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AN EYE EXAM IS A CRITICAL ADDITION TO YOUR BACK-TO-SCHOOL CHECKLIST

Alexandria, VA – Aug. 14, 2023 – Completing an eye exam annually is important for the whole family, and back-to-school season is the perfect time to schedule a visit to the eye doctor. With a mission to promote better vision for better lives, [The Vision Council](https://www.thevisioncouncil.org) encourages parents and guardians to make sure their children have the right prescription and/or confirm if they need glasses before the school year starts to ensure optimal learning outcomes and eye health.

“An eye exam is just as important as your child’s annual physical,” **said Ashley Mills, CEO of The Vision Council.** “Vision is critical to class participation, learning and long-term success. A short appointment can prevent blurry vision, eye strain, headaches, and frustration; plus, it can detect other health issues such as high blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes.”

A Back-to-School Guide

School is back in session. When is the best time to schedule an eye exam?

- Right now! A few weeks before the start of the school year is a great time for parents to book an eye exam to make sure their kids have the right prescription and allow time for glasses or contacts to be fabricated if they need them. If school is already in session, it’s still a good idea to get an eye exam on the calendar, to make sure your kids are well-positioned for a year of successful learning.
- It’s important for the whole family to go to the eye doctor once a year; back-to-school season is a great time to schedule for the whole family at once so you’re all on the same schedule.
- Even if you have perfect vision, a visit to the eye doctor can help detect and prevent other health issues in the long run, from high blood pressure and diabetes to high cholesterol or even cancer. Eye health is more than just seeing 20/20.

My child has never worn glasses or contact lenses - what are some signs that they may need glasses?

- Your child holds books, papers, and screens very close to their eyes.
- Your child has a short attention span.

- Your child exhibits general clumsiness.
- Your child complains about headaches.
- Your child fears getting hit by a ball or doesn't want to play sports.
- Your child frequently asks you to explain what's going on.

What should parents look for when selecting a pair of glasses for their kids? How can you get kids excited about wearing them?

- There are so many great, stylish eyewear options for kids that are also durable, comfortable, and affordable.
- To get kids excited about wearing glasses, make sure they are involved in the process of picking a color and style that reflects their unique personality.
- Many kids' eyewear brands are basically "indestructible" without sacrificing style.
- Flexible material, 360 flexible hinges and bendable memory metal are good qualities to look for in kid's glasses. Anti-glare and anti-scratch coatings on lenses are great for kid's glasses as well.
- Contact lenses are also a great option for kids, once they are old enough to wear them responsibly. Disposable contacts can be convenient and easy for kids.

What about sunglasses? Do kids really need to wear them?

- Yes! Sunglasses are a daily health necessity for adults *and* kids to protect the eyes from long and short-term damage from the sun's UV rays.
- Children have larger pupil sizes which means there is a bigger window for UV to enter their eye. Since their internal lens is still developing, they can't filter out UV as well as an adult eye.

Is digital eye strain a concern for kids?

- As children, especially teens, increasingly use digital devices at school and at home, digital eye strain can be a concern for kids just as much as it is for adults.
- Fortunately, kids can benefit from the same simple lifestyle changes as adults - encourage them to take breaks and make sure their devices are set up properly. And of course, encourage spending time outside whenever possible.

What should parents look for when choosing eyewear and contact lenses for kids who are participating in sports or outdoor activities?

- The best way to prevent a sports-related eye injury is to wear sport-specific protective eyewear that fits properly.
- Ensure the protective eyewear is ASTM (American Standard for Testing and Materials) rated for the sport being played.

- Polycarbonate lenses provide the highest level of protection for impact resistance.
- ASTM Sports rated protective eyewear can be purchased at sporting goods stores or at your local eyecare provider's office.

Learn more about what to expect from an eye exam here: [Eye Exams - The Vision Council Foundation - Learn about Vision Health, Eye Diseases and Treatments.](#)

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About The Vision Council

The Vision Council brings the power of sight to all through education, government relations, research, and technical standards. A leading advocate for the optical industry, the association positions its members to deliver the eyewear and eyecare people need to look and feel their best. Vital to health, independence, and safety, better vision leads to better lives.