

## *Eye See Eye Learn (ESEL) Program Enrolment for 2017-2018 School Term*

Thank you to school personnel for participating in the Eye See Eye Learn Program (ESEL).

*May is Vision Health Month and we are seeking your projected enrolment numbers for the 2017-2018 school term.* The program is unchanged and teachers are asked to hand out one simple pamphlet to their students. The Eye Examination Report forms will only be completed for those children who were identified at their eye examination as having a vision problem, which may require adapting or modifying teaching techniques for reading, eye patching or when visual training has been recommended.

*Together we are making progress!* Saskatchewan Health statistics confirm the number of age 3, 4 and 5 year old children seeking eye examinations are continuing to rise. The percentage of age 5 children seeking an eye examination year ending 2009 was 33.5% and as of government's fiscal year-end the number increased to 45.6%. As of December 31, 2016, the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter results from the Ministry of Health there were 6,863 age 5 children who obtained an eye examination. We anticipate these numbers will continue to rise with your assistance and the public awareness through the ESEL Program. Together children and their parents have a better understanding of the importance of eye health examinations, ensuring there are no eye health or vision barriers preventing children from reaching their full learning potential.

Ages	Population Apr1/08-Mar 31/09	# Eye Examinations	%	Population Apr1/14-Mar 31/15	# Eye Examinations	# Eye Examinations
3	12,394			14,707	4,226	28.7%
4	12,708	3,260	25.7%	14,867	5,516	37.1%
5	12,201	4,089	33.5%	14,788	6,740	45.6%

[www.stats.gov.sk.ca/pop](http://www.stats.gov.sk.ca/pop) and Ministry of Health – Medical Services Branch Data Report

Highlights of the 2016-17 school term:

- ✓ 23 school divisions participated in the ESEL Program – we would like to achieve 100% participation!
- ✓ 25,853 Eye See Eye Learn pamphlets, tattoos and coloring books were distributed to students and their parents
- ✓ 26,574 teacher packages were distributed

*Optometrists across the province continue to report that many parents are still unaware Saskatchewan Health covers the cost of an annual eye examination for children under the age of 18.*

### ***Facts:***

- An estimated 80% of learning is visual in a child's first 12 years.
- Vision disorders are the 4<sup>th</sup> most common disability in children.
- 1 in 4 children will have some form of vision problem.
- Good vision is vital to developing skills such as reading, copying and hand coordination.
- Children are influenced daily by technology, spending far more time in front of computers, hand held devices, white boards and television screens; all contributing to eye strain and the need for accurate visual acuity.
- There is improved success to treat vision problems if they are found early in a child's life.
- 20/20 does not mean a child can read what is put in front of them or that they comprehend the information.
- Not all children's vision problems have signs or symptoms.
- Parents assume their child will tell them if they can't see, unfortunately children don't know what "normal" is supposed to look like.
- Saskatchewan Health covers the cost of an annual eye examination for all SK children under the age of 18.

- Children are naturally adaptive and unknowingly they will compensate. One of the most harmful compensation methods is called suppression, an involuntary adaptation of the brain when one eye is blurred or misaligned. In the case of suppression, the brain automatically shuts off the image from the blurred or misaligned eye. This in turn causes the visual cells in the brain for that eye to poorly develop and remain small and immature. This condition is called amblyopia and if it is not detected at a young age it becomes permanent. The child through adulthood will have a permanent visual impairment that cannot be corrected with glasses or surgery.
- Some immediate effects of uncorrected vision are reduced fine motor skills such as printing and scissor use.
- Children with uncorrected vision are often frustrated with their failure to learn at the same rate as their peers; they may be easily distracted and have decreased self-esteem and social interaction.
- Components of an eye examination will determine the health of the eye, the ability for the eyes to work and move properly together, to focus and to alternate between near and distance viewing.
- We still have a huge number of children who have not obtained an eye examinations and may require visual treatment to improve their ability to see and ultimately to learn.
- Many families new to Canada do not have any knowledge of eye examinations and some cultures by heredity have a higher prevalence of visual problems (astigmatism, near-sightedness, etc.).

**Undiagnosed eye problems are often missed unless a complete eye health examination is conducted. The goal of the ESEL program is to ensure ALL Saskatchewan children will have an eye examination in preparation for school.**

### About the ESEL Program:

- The ESEL Program raises the awareness of the importance of early childhood eye examinations.
- There is “No Cost” to school divisions to participate.
- Based on their enrolment numbers, Teachers will be provided with an ESEL instruction sheet, student coloring books, tattoos, and informational pamphlets for each student asking them to arrange an eye examination if they have not already done so.
- The program is funded by the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists and Saskatchewan Health and was developed in collaboration with teachers, public health nurses, government officials, parents and optometrists.
- The Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists volunteers to administrate the ESEL Program in Saskatchewan with support from Saskatchewan Health and the Ministry of Education.
- The ESEL Program is simple, fun and it works! The ESEL Program is also offered in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, British Columbia and areas in the Maritimes.
- School divisions are encouraged to enroll in the ESEL Program and assist us in distributing the materials to Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and Grade One students.
- Following the eye examination, the Optometrist will complete an Eye Health and Vision Report Form only if a child has been identified as having a visual condition requiring treatment. The parents will be asked to return the form to the student’s teacher should they be able to adapt or modify teaching approaches for those students experiencing difficulties with visual tracking, eye hand coordination, adjusting to newly prescribed eyewear, or when eye patching or alternate treatment recommendations have been identified.
- It is recommended the Eye Health and Vision Report Forms be reviewed and then filed in the student’s cumulative record.
- Additional ESEL interactive resources and eye health information is available at [www.optometrists.sk.ca](http://www.optometrists.sk.ca).

*The ESEL Program is designed to be simple and effective. It offers encouragement and education. Ultimately everyone wins... and the reward could be life altering for children who didn't know they couldn't see.*

**Please enroll for the 2017-18 school term as soon as possible** to allow delivery of the packages to your central office in early September. We value your comments and if you have any questions please contact the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists at 306.652.2069 or [admin@saosk.ca](mailto:admin@saosk.ca) or visit [www.optometrists.sk.ca](http://www.optometrists.sk.ca)

# Eye See Eye Learn Program

## 2017/2018 School Term - Enrolment Form

Fax to 306.652.2642 or Email to [admin@saosk.ca](mailto:admin@saosk.ca)

### ESEL Enrolment Form (please complete in full):

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address for Delivery: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2017/2018 School Term Projections for ESEL Materials:

Pre-Kindergarten projected # of <u>students</u>	_____	_____
Pre-Kindergarten projected # of <u>teachers</u>	_____	_____
Kindergarten projected # of <u>students</u>	_____	_____
Kindergarten projected # of <u>teachers</u>	_____	_____
Grade One projected # of <u>students</u>	_____	_____
Grade One projected # of <u>teachers</u>	_____	_____
<b>Totals</b>	_____	_____

We understand at this time of the school year your numbers will be preliminary; however, your estimates assist us in coordinating the printing of materials.

Packages will be delivered late August to your school division central office for individual school distribution. Thank you for participating!

Please direct all inquiries or to request additional ESEL supplies to the ESEL Coordinator c/o the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists  
1.877.660.3937 or 306.652.2069 or [admin@saosk.ca](mailto:admin@saosk.ca)