

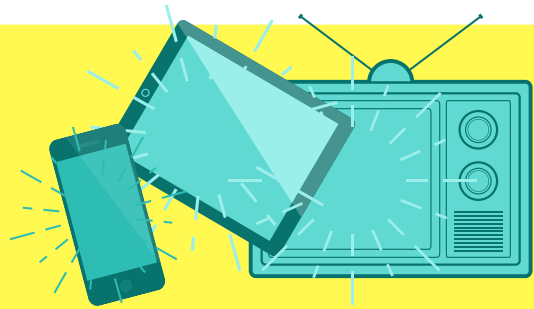


## IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO HAVE YOUR CHILD'S EYES EXAMINED

Children may struggle in school if they cannot clearly see the teacher, see the writing on the whiteboard, have difficulty changing their visual focus from far to near distance, or have problems following words in a book or on a tablet. It is important that children have a chance to achieve their full learning potential, beginning with the best vision possible.

Having the best vision possible is very important for learning and development. Unfortunately, as many as 1 in 4 children have a vision problem that may impair their ability to learn.

## How much screen time should my child get?



Children's use of digital media has increased dramatically, and begins earlier in childhood. High screen time use in children is associated with a risk for obesity, poorer school performance, poorer sleep quality, risky behaviours in older children, as well as delays in critical cognition, learning and social skills in younger children.

### 0-2 Years | Infants & Toddlers

None, with the possible exception of live video-chatting (e.g., Skype, Facetime) with parental support, due to its potential for social development.



### 2-5 Years | Preschool Children

No more than **one hour per day** of age-appropriate, educational, and supervised viewing.



### 5-18 Years | School Age Children

No more than **two hours per day** of recreational screen time. Individual screen time plans should be based on development and needs.



## Bonus Tip

Encourage outdoor activity over screen time. Increased prevalence or progression of nearsightedness has been linked with children spending fewer hours outdoors.



Has your child had an eye examination? If not, book an appointment today! Find an optometrist at [www.ESELsk.ca](http://www.ESELsk.ca)



## FAQ

**Q: I received this package from my child's school, but my child has already been to the optometrist this year. What do I do?**

A: No further action is required if your child or children have already received an eye exam within the last year. Thank you for making regular eye exams a part of your family health plan!

**Q: I have more than one child, my youngest received this package from school, but my oldest did not. Does this mean I should only book an eye appointment for my youngest?**

A: No, you should book an appointment for all of your children if they have not had an eye exam in the last year. We focus the program on younger students because our goal is to ensure all Saskatchewan children receive a comprehensive eye exam at or before the age of 5, but we recommend every child visits the optometrist regularly.

**Q: How much does it cost to take my child(ren) to the optometrist?**

A: Saskatchewan Health covers the cost for children to receive annual eye exams until they are 18 years old as long as they have a valid SK Health Card.

**Q: When should my child receive their first eye exam?**

A: We recommend that children have their first eye exam between 6 and 9 months of age.

**Q: How often should my child get their eyes examined?**

A: Once between 6 and 9 months, once between the ages 2 and 5, and annually after the age of 5.

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD MY CHILD GET AN EYE EXAM?

Birth to 2 years should undergo their first eye exam between 6 and 9 months of age

2 to 5 years should undergo at least one eye examination between 2 and 5 years of age

6 to 18 years should undergo an eye examination annually

Did you know...

Saskatchewan Health covers the cost of annual eye exams for all children under the age of 18

There is significantly improved success when treating vision problems if they are found early in a child's life

Children rarely complain of vision problems, often because they are not aware of them

You should inform your child's teacher if the optometrist diagnoses an eye health problem or recommends vision treatment

Children do not need to know how to read prior to having an eye examination

Eye examinations can often be booked within the week, and eye exams do not hurt

Nearsightedness usually occurs before age 25



Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists

## Contact us

[www.ESELsk.ca](http://www.ESELsk.ca)

306.652.2069

1.877.660.3937