Frustrated with school
- Loses place and skips lines
- Exaggerated head movements
- Very close reading distance
- Has no voice inflection when reading
- Rapidly fatigues when reading



Protect your vision for life by following these guidelines:



- Have your eyes examined by an eye doctor every two years from six months to 60 years; annually thereafter.
- Drink 8 - 10 glasses of water a day to keep your body and your eyes well hydrated.
- Remember to rest your eyes periodically, particularly when reading, working on a computer or watching television.
- Wash your hands frequently to avoid getting dust or particles in your eyes should you touch them. Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes or the eye area.
- Enhance your diet by eating foods that are rich in beta-carotene, a nutrient that can help maintain your healthy vision.
- Always remember to protect your eyes from the sun's harmful UV light and glare by wearing protective lenses.

Vision Fact:

Your body protects your eyes. Bony sockets guard against impact; eyebrows provide shade; eyelids and eyelashes keep things out of eyes; and tear ducts moisten eyes.



Attention Parents of Kindergartners Has Your Child Had A School Vision Evaluation?

Nebraska law requires students entering school for the first time, including kindergartners and transfer students from out of state, to provide proof of a vision evaluation within six months prior to the student's entrance. The vision evaluation is required to test for amblyopia (lazy eye) and strabismus (misalignment of the eyes), which are two of the most common vision disorders in young children, as well as internal and external eye health and visual acuity. A certificate or form stating results of the evaluation must be signed by an optometrist, physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse. Typical vision screenings test

Vision Fact:
One out of five children entering kindergarten in Nebraska has an undetected vision problem.

only for distance vision and are not designed to assess many of the common vision disorders in young children. The state law helps assure that more students get a broader assessment of conditions that could adversely impact their learning ability. Schedule your child's vision evaluation with an eyecare professional today!

For a copy of the school vision evaluation form, go to www.nechildrensvision.org/resources.html#Forms.

Vision Fact:

One in every 12 males is color blind. Color blind does not mean you see in black and white, but that you have trouble telling the difference between certain colors.

Building Strong Readers



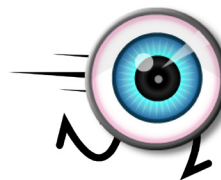
How can you encourage your children to read? Try a few of these tips to interest your children in reading:

- Talk with your children as you play, shop or work around the house. Listen to what they say and ask questions.
- Let your children see you read – be a good role model!
- Go to the library together and ask the librarian to help your children find books they will enjoy.
- Keep books, magazines and newspapers around your home.
- Tell stories about your family and stories you enjoyed as a child. Write them down and save them to read aloud another time.

Source: *Reading is Fundamental*, www.rif.org.

See To Learn® Providers Offer Free Vision Assessments for 3-Year-Olds Helping Children See a Better Tomorrow

As part of its commitment to assuring that *all* Nebraska children have the opportunity for a meaningful vision evaluation, the Nebraska Foundation for Children's Vision offers **FREE** vision assessments for any 3-year-old through its SEE TO LEARN® program. For a referral to a SEE TO LEARN® eyecare professional in your area, call 1-800-960-3937.



Exercise Your Eyes

Have you ever done eye push-ups? Like all muscles, eye muscles get stronger if you exercise them. And while an "eye fitness" routine probably won't let you throw away your glasses, it can prevent eyestrain, relieve eye tension, and help keep your eyes healthy and strong.

Eye Push-Ups

1. Hold your finger 10 inches away from your face. Slowly bring it towards your nose, stopping before it appears to double. Repeat 5 to 10 times.
2. Hold up your finger in front of your face. Focus on your finger and count to 3. Now focus on a point far away from you, counting to 3. Repeat a few times.

Eye Writing

Look at a wall and pretend that you're writing on it with your eyes. Don't move your head—only move your eyes. Start by writing your name, then try composing poetry or writing out the lyrics to your favorite song. The bigger the letters, the more you strengthen and stretch the muscle around the eye.

Round the Clock

Imagine that you're standing (or sitting) in front of a really big clock. Look at the middle of the clock. Then, without moving your head, look at any hour mark. Look back at the center. Then look at another hour mark, and come back to the center. Repeat for every "hour." You can also do this exercise with your eyes closed. Either way will give the muscles around your eye a workout and help prevent eyestrain.

Source: *VSP (created by the Exploratorium)*