

## VISION HEALTH FACT SHEET

### Why is vision important?

Children need healthy eyes to read, write, and see the board in school. For a child with vision problems, it can be hard to focus and learn at home. It can also be hard to focus and learn at school. It is important to treat vision problems early and the right way.

### Signs and Symptoms

A child may not tell you that he or she has a vision problem. They may think the way they see is the way everyone sees. Signs of vision problems are:

- Redness or tearing of the eyes
- Trouble paying attention
- Trouble reading the board
- Headaches or eye pain
- Taking longer than expected to complete homework
- Squinting or sitting too close to the TV

### Screening and Treatment

Children should have an eye screening every year. This can be done at your child's regular doctor's office. They should see an **eye doctor** once a year if they have ever had glasses.

There are two types of vision tests:

1. Vision screening
2. Full eye exam

A **vision screening** is a short test that can show if your child may have a vision problem. Usually it includes children reading letters or pictures from a chart on a wall several feet away. Sometimes this is done at school. It should also be done in your child's doctor's office. Generally when done by a doctor, they will also examine the eye for other problems. This is especially important in young children.

A **full eye exam** is done by an optometrist or ophthalmologist (eye doctor). This is for children who have failed a vision screen, or if the doctor or parent is worried about their eyes. The eye doctor will look at your child's eyes and ask about your child's health history. They will check for color blindness and other eye and vision problems. They can also help your child get glasses, if needed.

### What can you do?

Your child may not notice a change in their vision. Be sure to ask your child's doctor for a vision screening every year or sooner if they have any of the symptoms above.