

Child Classroom and Home Misbehaviors That May be Related to Vision

“Our story is about ‘Amelia’, who seemed sort of spacey, as if she were in her own little world, usually a step behind the other students. She would often interrupt story time to come forward and peer at the pictures in the book. Her very astute teacher recommended that she be one of the first to participate in vision screening. And her teacher’s instincts were quickly proven correct! Poor Amelia couldn’t even see the practice panels with both eyes!

Amelia’s mother immediately made an eye appointment and by the following week, Amelia was proudly wearing a new pair of glasses!

The cutest moment was when she and a friend were walking hand-in-hand around the playground. He was pointing out different things to her, and she would excitedly exclaim “I can see that now!” Amelia is now very aware and an active participant of everything that is happening in the classroom and will truly be ready for kindergarten!”

Head Start, Monongalia County, West Virginia

This Mom had concerns about the vision of her younger son and took him to a community health fair for vision screening, thinking if he failed the vision screen, she would schedule an eye exam. He failed his vision screening. A subsequent eye exam indicated that he required prescription glasses.

Those glasses have made an incredible difference for her son. Previously, she experienced difficulty trying to read to him because he would not sit still. Now, he sits in her lap while she reads a book from start to finish.

Previously he would run around the room instead of watching TV with his brother. Now, he watches cartoons with his brother without running around the room.

At age 4, he is achieving greater success at his daycare. Before the vision screening and eye glasses, he was “up and moving” during circle time. “He was kind of a loner before. He would get bored.” Now he sits and participates in group activities.

Parent, Preston County, West Virginia

“After he received his glasses, he was like a different child. He seemed happier and less frustrated. Before his glasses, he would become frustrated trying to write his letters or draw. Now he likes to work on his letters.”

The child shared that, before glasses, “things looked dusty”.

Parent and Son, Marion County

“At XXXX Collaborative Preschool all the preschool children were vision screened mid-September. ‘Sally’ failed the screening with her left eye. Her mother called me to see if she should make an appointment with the doctor. I explained that this was a screening and that the children were still new in school. I would be rescreening in mid-October to see how they do.

When ‘Sally’ was rescreened, she again failed with her left eye. Being concerned, ‘Sally’s’ mom immediately made an appointment for a full eye exam.

‘Sally’ returned to school with glasses to correct her vision and has done very well wearing them. ‘Sally’ does not have to squint when she is in circle and they are doing activities such as calendar time or weather chart. She wears them for class work and takes them off and stores them in her cute little pink case for recess, gym, and naps.”
Head Start, Marion County, West Virginia

“I remember clearly one of the first vision screenings I completed. It was on a little girl who we had already realized was very clumsy. When I did the screening and she was referred I had no idea how that would affect her. She was prescribed very strong lenses and we immediately realized that her vision was the reason for her clumsiness. I have realized through these screenings that vision can affect a child's behavior, balance and academic performance.”

Head Start, Nicholas County, West Virginia

Take-Home Message

- Problems in circle time?
- **Clumsy?**
- **Loner?**
 - Consider vision problem as a potential causal factor
 - **Screen vision**
 - Encourage parent to arrange and attend an eye exam when their children do not pass vision screening