

# Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



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## Children's Eye Safety and Health

**M**ost eye problems in children can be corrected if they are detected and treated early. Appropriate eye care is essential for maintaining good vision. Some problems, if left untreated--even for a short period--can result in permanent vision loss.

Experts recommend a continuum of eye care for children to include both vision screening and comprehensive eye examinations. All children, even those with no signs of trouble, should have their eyes checked at regular intervals. Any child who experiences vision problems or shows symptoms of eye trouble should receive a comprehensive eye examination by an optometrist or an ophthalmologist.

### Comprehensive Eye Examination

While vision screenings and eye examinations are complementary approaches to assessing the eye problems of a child, a screening is used to identify a child at risk for vision problems and does not replace a comprehensive examination performed by an eye doctor.

A comprehensive eye examination



includes an evaluation of the refractive state, dilated fundus examination, visual acuity, ocular alignment, binocularity, and color vision testing, where appropriate.

### Suggested Timetables for Children's Eye Health

Based on key children's health organizations the following is a suggested timetable for maintaining good vision:

- **Newborn infants** should have their eyes checked while still in the hospital nursery. This examination can help detect several congenital eye problems
- **During regular well baby exams**, from birth to 2 years of age, pediatricians should use history and a vision evaluation to see if vision problems

exist. Beginning at well child exams at age 3 and continuing through 10 years of age, vision screenings should be performed assessing visual acuity and ocular alignment.

- **If a child fails a vision screening or there is any concern of an eye or vision problem** the child should be referred for a comprehensive professional eye examination.



(Over)

## Children's Eye Safety . . . (Continued)

### Keeping Your Child Safe From Eye Injuries

Experts say, each year thousands of children age five and under have eye accidents at home, at play, or in the car. These eye injuries can damage a child's sight and even cause blindness. Taking these simple steps can help prevent eye injuries to your child:

#### (1) Understand the dangers

The most common causes of eye injuries to children include:

- Misuse of toys
- Falls from beds, against furniture, on stairs, and when playing with toys
- Contact with harmful household products (detergents, paints, glues, etc.)



#### (2) Find and remove hazards

Use safety gates at top and bottom of stairs. Pad or cushion sharp corners. Put locks on all cabinets and drawers that kid's can reach. Keep all sharp or pointed objects out of kid's hands. Put away all hazardous chemicals, including cleaning solutions. Keep your child out of work areas.

Read all warnings and instructions on toys. Avoid toys with sharp edges or hard points, spikes, and rods.

## Benefits Corner

### County Health Pool Over-Age Dependent Eligibility

An unmarried child that is between the ages of 19-25 is eligible for coverage if they meet one or all of the following criteria;

1. Financially dependent on employee and/or spouse
2. A full time student
3. Living at the same legal residence as employee and/or spouse

The verification for over-age dependents is on an annual basis, on our policy renewal date of January 1. If there is any change in status prior to the annual verification, the employee is required to report the change in status to the County Health Pool at the time of change in status.

For a copy of the over-age dependent affidavit, please contact your County Health Pool contact for your entity or contact a Benefits Administrator at 303-861-0507.

When in a vehicle, make sure children are properly secured in baby carriers and child safety seats and that the seat and shoulder belts fit well.

#### (3) Watch your child closely

If you notice any of these signs, get medical help right away:

- Your child has obvious pain or trouble seeing.
- Your child has a cut or torn eyelid.
- One eye does not move as well as the other.
- One eye sticks out compared to the other.
- The eye has an unusual pupil size or shape.
- There is blood in the clear part of the eye.
- Your child has something in the eye or under the eyelid that can't be easily removed.

Source: preventblindness.org

