



## Wisconsin's Children's Vision Law Attention Parents!

*80% of all learning during a child's first 12 years of life is obtained through vision.*  
–Vision Council of America

*Vision disorders are the fourth most common disability in the United States and the most prevalent handicapping condition in childhood.*  
–Preschool Children's Vision Screening Study Group

*8 to 12 million school age children are at risk from undetected vision impairments.*  
–National Eye Institute

Dear Wisconsin Parent,

Your child's ability to see clearly in school will have an enormous impact on their ability to learn. As a parent, you can ensure your child's academic performance is maximized from the beginning of their educational career by scheduling your child for a comprehensive eye health exam by an eye doctor. Please remember, vision screenings which are offered in many communities and in many schools are not enough. Although helpful, they DO NOT detect eye disease or more complicated vision disorders in your children. Wisconsin optometrists believe undiagnosed and untreated vision and eye health problems represent one of the most serious, yet overlooked, health issues facing our nation's children.

It is because of this threat to our children's health and academic futures that Wisconsin optometrists have partnered with parents, school district administrators, school nurses and other health providers to encourage students to receive the eye health and vision care they need. This partnership, known as the "Clear Vision, Bright Future" initiative, provides the opportunity not only to enhance the academic future of your child, but also to provide a strong foundation for those who may be at-risk for visual learning problems.

Please do not assume that your child has healthy eyes and can see clearly in school just because they don't say anything to you. That assumption could risk your child's future eye health and school achievement. Don't wait for signs of struggle to emerge; be proactive and have their eyes examined today.

### **Tips for parents scheduling comprehensive eye exams for their children:**

1. Schedule the exam early in the day, at least 3-4 months before school starts
2. Let your child know that there won't be any shots or pain involved
3. Make a game of it; practice looking at pictures and making it fun

### **Wisconsin Law**

Current Wisconsin law (Chapter 118.135) states that all Wisconsin Public School Districts are required to request that parents of Kindergarten children have their child's eyes examined by an optometrist or evaluated by a physician. Each school board or charter school shall provide pupils with the form distributed by the department of regulation and licensing for that purpose.

### **Financial Assistance for Eye Exams**

Many families in Wisconsin do not have insurance coverage for their children's eye exams, and cannot afford such care. Member doctors of the Wisconsin Optometric Association (WOA) provide at no charge eye examinations for children who meet certain financial criteria. **Please contact VISION USA at (877) 435-2020 or for more information or to request an application.**

Thank you!

Sincerely,  
Dr. Jeff Sarazen  
President, Wisconsin Optometric Association