A Look at Reading and Vision Pamphlet [C2]

Outside

If that occurs, the brain often subconsciously suppresses or inhibits the vision in one eye to avoid confusion. That eye may then develop poorer visual acuity (amblyopia or lazy eye).

Convergence

Convergence is the ability to turn the two eyes toward each other to look at a close object. School desk work is one instance in which a child depends on this visual skill.

Field of Vision

Field of vision is the wide area over which vision is possible. It is important that a child be aware of objects in the periphery (left and right sides and up and down) as well as in the center of the field of vision. Near central or para-central vision is important for reading ability.

Perception

Visual perception is the total process responsible for the reception and understanding of what is seen. Good visual perception is necessary for successful school achievement.

Form perception is the ability to organize and recognize visual images in specific shapes. The shapes the child encounters are remembered, defined, and recalled when development of reading skills is regular.

Regular ophthalmologists are aware that a child's skills necessary for reading performance.

Treating reading-related vision problems

The ophthalmologist examines these vision skills and determines how well the child is using them together. When a vision problem is diagnosed, he or she can prescribe glasses, vision therapy, or both.

Vision therapy has proved quite effective in treating reading-related vision problems. It involves an individual program of training procedures designed to help a child acquire or sharpen visual skills that are necessary for reading.

Treating reading problems

Because reading problems usually have multiple causes, treatment must often be multidisciplinary. Educators, psychologists, ophthalmologists, and other professionals must work together to meet each child's needs.

The ophthalmologist's role is to help the child overcome the vision problems interfering with the ability to read.

Once this is accomplished, the child is then more capable of using other vision skills to improve reading problems.

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Inside

Description:

For the patient, this pamphlet discusses the relationship between reading and vision and shows how vision skills like visual acuity, visual fixation, accommodation and many others can affect the ability to read.

Getting at the root of reading problems

When Michael or Jennifer has trouble reading, parents and teachers need to investigate many different possible causes.

Since a combination of problems, rather than just one, is usually at the root of a reading difficulty, all possible causes should be explored.

One that is often overlooked is the child's vision. This may happen because the child appears to be able to see, does not complain about his or her eyes, and passes a school vision screening or has not had a comprehensive eye examination.

To see to read

Reading requires the integration of a number of different vision skills: visual acuity, visual fixation, accommodation, binocular fusion, convergence, field of vision, and form perception. Of these, only one is checked by the typical school eye chart test.

Visual Fixation

Fixation is the skill utilized to aim the eyes accurately. Static fixation is the ability to focus on a stationary object when reading a word or working a math problem. Saccadic fixation is the ability to move the eyes quickly and accurately across a page to read a line of print.

Visual Acuity

Visual acuity is the ability to see objects clearly. It is usually the only skill checked in a school vision screening. The typical school eye chart is designed to be seen at 20 feet and measures how well or poorly the child sees at that distance.

If a problem is discovered in the screening, the child should be referred for a thorough ophthalmic examination.