

# Eye On Health



## Small Adjustments Can Make A Big Difference

(NAPSA)—Here's news many parents may care to keep an eye on: At schools around the country, teachers are increasingly incorporating 3-D imaging, digital devices and the latest computer applications into their teaching tools. What's more, according to the American Optometric Association's (AOA) latest American Eye-Q survey, 60 percent of parents estimate their child spends up to four hours a day looking at the screen of a computer, video game, MP3 player or handheld electronic device.

### The Problem

Unfortunately, prolonged use of these technologies can cause eye-strain, headaches, fatigue, burning or tired eyes, loss of focus, blurred vision, double vision or head and neck pain. The AOA calls this condition computer vision syndrome (CVS).

### What To Do

Parents and teachers can help students avoid CVS by encouraging them to follow the 20-20-20 rule. When using technology or doing near work, take a 20-second break every 20 minutes and view something 20 feet away. Studies show that people need to rest their eyes to keep them moist. Plus, staring off into the distance helps the eyes from locking into a close-up position.

Additional ways to reduce CVS include:

- Position the computer monitor or handheld device slightly below eye level. Ideally, a screen



**Optometrists say it's wise for your eyes when you're working at a computer screen to take a 20-second break every 20 minutes and view something 20 feet away.**

should be 15 to 20 degrees below eye level (about four or five inches) as measured from the center of the screen and 20 to 28 inches from the eyes.

- Avoid screen glare, particularly from overhead lighting or windows.

- Blink frequently to keep the front surface of the eye moist.

- Most importantly, students should see a doctor of optometry for a comprehensive eye examination prior to or early in each school year to ensure their eyes are healthy and functioning properly. Early detection and treatment are key in correcting vision problems and helping students see clearly.

### Learn More

To find a nearby optometrist and for additional information on children's vision and the importance of schooltime eye exams, visit [www.aoa.org](http://www.aoa.org).