



Comprehensive eye exams by an optometrist or ophthalmologist for children are considered to be highly effective in detecting vision conditions.<sup>17,18</sup>

A vision examination improves the detection and treatment of eye problems.<sup>16,17</sup> Children who are successfully treated for their eye problems show increased performance in school. One study found that the provision of eye glasses and vision therapy to children is correlated with improved grades and higher scores on standardized tests.<sup>19</sup>

### Commission recommendations:

Providing access to comprehensive eye exams to children helps ensure success in school. If comprehensive exams by an optometrist or ophthalmologist are not possible, science-based vision screening with high sensitivity and specificity and controlled follow up for treatment is an acceptable, though not preferred, method to providing vision care for children.<sup>16,17,20</sup> Therefore, the National Commission on Vision and Health highly recommends that children have timely access to comprehensive eye exams.

### About the National Commission on Vision and Health

The National Commission on Vision and Health strives to improve the nation's visual health by collaborating with science and health policy experts to ensure informed analysis and policy recommendations in order to prevent blindness, improve vision, and eliminate vision health disparities. The Commission aims to provide unbiased and authoritative information and advice concerning health policy to decision-makers, health professionals, and the public at large and to integrate vision care into public health programs at the national, state and local levels.

<sup>1</sup> Vaughn W, Maples WC, Hoenes R. The association between vision quality of life and academics as measured by the College of Optometrists in Vision Development quality of life questionnaire. *Optom* 2006; 77:116-123.

<sup>2</sup> Vision Council of America. A Summary of Medical Literature on Vision Screenings and Eye Exams. Alexandria, VA, 2004. [http://www.2020advocacy.com/s\\_2020/images/PDFs/StudiesSummary2004.pdf](http://www.2020advocacy.com/s_2020/images/PDFs/StudiesSummary2004.pdf) (Accessed February 28, 2008)

<sup>3</sup> Williams et al. Amblyopia treatment outcomes after screening before or at age 3 years: follow up from randomized trial. *BMJ* 2002;324(7353):1549.

<sup>4</sup> Kleinstein, RN et al. Refractive error and ethnicity in children. *Arch Ophthalmol* 2003; 121:1141-1147.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Visual impairment and use of eye-care services and protective eyewear among children – United States, 2002. *MMWR* 2005; 54:425-429.

<sup>6</sup> The Vision Care Institute. Americans' Attitudes and Perceptions about Vision Care. Conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of The Vision Care Institute™ of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc., 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Donohue SP, Johnson TM, Leonard-Martin TC. Screening for amblyogenic factors using a volunteer lay network and the MTI photoscreener. *Ophthalmol* 2000;107:1637-44.

<sup>8</sup> Preslan MW and Novak A. Baltimore vision screening project. Phase 2. *Ophthalmol* 1998;105(1):151-153.

<sup>9</sup> Ferebee A. Childhood Vision: Public Challenges & Opportunities, A Policy Brief. The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools. November 2004. Retrieved on July 5, 2008 from:

<http://www.healthinschools.org/Health-in-Schools/Health-Services/School-Health-Services/School-Health-Issues/~media/Files/PDF/visionfinal.ashx>

<sup>10</sup> Vision In Preschoolers Study (VIP Study): National Eye Institute Health information. National Institute of Health.

<http://www.nei.nih.gov/neitrials/viewStudyWeb.aspx?id=85> (Accessed February 26, 2008)

<sup>11</sup> Broderick P. Pediatric vision screening for the family physician. *Am Fam Physician* 1998; 58(3): 691.

<sup>12</sup> Newacheck PW, Stoddard JJ, Hughes DC, Pearl M. Health insurance and access to primary care for children. *N Engl J Med* 1998; 338:513-519.

<sup>13</sup> Mark H and Mark T. Parental reasons for non-response following a referral in school vision screening. *J School Health* 1999; 69(1):35-38.

<sup>14</sup> Vision Council of America. Making the Grade? An Analysis of State and Federal Children's Vision Care Policy. Alexandria, VA, 2005.

<sup>15</sup> New Jersey Commission on Business Efficiency of the Public Schools. Individual Supportive Education Reform Agenda for New Jersey Reading. 2006.

<http://www.bettervisioninstitute.org/research/Research/NJ%20ed%20link%20report.pdf> (Accessed August 18, 2008)

<sup>16</sup> Ferebee A. Childhood Vision: Public Challenges & Opportunities, A Policy Brief. The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools; 2004. Retrieved on July 5, 2008 from:

<http://www.healthinschools.org/Health-in-Schools/Health-Services/School-Health-Services/School-Health-Issues/~media/Files/PDF/visionfinal.ashx>

<sup>17</sup> White AJ. Eye Exams for Children: Their Impact and Cost Effectiveness. Abt Associates, Cambridge, MA, 2004. provided)

[http://www.abtassociates.com/reports/ES\\_Cost\\_Effectiveness\\_of\\_Eye\\_Exams.pdf](http://www.abtassociates.com/reports/ES_Cost_Effectiveness_of_Eye_Exams.pdf) (Accessed February 26, 2008)

<sup>18</sup> Vision in Preschoolers Study Group. Comparison of preschool vision screening tests as administered by licensed eye care professionals in the vision in preschoolers study. *Ophthalmol* 2004;111:(4)637-650.

<sup>19</sup> Marshall, EC, Meetz, RE, Harmon, LL. Through Our Children's Eyes: The Vision Status of Indiana School Children. Health Policy Group School of Optometry Indiana University. June 2007.

<sup>20</sup> Vision in Preschoolers Study Group. Sensitivity of screening tests for detecting vision in preschoolers-targeted vision disorders when specificity is 94%. *Optom Vis Sci* 2005;82(5)432-438..

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This publication was prepared under a contract with the George Washington University's Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy, School of Public Health and Health Services.

National Commission on Vision and Health  
1505 Prince Street, Suite 300  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
(800) 365-2219 X 4284 #