

Children's Eye Health



According to the 2022 American Community Survey, it's estimated there are 600,000 children with vision difficulty in the United States. One out of twenty children between the ages of three and five have serious eye problems that if not treated on time, can lead to permanent vision problems. It is important to have routine vision screening! Vision problems can affect school performance.

Resources:

- [American Foundation for the Blind](#)
- [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#)
- [CDC Vision Screenings](#)



Vision Screening

Vision screening is an exam looking for eye problems. Screening can be conducted by pediatricians, primary care providers, schools, or other properly trained health care professionals. If anything is detected, your child will be referred to an ophthalmologist for a comprehensive eye exam, which can diagnose eye disease. During a comprehensive exam, eye drops are used to dilate (widen) the eye so the ophthalmologist is able to view inside the eye.

The following is the recommended screening schedule:

- Newborn
- 6-12 months of age
- 12-36 months of age
- 3-5 years of age
- 5 years and older

Or more often if indicated due to other risk factors or as otherwise indicated by a healthcare professional.

Common Eye Conditions

- **Myopia** – also known as nearsightedness, is a common vision condition in which you can see objects near to you clearly, but objects farther away are blurry.
- **Amblyopia** – also known as a lazy eye; is reduced vision caused by abnormal visual development early in life.
- **Strabismus** – also known as cross-eyed, a condition in which the two eyes do not align properly and appear to look in different directions.
- **Eye Injuries** – are common among children; most injuries are sports-related or accidental.
- **Blindness** – the inability to see or lack of vision. If you're partially blind, you have limited vision. If you have complete blindness, you can't see or detect light.

Protect Your Child's Vision

- Eat well
- Limit screen time
- Get enough sleep
- Spend time outdoors
- Use protective eyewear and glasses
- Get regular eye exams

www.dshs.wa.gov/fwb

fwb@dshs.wa.gov

