STURGEON VISION CENTRE

VISION CARE FOR THE YOUNG

Vision problems may occur at any age. However, when children have vision problems it's not always noticeable. They don't necessarily realize that there's something wrong until they go for an eye exam. To illustrate this, follow Jennifer and Ben's experience with their first eye exams.

Sylvia, Jennifer and Ben's mom, was surprised to hear that Jennifer should have her eyes checked before she starts kindergarten in September. So, Sylvia decided to book both of her children to see her optometrist, and she was relieved to hear that both appointments would be entirely covered by Alberta Health Care.

Ben was first and had no problems with the tests; he could even read the bottom line of the chart with both eyes. Even though his eyes were healthy, the optometrist spoke with Sylvia about the importance of UV protection with either sunglasses or a hat. The optometrist also made recommendations for limiting the children's screen time and discussed blue light concerns from digital devices.

When Jennifer completed all her tests, they discovered only one of her eyes could read the bottom line of the chart, while the other eye could only see the large letters. She was diagnosed with amblyopia or 'lazy eye.' Sylvia was shocked at the news, but the optometrist reassured her that this condition is difficult to spot for parents. She was prescribed glasses to even out her vision and to allow her brain to use the images from both eyes. She would also be monitored closely to make sure her

vision improves; if it doesn't improve, she may need to patch the good eye in order to strengthen the weak one. Luckily, the problem was caught early. If she had been diagnosed after the age of eight, the treatment may not be as successful. Sylvia was relieved to hear that since Jennifer was in kindergarten she would receive one free pair of glasses thanks to the *Eye See…Eye Learn Program* that's offered in Alberta.

At Sturgeon Vision Centre, we ensure that your child's vision care is comprehensive, and that we thoroughly answer all of your questions. Vision is precious, and for children, catching vision problems early is extremely important, which is why they should have annual eye exams. We would love to be the optometrists for your family, and we look forward to seeing you.

STURGEON VISION CENTRE
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Alberta Health Care and Children

Annual eye exams for all children in the province are covered by the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan until the age of 19. For more details, visit www.health.alberta.ca/health-info/growing-healthy.html

Eye See…Eye Learn

This is a program for kindergarten-aged children. Any child who has a comprehensive eye exam by a doctor of optometry and requires eye glasses will be provided with a free pair. For more details, check out www.optometrists.ab.ca/@/AAO/ESEL

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