

Back to school children's eye care campaign

Up to a million children under 12 will start school in September with undetected vision problems that can interfere with their learning.

Optometrists and opticians will be running a back to school awareness campaign this year to promote the message that **all pre-school children should have their eyes tested**.

Building on the success of the Transitions Eye Know Eye Care campaign highlighting the importance of children's eye care, a wide-ranging group from across the profession, representing organisations, employers and manufacturers, will be implementing a series of initiatives aimed at **parents, teachers and school governors**.

We aim to increase awareness of the need for children to have their eyes checked and to highlight the fact that vision screening in schools is no longer carried out in all parts of the country. We want parents and teachers to know that good eyesight is vital in the development and learning ability of every child and that NHS-funded eye examinations are available for all children at their community optometry practice.

Help us to spread the message

We will be producing a variety of resources to help highlight the issue:

- **A new leaflet** explaining the importance of children's eye care for all practices and eye care professionals to use
- **A children's eye care video** highlighting the importance of children's eye examinations aimed at parents and teachers
- **Further training for optometrists** to update them on techniques and equipment to examine children's eyes, as well as lobbying for optometrists to be included in the referral pathway for any child who fails an orthoptist-led vision screening

We are encouraging all optometrists and opticians to offer children's eye care in practice and to become actively involved in promoting this service.



www.eyeknoweyecare.com

Further updates will be available soon on the Association of Optometrists (AOP) website (www.aop.org.uk) and in future editions of *Optometry Today*. For information, ideas or advice on this campaign, please contact Anne Grenyer, AOP PR Manager, on 020 7401 5316 or annegrenyer@aop.org.uk