



# August is children's eye health and safety month

## Tags

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The American Academy of Pediatrics and the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#) recommend that your child's pediatrician—or family doctor conduct periodic eye [screening](#) examinations at well child visits, [according to a press release from Philadelphia-based Wills Eye Institute.](#)

If a specific vision problem or other concern is detected then referral should be made to an eye doctor. Seeing a pediatric ophthalmology specialist may also be needed for children who are very premature, have developmental disabilities, misaligned eyes ([strabismus](#)), lazy eye, near- or farsightedness and those with [family histories](#) of congenital [cataracts](#), childhood eye cancer or other genetic [diseases](#).



The first ten years of your child's life are the most important years for the brain to learn how to effectively use the eyes. Many of these eye problems can be treated and resolved if caught early.

“As a result of vision problems, children can often fall behind in their school work or even become labeled with behavioral problems. If you have concerns about your child's vision or any other aspect of their eyes, seek the opinion of a pediatric ophthalmologist before school issues occur” said **Dr. Alex V. Levin, MD, MHSc**, Chief of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Ocular Genetics at Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia. “Also, don't forget appropriate [protective eyewear](#) for sports!”

The Wills Eye Institute offers the following things to look for in your child and questions parents should ask:

Know [the signs](#) that your child may be having a vision problem:

- Difficulty seeing the blackboard at school
- Rubbing their eyes a lot, red eyes, eye pain
- Not interested in [reading](#)
- Squinting
- In pictures, child's pupil looks transparent or milky white rather than a reddish color. Or if one pupil looks different than the other

Questions you should be asking yourself as a parent:

- Does my child seem to see well?
- Does my child hold objects close to his or her face when trying to focus?
- Do the eyes appear straight or seem to drift, cross or seem lazy?
- Do the eyes look unusual in any way?
- Does one eyelid droop or tend [to close](#)?