

# What is Eye See ... Eye Learn<sup>®</sup>?

Info Sheet for Parents/Guardians

Eye See ... Eye Learn<sup>®</sup> (ESEL) is a children's vision program created by the BC Doctors of Optometry (BCDO). The mission of ESEL is to detect, diagnose, and treat kindergarten children with vision problems so that every child in kindergarten can see and learn to the best of their ability.



ESEL provides kindergarten students from a participating school district with a comprehensive eye exam from a participating B.C. doctor of optometry at no cost to the family. If needed, kindergarten students will receive one pair of eyeglasses free of charge.

## Why Participate in ESEL?

### Good Vision = Better Learning

Each year, many children start school without ever having an eye exam, even though 80% of a child's learning is based on vision<sup>1</sup>. Children who are unable to see the board, focus on a picture, or follow words in a book may struggle to achieve their full learning potential.

For children, several different visual skills must work together so they can see and understand clearly. If any of these visual skills are lacking or impaired, a child may need to work harder and develop headaches or fatigue. A child may not realize they have a vision problem, they may simply assume everyone sees the way they do.

### The Need for Comprehensive Eye Exams

While vision screening is available for kindergarten children in B.C., they are not a substitute for a comprehensive eye exam. Vision screening only involves a limited number of simple tests that

cannot detect all eye problems. Undetected vision problems can lead to: frustration with learning, learning at a slower rate than other children, behavioural or discipline problems, or negative self-image.

### Facts about Children's Vision

Did you know that...?

- Almost 25% of school-age children have vision problems<sup>2</sup>?
- Children rarely complain of vision problems since they don't realize that they see the world differently from others?
- Vision problems are often mistaken as other developmental problems like dyslexia or ADHD?
- Vision screenings are only able to detect a small percentage of those children needing professional vision care?

# Participating in Eye See ... Eye Learn®

## Is My Child Eligible for ESEL?

Is your child...?

- Enrolled in kindergarten during the eligible year?
- Enrolled in a participating school district?  
To see a list of the participating school districts in B.C., visit: [www.bcesel.ca](http://www.bcesel.ca)

If so, your child is eligible for ESEL!

## How Can I Participate in ESEL?

It's simple!

- 1. Check above to find out your eligibility**
- 2. Book an appointment with an ESEL clinic**  
To find an ESEL clinic, visit [www.bcesel.ca](http://www.bcesel.ca) and use our 'Find A Doctor' tool. Make sure you select 'Eye See ... Eye Learn®' under 'Programs'.
- 3. Fill in the ESEL Participation Form and bring it to your appointment**  
Parents/Guardians of kindergarten children can either fill in the ESEL Participation Form or bring relevant documentation that the child is enrolled in kindergarten.

## How Long Does ESEL Run For?

ESEL runs alongside the school calendar, though the program is available for one full year. The official start date of the program is on September 1 and the end date is on August 31 of the following year. For example, the 2018/2019 program will run from September 1, 2018 until August 31, 2019.

## Learn More

Visit [www.bcesel.ca](http://www.bcesel.ca) or contact BC Doctors of Optometry at [esel@optometrists.bc.ca](mailto:esel@optometrists.bc.ca)



ESEL PARTNERS



References: 1. Joel Zaba, Children's Vision Care in the 21st Century and its Impact on Education, Literacy, Social Issues, and the Workplace (2011). 22 JBO 39. 2. NCVH, *Vision Loss in Canada* (2011)

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