



The Cost of Children's Vision Loss

Ottawa, ON (October 27, 2015) - Better eye health for children hinges on increased awareness. Despite Canada's wealth and robust health care system, it is estimated that nearly 25% of school-age children have vision problems. Many preschool and school-age children are not receiving adequate professional eye care. This is why on October 28th, the Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) will be on Parliament Hill meeting with Members of Parliament and senators.

"One of the challenges we face is that many parents assume they would know if there was a problem, in many cases that simply isn't true," said Dr. Paul Geneau, CAO President. "Children are highly adaptive and they assume that everyone sees the way they do. Even if the problem is impacting the way they see, they may not indicate any issues", he added.

It has been estimated that only 14% of children under 6 years of age receive professional eye care. The early detection and treatment of eye and vision problems should be a public health goal. Vision affects every aspect of a child's development, from gross and fine motor skills to language. It also impacts a child's learning, including reading, note taking, participation and paying attention in class. All of these things can have a tremendous impact on children's self-esteem. Frustration with learning, behavior and discipline problems can follow and eventually lead to school dropout. The cost of lost vision for children is high and can be long lasting.

During Children's Vision Month, CAO encourages parents to consider the cost of lost vision. Children should visit a doctor of optometry [regularly](#). Optometrists have the technology and education required to deliver a thorough eye exam. [In most provinces, this service is free.](#)

For more information on children's vision, see CAO's advocacy document, [Better Vision for Children](#).

About CAO: CAO represents doctors of optometry in Canada. It is our mission to enhance the quality, availability, and accessibility of eye, vision, and related health care; to enhance and promote the independent, and ethical decision-making of its members; and to assist doctors of optometry in practicing successfully in accordance with the highest standards of patient care.

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For more information or to arrange an interview with a doctor of optometry, please contact

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