

Pointers For Parents

Good Vision Essential To Success In School

(NAPSA)—Eighty percent of what students learn is through vision, yet 86 percent of children who enter school have not had a thorough eye examination, according to the American Optometric Association. With schools opening soon across the country, now is the time to make sure your kids' eyes are ready for the classroom.

“How children see, from birth through the late teen years, has a profound impact on their development and ability to learn,” says Ron Tiarks, who oversees 1,300 Vision Centers at Wal-Mart stores and SAM'S CLUBS nationwide. “We have found that 10 percent of preschoolers and 25 percent of kids in kindergarten through sixth grade have vision problems, which can make learning more difficult and school less fun.”

While symptoms are not always apparent, parents should watch for the following warning signs in their children:

- Consistently sitting too close to the TV, or holding a book too close.

- Squinting.
- Tilting the head or closing an eye to see better.
- Avoiding coloring books, puzzles or detailed activities.
- Bumping into things.
- Having difficulty judging distances.
- Turning one eye inward, upward or downward.
- Losing their place or using a finger to keep their place while reading.
- Complaining of headaches or tired eyes.
- Excessively rubbing the eyes.

If your child exhibits any of these symptoms, make an appointment with an optometrist right away. Even if your child appears to see well, he or she should have a first eye exam by age



Are your kids' eyes ready for the classroom?

3 and every two years after that. If children require glasses or contact lenses, schedule visits once a year, since prescriptions can change frequently for younger kids.

Keep in mind that a school vision screening, while helpful, is not a substitute for a complete eye examination. “One of the most important steps parents can take to ensure their child's success in school is to schedule regular eye exams with a doctor of optometry,” says Tiarks. “These will help ensure that their child's vision is developing normally, and that any vision problems are detected and corrected early in the child's development.”

Vision Centers are located in Wal-Mart stores and SAM'S CLUBS nationwide. Doctors of optometry at each location take appointments and welcome walk-ins. To find a Vision Center near you, check the phone book, or click on the Store Finder at www.walmart.com or the Club Locator at www.samsclub.com.