



Eye issues aren't always obvious

The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) urges regular comprehensive eye exams for children with a new awareness campaign.

Ottawa, October 1, 2025 – As we celebrate Children's Vision Month in October, the CAO is launching a new digital awareness campaign to address children's vision care and the rising epidemic of myopia. Raising public awareness about the importance of regular eye exams for early detection remains crucial to improving eye care outcomes for Canadians, from toddlers to seniors. Unfortunately, eye health often doesn't receive the same level of attention as other routine health care.

"Many parents assume they would know if their child was struggling to see, and children with vision problems are generally unaware of their condition because they assume everyone sees the way they do", says Dr. Allison Scott, CAO President. "Parents are often surprised when optometrists diagnose their child with an ocular issue. Reassuring them, explaining that these things aren't always obvious, leads to a better understanding of the importance of regular comprehensive eye exams".

CAO's new campaign aims to boost public awareness about children's vision care through a simple yet potent message: Eye issues aren't always obvious. It will run throughout October on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Pinterest, and Spotify in English and French, and is supported by [New Brunswick Association of Optometrists](#), [Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Optometrists](#), [Nova Scotia Association of Optometrists](#), and [The Prince Edward Island Association of Optometrists](#), and industry sponsors - [Alcon](#) and [CooperVision](#).

It is never too soon to see an optometrist

As a child grows, so do their eyes, and eye conditions can develop quickly. Optometrists frequently encounter 'invisible' eye issues especially myopia or nearsightedness – an increasingly common eye disease among children.

This is why the CAO recommends that parents schedule comprehensive eye exams for their children starting at six to nine months, then again between the ages of two and five years, and annually thereafter to age 19. After 19, eye development stabilizes, allowing eye exams every two years for healthy adults with no known eye conditions.

Eye exams are crucial, even if no symptoms are evident, to catch potential issues early and ensure timely intervention.



Fighting Myopia, one of the leading causes of vision loss in the world¹

Detecting myopia early on means taking measures right away to halt or slow the progression. People with myopia will have trouble seeing distant objects, such as road signs, whiteboards, movie screens and TVs. Myopia has both a genetic and environmental component, including increased near work and screen time among children.

Research shows that myopia is occurring at earlier ages starting in childhood (6-7 years of age) and progressing at a more rapid rate than in previous generations. This is concerning, given that high levels of myopia can lead to sight-threatening conditions, including retinal detachments, cataracts, glaucoma, and myopic maculopathy. By 2050, the prevalence of myopia is estimated to increase to 50% of the world's population².

"We know that clear vision is the cornerstone of a child's ability to learn, grow, and build confidence," according to Vanessa Johari Hansen, Country Business Unit Head, Vision Care, at Alcon Canada. "Alcon is proud to support the Canadian Association of Optometrists' campaign, empowering families to prioritize regular comprehensive eye exams, so children can See Brilliantly and Learn Brilliantly."

Focusing on prevention, early detection and timely treatment of vision problems set the foundation for lifelong eye health, and beyond.

"Myopia can significantly impact a child's ability to engage fully in daily life, even in the short term. While correcting vision is important, it's only part of the solution. Myopia often progresses as children grow," said Enrique Contreras, Country Manager at CooperVision Canada. "As a global leader in myopia management for children, we are dedicated to offering innovative solutions designed to slow that progression, helping to reduce the risk of serious vision complications later in life."

Maintaining good habits beyond the optometrist's exam room will also help minimize the impact of myopia. Spending more time outdoors and limiting screen time are beneficial for healthy development, both for ocular health as well as overall health.

To find more about the CAO's new awareness campaign, please visit: <https://opto.ca/eye-issues-not-obvious>

¹ Bourne RR, Stevens GA, White RA, Smith JL, Flaxman SR, Price H, et al. Causes of vision loss worldwide, 1990-2010: a systematic analysis. *Lancet Glob Health*. 2013;1(6):e339-49.

² Holden BA, Fricke TR, Wilson DA, Jong M, Naidoo KS, Sankaridurg P, et al. Global Prevalence of Myopia and High Myopia and Temporal Trends from 2000 through 2050. *Ophthalmology*. 2016;123(5):1036-42.



About the Canadian Association of Optometrists

The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) is the national voice of optometry. Optometrists are independent primary health care providers and represent the front line of vision health. Optometrists practice in a range of settings: most work in private practice, others work in clinics, hospitals, community health centres, corporate optometry, research, teaching, and administration. Recognized at home and internationally as a leading advocate for the profession, CAO provides leadership and support to its +8,400 members (Optometrists, Students, and Optometric Assistants) to enhance the delivery of healthy eyes and clear vision for all Canadians. For more information, visit www.opto.ca

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About Alcon

Alcon helps people see brilliantly. As the global leader in eye care with a heritage spanning over 75 years, we offer the broadest portfolio of products to enhance sight and improve people's lives. Our Surgical and Vision Care products touch the lives of more than 260 million people in over 140 countries each year living with conditions like cataracts, glaucoma, retinal diseases and refractive errors. Our more than 25,000 associates are enhancing the quality of life through innovative products, partnerships with Eye Care Professionals and programs that advance access to quality eye care. Learn more at www.alcon.ca.

About CooperVision

CooperVision, a division of CooperCompanies (NYSE:COO), is one of the world's leading manufacturers of contact lenses. The company produces a full array of daily disposable, two-week and monthly soft contact lenses that feature advanced materials and optics, and premium rigid gas permeable lenses for orthokeratology and scleral designs. CooperVision has a strong heritage of addressing the toughest vision challenges such as astigmatism, presbyopia, childhood myopia, and highly irregular corneas; and offers the most complete portfolio of spherical, toric, and multifocal products available. Through a combination of innovative products and focused practitioner support, the company brings a refreshing perspective to the marketplace, creating real advantages for customers and wearers. For more information, visit <https://coopervision.ca>.