



Lions Screen Kids Sight

Program Background

Why Vision Screening

Read On Arizona is a state-wide initiative with the goal that 100% of third graders be proficient readers. This is a critical goal because studies show that third grade reading proficiency is a strong predictor of a child's future academic performance throughout high school and the likelihood of attending college. We are currently far from this goal as only 28% of students entering the 4th grade in Arizona are proficient readers and 40% have not achieved even basic proficiency (2013 data).

Arizona Reads Now is a local initiative in Yavapai County with the goal to improve literacy rates for students from pre-kindergarten through third grade. Analysis of data from this program has revealed that a significant barrier to reading at grade level is unidentified vision impairment. Studies show that undetected and untreated childhood vision disorders can result in delayed reading and poorer outcomes in school. Other studies have confirmed that approximately one in four school-age children have vision problems.

And, children rarely complain about vision problems. They believe everyone sees the world the way they do. According to Eyes on Learning Vision Coalition, 80% of children's learning is through their eyes. Thus, the detection and correction of unidentified vision impairments is a necessary component in a comprehensive strategy to improve reading proficiency.

Photoscreening

The most effective vision screening methods for the grade range preK-4 utilize advanced vision screeners, also termed photoscreeners. In a study done by Silbert, Matta and Brubaker to determine the reliability of visual acuity screening performed by a lay screener, compared to a photoscreener operated by a lay screener, the results were dramatic. The conclusions of this study stated that the results from the photoscreener for ages 3-10 were significantly more reliable than the results from the acuity testing. And, the following organizations have published peer-reviewed papers in support of vision screening of children utilizing photoscreeners: National Institutes of Health, American Academy of Optometry, American Academy of Ophthalmology, and American Academy of Pediatrics.

Photoscreeners can identify the risk factors for Amblyopia (Lazy Eye), which are not easily detectable by traditional vision screening techniques for younger children. The most common cause of vision loss in one eye for adults 20 - 70 years of age is untreated childhood amblyopia. Photoscreeners offer the additional advantage that they do not require the continued cooperation of the child being screened because the test takes only a few seconds. Thus vision screening a school population with photoscreeners can take significantly less time than vision acuity screening using eye charts for younger children. The Lions Screen Kids Sight vision screening program will use a photoscreener from Welch Allyn called the Spot Vision Screener.

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