

Observation of Possible Vision Problems

Children may experience the following signs of a possible vision problem; however, they may not feel discomfort or complain about visual difficulties associated with some of the following signs. Parents and classroom teachers may detect various signs or note comments from a child to indicate a possible problem when children do express discomfort or difficulty.

Children who exhibit the following signs or behaviors should be evaluated by an eye care professional or primary care physician. Continue to screen the child's vision, whether or not the child exhibits any of the following signs. The child should be referred to an eye care professional or primary care provider, even if the child passes vision screening.

Appearance Signs

- Crossed eye or "wall" eye (eye turning in, out, up or down). Eye turn may be continuous or intermittent, particularly when the child is tired.
- Continually watering eyes.
- Red-rimmed, encrusted, or swollen eyelids.
- Cloudiness/haze.
- Unequal pupil size.
- Drooping eyelid(s). Ptosis, commonly called drooping eyelid, is observed as the sagging of an upper eyelid to touch or partially cover the pupil of the eye.
- Sties or infections on eyelids.
- Presence of white pupil. This can be associated with a rare but serious eye disease. The white pupil may be observed when looking directly at the individual's eyes, or in his or her photograph.
- Possible eye injury. Watch for eyes that are reddened, bloodshot, blackened, bruised or swollen, or show evidence of lacerations or abrasions.

Behavior Signs

- Body rigid when looking at distant objects.
- Clumsiness or decreased coordination.
- Thrusting head forward or backward while looking at distant objects.
- Tilting head to one side most of the time.
- Squinting or frowning when trying to focus.
- Excessive blinking.
- Closing or covering one eye while doing near work.

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Complaint Signs

- Headaches, nausea, or dizziness.
- Blurred or double vision.
- Burning, scratchy, or itchy eyes.
- Sees blur when looking up after close work or when looking at whiteboard.
- Unusual sensitivity to light.

Prevent Blindness. (2015). *Prevent Blindness position statement on school-aged vision screening and eye health programs*. Retrieved from <https://nationalcenter.preventblindness.org/sites/default/files/georgia/documents/Prevent%20Blindness%20Statements%20on%20School-aged%20Vision%20Screening%20%20Approved%208-2015.pdf>