

SAN ANSELMO OPTOMETRY

Your Child's Eyes

Because of the unique needs of children, it's most important that your child's eyes be examined before pre-school or even earlier if you observe any questionable vision difficulties.

Even small amounts of astigmatism have been shown in Children's Vision 2014 Vision Study to be significant in academic performance. A February 2016 new study reveals:

"This study suggests that an untreated vision problem in preschool, in this case one that makes it harder for children to see things up-close, can create literacy deficits that affect grade school readiness," said Maryann Redford, National Eye Institute."

These are some of the symptoms to watch for in your child:

- Spends a long time doing homework
- Reduced attention span
- Covers one eye at times
- Lays head on desk when doing near work
- Frequently loses place when reading
- Skips or re-reads words and lines
- Reverses words or letters (was for saw, b for d) after the 2nd grade
- Does better at math than English, History or Social Studies
- Must re-read material several times to grasp its meaning
- Gets tired quickly when doing reading or homework
- Short attention span
- Daydreams a lot
- Learns best through auditory tactics (listens to learn)
- Avoids work that includes reading or near seeing
- Is more than one year behind in reading skills
- Has poor posture, slouches or slumps in chair

Your child's eye exam is different than an adult one and typically is very easy for children. Dr. Larry Harrison has had many years of experience with putting children at ease for and making sure they enter school with no visual problems that could hamper their learning.

We are happy to provide free eye exams for any child under 18 years old. Also, if you cannot afford eyeglasses for your child under 18 yrs old, just mention that to Royce and we will provide free eyeglasses along with a free eye exam.

A child who is unable to comfortably read or view a blackboard can become easily frustrated, leading to poor academic performance. Some children can see 20/20 and have clear vision but their eyes are under stress by working 20 to 50 percent harder in order to read.

Some parents are surprised to learn that preschool-age children do not need to know their letters and their vision can be accessed in other ways. In addition, a computerized instrument can read your child's eyes and determine what possible prescription is needed. No responses are necessary from the child during this testing which takes only 30 seconds.

In addition to frequent issues of nearsightedness, farsightedness affecting children's academic performance, the common and often overlooked, vision problems of school children include:

Amblyopia

It is very important to rule out amblyopia, or "lazy eye," which is the inability to correct to 20/20 acuity in one or both eyes. Amblyopia must be treated in the first several years of life while the vision system is still developing or permanent loss of vision may occur.

Binocular Vision

Large amounts misaligned eyes (strabismus) can have different causes, such as problems with muscle control in the affected eye or eyes. Strabismus is a common cause of amblyopia causing both eyes an inability to function together. This should be treated early in childhood so vision and binocular vision skills can develop normally.

Eye Coordination

Not only do your child's eyes need to focus without strain and discomfort but both eyes must be aligned without excess strain in order to for proper reading skills to develop to their potential. We will assess the ability of your child's eyes function at their optimum in all aspects. Even small amounts of misalignment may lead to avoidance of reading.

Focusing Ability, Depth Perception And Color Vision

We also test your child's focusing (accommodation) ability. Depth perception or ability to gauge distances between objects also may be examined, and color recognition tests may be used to assess your child's color vision.

Should your child require eyeglasses, we approach the process with an understanding that children require special care and proper eyeglass fitting.