

How to make sure your child isn't the 1 in 4 with an undetected vision issue



It's hard to imagine that newborn babies can only see about 8-12 inches away, with anything beyond all a blur.^[1] It's even harder to imagine just how crucial a strong visual system is for a child's overall development, with 80% of learning in the first 12 years coming through the eyes.^[2]

With such a huge window of opportunity, parents and caregivers alike can take advantage of toys and play to help stimulate and sharpen a child's vision.

Here are activities for 3 different age stages you can try with your child:

Babies

When a baby is able to safely sit on his or her own, a simple game of roll-the-ball can help stimulate depth perception and eye movement/tracking. Be sure to choose a soft ball (preferably with high contrast) and start close, slowly working your way further back from the child. While the goal here is to stimulate a baby's sense of sight, keep in mind this time is a treasure trove for verbal and social development, too. Describe what you are doing at all times and reinforce turn-taking skills.

For younger babies, brightly colored mobiles will fit the bill.

Toddlers & preschoolers

Now poised to interact at a more complex level, try engaging your toddler with age-appropriate puzzles or parquetry blocks (brightly colored geometric shapes) to learn spatial awareness and appreciate figure-ground relationships. That's the ability to focus on 1 specific piece of information in a busy background (think I Spy).

School-age kids



Swap out the tablet for activities such as connect the dots, fill in the dots, mazes or tracing, which can enhance fine motor skills, eye-hand coordination and eye movement/tracking skills. To get started, check out this [special back-to-school guide](#) chock-full of fun vision games and info from our friends at Pearle Vision, who have been caring for members of the community – including kids – since 1961. Play fun vision games alongside of Iris and Lash, Pearle Vision's Eye Squad that is helping keep kids eyes healthy and strong.

Staying up-to-date with eye exams can help ensure your child isn't the 1 in every 4 school-age kids who has an undetected vision problem.^[3] And be certain to opt for a comprehensive eye exam, which can uncover issues like farsightedness and eye coordination that would likely be missed during a basic school screening.^[4] [Find an eye doctor](#) near you today.

[1] "Your newborn's hearing, vision, and other senses," Nemours KidsHealth, 2022, <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/senseneewborn.html>.

[2] "Can vision therapy help with learning problems?" Optometrists Network, Sept 2021, <https://www.optometrists.org/vision-therapy/guide-vision-and-learning-difficulties/can-vision-therapy-help-with-learning-problems/>.

[3] "Keep an eye on your child's vision," CDC, May 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/resources/features/vision-health-children.html>.

[4] "Your child's eye exam: what to expect," WebMD, Dec 2020, <https://www.webmd.com/eye-health/child-eye-exam>.

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