

Your child may receive a vision screening at school or a pediatrician's office. Know that such a screening is not a comprehensive eye exam. Comprehensive eye exams performed by an eyecare professional ensures your child's eye and vision health. Vision problems can affect a child's ability to learn. Your child may not complain about vision problems because usually these conditions don't cause pain. The Bascom Palmer Eye Institute recommends parents keep an eye out for the following signs a child may be experiencing vision problems:

- Does your child have difficulty seeing objects that you or other children see well?
- Does your child hold objects close to the face when trying to focus?
- Does your child sit too close to the TV?
- Does your child frequently complain of headaches?
- Is there an unusual appearance to your child's eyes?
- Is there frequent blinking or eye rubbing?
- Is there swelling or redness in one or both eyes?
- Does your child close or cover one eye?
- Do one or both eyelids droop or does one eyelid tend to close?
- Is the iris different in color in the two eyes?
- Do the eyes tend to "dance" or show to-and-fro movement?
- Do the eyes appear to turn in, out, up, or down or tend to intermittently drift off center?
- Is there a head tilt or turn, particularly when concentrating on objects at a distance or close up?
- Does your child complain of seeing double?
- Does your child lose his or her place when reading?
- Does your child have difficulty remembering what he or she reads?

Children are commonly affected by the following eye and vision disorders:

- Nearsightedness, or myopia, is the most common vision disorder in children and often develops between age six and adolescence.
- Farsightedness, or hyperopia, may cause blurred vision, headaches, or eye crossing.
- Strabismus, sometimes referred to as "lazy eye," refers to eyes that are misaligned by turning in, out, up or down. Treatment of strabismus may include eye exercises, glasses, patching, eye drops, or occasionally, surgery.
- Amblyopia is a reduction in vision in one, or occasionally, both eyes and is commonly caused by nearsightedness, farsightedness, or astigmatism. It is usually treated with glasses, patching, or eye drops. Amblyopia can be caused by strabismus.