



**HOW  
DOES  
YOUR  
CHILD  
KNOW  
THIS  
ISN'T  
NORMAL?**

**A sight test helps your  
child achieve their best**

**Book an appointment today**



Association of  
Optometrists

[www.aop.org.uk/absee](http://www.aop.org.uk/absee)

# 5 WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN'S EYES



## 1 Spend time outdoors

Playing or exercising outside regularly can help to protect a child's eyesight by reducing the chance they will become short-sighted. Studies have shown that fewer children wear glasses in countries where outdoor time makes up a significant part of each day, while the number of glasses wearers increases in nations with a greater focus on indoor study and recreation.



For example, 60% of eight to 12-year-olds in Singapore are short-sighted, compared with only 14% of Australian children in the same age group. Studies suggest that around two hours of outdoor time each day is ideal to help protect the vision of children.

## 2 Put digital screens away at bedtime

Using mobile phones or tablet devices directly before going to bed can interfere with sleep. For this reason, it is a good idea to switch off devices an hour before turning in for the night. Night settings, which reduce the amount of blue light given out by devices during evening hours, may also help children to get a good night's rest.



## 3 Protect eyes from the sun

Children should be encouraged never to look directly at the sun. Sunglasses help to protect a child's eyes by blocking out harmful UV rays. It is important to select a pair of sunglasses that are good quality – parents can look out for the CE quality mark and the British Standard BS EN 1836:2005.



## 4 Eat a healthy diet

Eating five portions of fruit and vegetables each day can help to protect vision as well as supporting overall health. Vitamins found in oily fish and green, leafy vegetables help to keep eyes healthy.



## 5 Book a sight test

All children under the age of 16 are entitled to an NHS-funded sight test and financial help towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses. Children should be seen by an optometrist around the age of three, so that any visual problems are picked up and treated early. After this, it is a good idea to take them for a sight test every two years, or as often as is recommended by the optometrist.



## Want to learn more?

The Association of Optometrists has produced a suite of patient-friendly leaflets on a range of eye conditions. Free to download, visit [www.aop.org.uk/patients](http://www.aop.org.uk/patients)

**Three**  
is a good age for regular sight tests to begin