



Eye See...Eye Learn™

an MAO children's vision program

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Starting school is an exciting time for kids. Ensure your child isn't hindered in learning, play or how they look at the world. Please make an eye exam a regular part of your child's overall health care.

Surprisingly, one in four children entering school has a vision disorder. Many of these children accept poor vision and other eye problems because they are unaware that their vision is not the same as that of other children. If left unchecked, serious long-term effects can result.

Since 80% of a child's learning is based on vision, excellent sight and eye health are critical to doing well in school.

The Manitoba Association of Optometrists is part of a national vision program ***Eye See...Eye Learn™***. The Association is working to get the message out to parents that ALL children should have a thorough eye examination by an optometrist before they enter school. Eye exams are covered by Manitoba Health for children and youth under 19 years of age!

With generous support of our sponsors, Modern Optical and OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation, The Manitoba Association of Optometrists (MAO), is pleased to offer the **Eye See... Eye Learn™ Kindergarten First Pair Free Program**. Manitoba kindergarten children – turning five during the calendar year they begin kindergarten- are eligible for one free pair of glasses. Children are eligible from January 1 of the year they begin kindergarten through to June 30 of the following year.

To locate an optometrist near you close to you, go to the MAO website at www.optometrists.mb.ca and select *Find an Optometrist*. You can also search the website for a list of First Pair Free Participating Practices.

Sincerely,

Your Manitoba Optometrists

An important message for parents of children entering the school system:

Vision directly affects how a child learns.

80% of a child's learning is based on vision.

One in five children entering school has a vision disorder.

Reading, learning and behavior problems can be related to undetected vision problems.

Why are kids not getting an eye exam?

Parents may think their children's vision is OK if they don't complain, or if they've successfully completed a vision screening. However, screenings are limited – they do not assess near vision ability, eye health, and how well the eyes work together as a team.

Our school and healthcare systems don't insist children have an eye exam, but they should. In some jurisdictions, eye exams before school entry are mandatory.

Parents might assume that if they have good eyes, their children must too. It doesn't always work that way. Why not book an eye exam and be sure?

Why not wait until my child is a little older?

The wiring between the eyes and the brain develops in the first 5 years of life. If a child has an eye problem, it will respond best if treated when young. Some eye problems can't be corrected as well if you wait until age 8 or 10. Eye exams are child friendly – your child does not need to know his/her alphabet in order to have an accurate exam. Most three year old children can complete a thorough eye exam easily! **Book an appointment before your child starts school. To find an optometrist near you, go to www.optometrists.mb.ca and select *Find an Optometrist*, or call the Manitoba Association of Optometrists at 204-943-9811.**

