

# CHILDREN'S EYE SAFETY

## CHILDREN'S EYE SAFETY MONTH

**80%** of what children learn is acquired  through visual processing.

*The American Optometric Association supports a comprehensive professional eye examination performed by an eye doctor at age 6 months, 3 years and 5 years for all children*

Since August has arrived and a new school year is about to begin, Friends for Sight wants you to make sure to include an eye examination as part of your back to school check list. As part of Child Eye Health and Safety Month, in addition to immunizations and school orientations, it is highly recommended your child receive an eye examination before going back to school. The inability to see clearly affects not only academic performance but also athletics and self-esteem. Start the new school year out right by making sure that your student is seeing clearly!

Common signs of vision troubles in children include: frequently rubbing eyes, squinting, tilting or turning head to look at objects, wandering eyes, or squeezing eyes. If you're child displays any of these symptoms, please schedule an appointment to have their eyes checked.

**1 in 4** children has  
A VISION PROBLEM 

**Should you worry about how much time your child spends in front of the computer every day?**

A large study conducted by the National Eye Institute and published in the December 2009 issue of *Archives of Ophthalmology* found that the prevalence of [nearsightedness](#) among Americans has increased from 25 percent to 41.6 percent of the population over the past 30 years — an increase of more than 66 percent.

Also, among people with 12 or more years of formal education, the prevalence of myopia is now as high as 59.8 percent.

Today it is a "near-point world," and parents need to be aware of the vision problems associated with computer work. Computer use demands fine motor skills from young eyes that are not well developed. Only when the visual system matures is a child better able to handle the stress of a computer on that system.

According to the American Optometric Association (AOA), parents should consider these factors affecting children and computer use:

- Children may not be aware of how much time they are spending at a computer. They may perform a task on the computer for hours with few breaks. This prolonged activity can cause eye focusing and eye strain problems.
- Children are very adaptable. They assume that what they see and how they see is normal — even if their vision is problematic. That's why it is important for parents to monitor the time a child spends working at a computer and make sure they have regular [eye exams](#) as directed by their [optometrist](#) or [ophthalmologist](#).
- Children are smaller than adults. Since computer workstations often are arranged for adult use, this can change the viewing angle for young children. Computer users should view the screen slightly downward, at a 15-degree angle. Also, if a child has difficulty reaching the keyboard or placing their feet comfortably on the floor, he or she may experience neck, shoulder and/or back pain.



### Protect Young Eyes from Too Much Blue Light

- In addition to discomfort symptoms caused by too much computer use, research is now suggesting that hours in front of digital screens each day may be putting children at risk of damage to their [retinas](#) later in life.
- This is because computer displays and the screens of smart phones and other digital devices emit significant amounts of [high-energy visible blue light](#) that can have long-term damaging effects on retinal tissue.
- Though it's still unclear how much blue light is too much, it's wise to take preventive measures to limit your child's exposure to blue light from these devices.
- In addition to attempting to place limits on the amount of time your child spends in front of a digital screen each day (good luck with that), it's wise to have kids wear eyeglasses with [photochromic lenses](#) and/or [anti-reflective coating](#) designed to filter blue light.
- Even if your child doesn't need corrective lenses for nearsightedness, farsightedness and/or astigmatism, your eye doctor can prescribe light-filtering [computer glasses](#) that can protect his or her eyes from blue light and visual fatigue. Consult your eye care professional for more details.





**Vision can effect sports performance too!**



**Eye safety is just as important as eye health.**

Every year thousands of children sustain an eye injury - 90 percent of which can be prevented if suitable protective eyewear is used. From sports and recreation, to toys and fireworks, an eye injury can happen at any time and provide protective eyewear, as corrective lenses do not protect the eye; most protective eyewear is made from a lightweight polycarbonate and is activity-specific. If your child should experience an eye injury, DO NOT allow child to rub or touch the eye, DO NOT apply medication to the eye, and DO NOT attempt to remove any debris from the eye. If the eye injury is caused by a chemical in the eye, flush the eye with water. For all eye injuries seek medical attention immediately.

<https://www.preventblindness.org/your-childs-sight>

<https://www.allaboutvision.com/safety/>

<https://www.preventblindness.org/fact-sheets>

<https://www.allaboutvision.com/cvs/children-computer-vision-syndrome.htm>

<https://www.friendsforsight.org/resources/eye-health-awareness/item/13-child-eye-health-and-safety-month-august>

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