

Children's Vision

Children need good quality vision, well balance ocular-motor control and cognitive recognition of symbols as well as awareness of their surrounds in order to read and comprehend written text. When a teacher, doctor, or friend recommends to a parent the need for an Eye Test by a Behavioural Optometrist they are seeking a deeper understanding of vision than just reading a letter on an eyechart. As Optometrists who are experienced in children's vision, specifically related to developmental/behavioural aspects of children's vision we look to evaluate and enhance your child's visual efficiency and visual information processing.

The Three Key Areas of Vision

1) Eye Health and Visual Acuity.

Your eye health always comes first. Eye diseases can occur at any age, although less commonly in children, eye disease needs to be ruled out as part of the assessment of vision and visual function. Visual acuity can be affected by refractive errors such as Myopia, Hypermetropia and Astigmatism, and when required these conditions can be treated with spectacles and/or contact lenses or orthokeratology.

2) Visual Efficiency – Stress free comfortable clear vision.

Variable blurred vision, poor focussing skills and an imbalanced to ocular coordination are common problems in children. These can be a barrier to learning. Children can develop focussing problems before and after they have learnt to read and these can have a major impact on learning to read and subsequently comprehension, concentration and reading stamina. Refractive correction through glasses or contact lenses and eye exercises help children maintain clear and comfortable vision. Reducing stress on the visual system allows your child to concentrate on learning and being able to enjoy reading. Treatment of minor focussing / eye co-ordination problems may also help reduce the risk of development of other visual disorders including myopia, amblyopia, and strabismus.

3) Visual Information Processing - Understanding and Acting on what we see

Learning difficulties can be assisted with reduced eye stress and improved visual acuity, but the subsequent visual processing can still require refinement particularly if your child is having learning difficulties. Information processing requires the ability to perform visual sequencing, visual spatial organisation, reading eye movements and visual motor integration as well as to think visually. Vision therapy can help develop and integrate these skills, so that your child becomes more visually ready to learn. Language, auditory and sensory/motor integration difficulties are often associated with visual processing difficulties. Some of our testing is used to determine if these are present. If we or you notice such concerns, we may require assistance from other appropriate allied health professionals and we happily provide information and referral to: Occupational Therapists; Speech Therapists; Chiropractors; Audiologists and Kinesiologists.