



XCELLENCE IN EYE CARE

THE EYE INSTITUTE

Hidden Vision Problems Can Block Learning Is your child at risk?

Could your child have 20/20 vision and still have a vision problem?

When people are asked "what is the definition of good vision," the most common responses are:

"Good vision is...

the ability to see the small letters on a chart."

seeing 20/20 on the vision chart."

having clear vision."

Although there is some validity to these responses, **good vision** actually encompasses much more.

What is good vision?

Optometry believes good vision actually consists of **three components**. These three components are:

- The ability to see small detail (clarity)
- The ability to read or use the eyes for long periods of time without fatigue (comfort)
- The ability to analyze and interpret visual input (processing skills)

Ability To See Small Detail

Having 20/20 vision is important. However, seeing clearly does not guarantee comfortable vision. There are many individuals who see very clearly yet find it difficult to read or concentrate for more than several minutes.

Conditions such as nearsightedness (myopia), farsightedness (hyperopia) and astigmatism can cause blurry vision. These conditions are usually easily treated with eyeglasses, which results in a restoration of clear vision.

Ability To See Comfortably

Many children can see clearly, yet still have significant vision problems. When tested at school as part of the school vision screening, they pass. These children have vision problems, which interfere with their ability to see comfortably.

Conditions such as eye teaming, eye focusing and tracking problems can cause discomfort associated with reading. If a child has difficulty controlling the coordination of his eyes, is unable to maintain focus or has difficulty aiming his eyes and scanning along a line of print, the result may be the need to use extra effort to overcome these problems, leading to discomfort.

Ability to Process Visual Information

The ability to analyze and interpret visual input is sometimes referred to as visual processing or visual perceptual skills. Optometrists believe this is an important aspect of vision, particularly for children in grades first through fourth.

Just because a child can see clearly and comfortably does not guarantee he/she will be able to make use of the incoming information.

These skills are important when a young child is learning letter and number recognition, reading and early math skills. In some children, the development of visual perceptual skills does not keep pace with the child's growth in other areas. This type of lag can lead to difficulty in the early grades in school.

How can you find out if your child is at risk?

If your child has any of the symptoms or behaviors listed in this brochure, he/she should have a full optometric vision evaluation designed to detect learning related vision problems including a visual information processing evaluation.

Signs of Eye Teaming, Focusing and Tracking Problems

- Covers or closes one eye when reading
- Rubs eyes
- Child complains of eyestrain
- Child complains of headaches
- Child complains of double vision
- Child complains of words moving on the page
- Child complains of blurred vision
- Tired at the end of the day
- Holds things very close
- Loses place often
- Must use finger or guide to keep place
- Skips lines and words often
- Poor reading comprehension
- Short attention span

Signs of Visual Processing Disorders

- Trouble learning left from right
- Reverses letters and numbers
- Mistakes words with similar beginnings
- Can't recognize the same word repeated on a page
- Trouble learning basic math concepts of size, magnitude
- Poor recall of visually presented material
- Poor reading comprehension
- Trouble with spelling and sight vocabulary
- Sloppy writing skills, Erases excessively
- Trouble copying from board to book
- Can respond orally but not in writing
- Seems to know material but does poorly on written tests

What can be done if a problem is detected?

If a learning related vision problem is detected we can prescribe a program of vision therapy specifically designed to treat the type of problems detected.

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