

Children's Eye Health and Safety News Release

Protect Your Child

Vision problems affect one in twenty preschoolers and one in four school-aged children. During September's Children's Eye Health and Safety Month, Eye M.D.s want Americans to know that because it is possible for your child to have a serious vision problem without you being aware of it. Infants should be screened for common eye problems during their regular pediatric appointments and vision testing should be conducted for all children starting at around three years of age. If there is a family history of eye problems or if a problem is apparent, speak to your Eye M.D. promptly about when and how often your child's eyes should be examined.

Among the conditions an eye care professional will look for are amblyopia (lazy eye), strabismus (crossed eyes), ptosis (drooping of the upper eyelid), color deficiency (color blindness) and refractive errors (nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism).

Aside from vision threatening conditions, eye screenings for children are important because vision changes can occur without you or your child noticing them. If your child is having trouble seeing the blackboard or trouble seeing the words in a book, learning, as well as participating in recreational activities will suffer. While vision problems can interfere with school performance, it's important to distinguish them from learning disorders.

You also have to protect your child's eyes from the danger of eye injuries. Be sure that the toys your child plays with are appropriate for his or her age and maturity level. Avoid toys with sharp, protruding or projectile parts. Sports also could endanger your child's eyes, so make sure he or she wears appropriate protective eyewear.

Information provided by Dr. Mark Weingarten, M.D., a board certified Ophthalmologist at Rochester Eye Care, located at 1135 W. University Dr: in Rochester. For more information or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Weingarten, call 248-650-2255