

UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S VISION

Of all the children aged 12 and under, around one out of every five has a vision problem.

Children seldom complain about their vision.

Parents need to be aware.

Children's vision problems are not always easy to find as many cannot be detected by a standard school eye chart test. Those related to learning difficulties are often mistaken for other problems. It is important to remember that children themselves will seldom complain because they think everybody else sees the way they do.

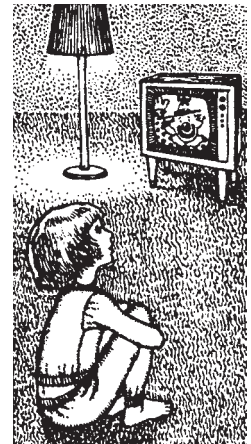
ARE YOUR CHILD'S EYES READY FOR SCHOOL?

After the normal eye check at birth, the next routine examination should be at 3 years of age as the child is preparing to begin pre-school. They should then be examined at 6 years of age as a follow up before any problems can have a significant interference with learning.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF A POSSIBLE VISION PROBLEM

Parents and teachers therefore need to be aware of possible vision problems and alert for the symptoms that may indicate them. (See checklist below).

Remember that early diagnosis and treatment can aid in prevention, controlling, correcting or slowing vision problems that can interfere with a child's learning, recreation and self-attitude.



CHECKLIST - SIGNS & SYMPTOMS FOR A POSSIBLE VISION PROBLEM

- Crossed or turned eyes
- Reddened, watering, burning or itching eyes
- Blinks frequently
- Very sensitive to light
- Dislike or avoidance of close work
- Short attention span for the child's age
- Turning or tilting head to use one eye only
- Closing or covering one eye
- Placing head close to book when reading or writing
- Frowning while reading, writing or doing blackboard work
- Reading errors of omission, insertion or substitution
- Writing which becomes smaller and crowded
- Irritability, or unusual fatigue after maintaining visual concentration
- Losing place while reading. Using a finger or marker to guide eyes
- Saying words aloud or lip reading
- Difficulty remembering what has just been read
- Repeating and miscalling words
- Persistent letter or word reversals (>Year 2)
- Poor eye-hand co-ordination. Difficulty throwing or catching a ball, buttoning clothes, tying shoes etc.
- Eye rubbing or tired eyes after near concentration
- Headaches, nausea or dizziness
- Complaints of blurring or double vision at any time
- Difficulty adjusting focus to see blackboard or book

