

VISION AND VISUAL PROCESSING

Presentation for:
Irvine Unified School District
Special Education
Community Advisory Committee
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KNOWN VISION STATUS

Wears glasses or contact lenses

- For distance
- For near
- For astigmatism
- For combination of above

Has known vision condition

- Strabismus and/or amblyopia
- Vision impairment
- May have had eye surgery, eye patching, and or other medical interventions for various reasons
- Screening at school or elsewhere has identified a possible vision problem

APPEARANCE OF EYES AND COMPLAINTS PERTAINING TO EYES

Appearance of Eyes:

- One eye turns in or out at any time
- Eyes or eyelids are red
- Eyes tear excessively or have discharge
- Eyelids are encrusted
- Frequent styes or other noticeable eyelid concerns

Common Complaints:

- Headaches in forehead or temples
- Burning or itching, especially after reading or desk work
- Nausea or dizziness
- Print blurs after reading a short time
- Sensitivity to light indoors or outside
- Cannot see the board or other distant targets
- Has difficulty seeing near material clearly

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF VISUAL PROBLEMS #1

Eye Movement Abilities (Ocular Motility):

- Head turns as reads across page
- Loses place often during reading
- Needs finger or marker to keep place
- Displays short attention span in reading or copying
- Too frequently omits words
- Repeatedly omits "small" words
- Writes up or down hill on paper
- Rereads or skips lines unknowingly
- Orients drawings poorly on page

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF VISUAL PROBLEMS #2

Eye Teaming Abilities (Binocularity):

- Complains of seeing double (diplopia)
- Repeats letters within words
- Omits letters, numbers, or phrases
- Misaligns digits in number columns
- Squints, closes, or covers one eye
- Tilts head extremely while working at desk
- Consistently shows gross postural deviations at all desk activities

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF VISUAL PROBLEMS #3

Eye-Hand Coordination Abilities:

- Must feel things to assist in any interpretation required
- Eyes not used to "steer" hand movements (extreme lack of orientation, placement of words or drawings on page)
- Writes crookedly, poorly spaced, even when writing on ruled lines
- Misaligns both horizontal and vertical series of numbers
- Uses other hand as "spacer" to control spacing and alignment on page
- Repeatedly confuses left-right directions
- Difficulty in other fine motor skills related to classroom activities (such as cutting, drawing, other art activities, manipulating small objects such as puzzle pieces or pegs in peg boards)

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF VISUAL PROBLEMS #4

Refractive Status (Nearsighted, Farsighted, Astigmatism) and Focusing Problems:

- Comprehension reduces as reading continued; loses interest too quickly
- Mispronounces similar words as continues reading
- Blinks excessively at desk tasks and/or reading; not elsewhere
- Holds books too closely; face too close to desk surface
- Avoids all possible near-centered tasks
- Complains of discomfort in tasks that demand visual interpretation
- Closes or covers one eye when reading or doing near work
- Makes errors in copying from chalkboard or other location (possibly at top of desk) to paper on desk
- Squints to see chalkboard or requests to move nearer
- Rubs eyes during or after short periods of visual activity
- Fatigues easily; blinks to make chalkboard clear up after desk task

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF VISUAL PROBLEMS #5

Visual Form Perception (Visual Comparison, Visual Imagery, Visualization):

- Mistakes words with same or similar beginnings
- Fails to recognize same word in next sentence
- Reverses letters and/or words in writing and copying
- Confuses likenesses and minor differences
- Confuses same word in sentences
- Repeatedly confuses similar beginnings and endings of words
- Fails to visualize what is read either silently or orally
- Whispers to self for reinforcement while reading silently
- Returns to "drawing with fingers" to decide similarities and differences

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN WHEN VISION PROBLEMS ARE SUSPECTED

All children are supposed to be screened for obvious visual impairment within the first year of life, often at birth or at the first well-baby check.

Parents should ask pediatricians at all check-ups to test vision.

The younger a child's vision problem is detected the better chance there is for remediating it. A visit to an eye doctor who specializes in children should be considered at an early age.

If a child fails a school vision screening a visit to the eye doctor is necessary.

Discuss any other vision concerns with your child's teacher and/or school nurse. There may be things that the school can do to help your child.