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August-children's Eye Health and Safety Month

Center for Persons With Disabilities

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August is a month where eye-damaging UV rays are still strong and school is just around the corner – the perfect time for Children's Eye Health and Safety Month.

Research tells us that over 100,000 sports eye injuries occur each year, with children making up nearly half of the cases. Children account for a third of all eye traumas requiring hospitalization according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In addition, eye injuries are the leading cause of blindness in children in the United States.

Proper vision screenings and examinations are essential for early detection and intervention of vision problems in children. More than 12.1 million school-age children have some form of vision problem, yet only one in three children in America have received eye care services before the age of six.

The National Eye Institute reports that the most prevalent and significant vision disorders of preschool children are amblyopia (lazy eye), strabismus (crossed eyes), and significant refractive error – each of which can be identified and addressed early if children are screened for possible problems and receive adequate follow-up vision care. Undetected vision problems can affect a child's physical ability, readiness to learn, and self-esteem, all important ingredients for success in school.

If you notice the following problems with your child, see a doctor right away:

- Frequent eye rubbing or blinking
- Frequent headaches
- Covering one eye
- Short attention span
- Avoiding reading assignments or holding reading materials close to the face
- An eye turning in or out
- Seeing double
- Losing his or her place when reading
- Difficulty with reading retention

Make your children's vision a top priority this month.