

The Vision & Learning Connection

Vision exams are essential for children entering school because learning is largely visual. Undetected vision issues can hinder academic performance and development. Everyday classroom activities—such as reading, writing, and using computers—require strong visual skills, especially at close distances.

Vision involves more than clear eyesight; it includes the ability to process and apply visual information. A comprehensive eye exam helps identify whether a child has the visual skills needed for success in the classroom.



Seven Visual Abilities for Learning

1. **Visual acuity:** *Ability to see clearly at distance or near.*
2. **Accommodation:** *Ability to maintain clear vision as objects are moved closer.*
3. **Eye teaming:** *Ability to coordinate the two eyes together so that they both point at precisely the same object.*
4. **Eye movement:** *Ability to “track” objects or views without discomfort or difficulty.*
5. **Visual perception:** *Ability to correctly interpret what is visually “received” as well as being able to react to what is seen.*
6. **Eye-hand coordination:** *Ability to use the eyes to guide the hands.*
7. **Visual imagery:** *Ability to “see pictures in the mind.” There are two categories: 1) Visual memory is the ability to retrieve or remember a picture of what has been seen in the past and 2) Visualization is the ability to form new pictures in your mind.*

How Thoroughly Has Your Child Been Tested?

Vision screenings typically only evaluate whether a child can see an eye chart from a distance or has an obvious eye health issue. Most vision screenings only address acuity.

School vision evaluations are required by law for students entering school. The law requires testing for lazy eye, misalignment of the eyes, internal and external eye health and acuity. These evaluations must be performed by an optometrist (OD), physician (MD), a physician assistant (PA), or an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN).

Vision examinations are typically performed by eye doctors. They include a series of tests and observations that assess the health of the eye as well as a broad range of visual functions. These are the most comprehensive evaluations of a child’s visual capability for learning.

For information on the availability of vision evaluation resources for low-income families, please contact your school or the Nebraska Foundation for Children’s Vision.



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