

# SEE WHAT COULD BE®

## Student Health Education Program

Dear Parent or Guardian,

In just about every aspect of life, what we see determines what we do. Good eye health and optimal vision are critical factors to help our children perform better at school, at work, and at play. Uncorrected or insufficiently corrected vision should not be the reason our children don't feel confident about performing at their best.

Yet, while most Canadians visit their doctor annually and their dentist twice a year, research shows that many adults do not prioritize, for themselves or their children, two of their most vital body parts—their eyes.

Your child is learning about the importance of healthy vision and protecting their eyes through a free classroom program entitled **SEE WHAT COULD BE®** from ACUVUE® Brand Contact Lenses in partnership with curriculum specialist Young Minds Inspired (YMI). This letter provides you with information about some of the things being discussed in the classroom.

### Does My Child Need an Eye Exam?

In a recent survey<sup>1</sup> of more than 6,500 adults from the United States and 12 other countries around the world, only one-third of American parents/caregivers said that they have ever taken their child under 18 years of age for a comprehensive eye exam—an examination conducted in an office by an Eye Care Professional that checks not just for vision correction needs, but also for overall eye health.

In part, this is due to the fact that many people share the misguided belief that seeing well translates to good eye health. Many school vision screenings only test for distance visual acuity, so even if a child passes a vision screening, they should receive a comprehensive optometric examination.

Vision changes can occur without your child or you noticing them, so the earlier a vision problem is detected and treated, the more likely treatment will be successful. According to the Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO), teens should have their eyes examined every year unless their Eye Care Professional recommends more frequent exams. When needed, the Eye Care Professional can prescribe treatment to correct any vision problems, such as eyeglasses or contact lenses.



### Vision Correction Options

Both glasses and contact lenses are good options for people who need vision correction. For children in need of vision correction, contact lenses have become a popular and easy alternative to glasses. Many parents are not sure if contacts are a viable option for their child. However, a growing body of research in children's vision correction continues to demonstrate that contact lenses provide significant benefits to children beyond correcting their vision.

Studies have shown that children who wear contacts feel better about their physical appearance, athletic ability, and social acceptance compared with kids who wear glasses. These children also report greater comfort with peer perception and higher satisfaction when engaging in social activities. Contacts can even help to improve academic confidence, especially among children who are unhappy with their glasses and may not regularly wear them at school or to study. In particular, girls show an improved sense of self-confidence when they wear contacts instead of glasses.<sup>2</sup>

The **SEE WHAT COULD BE®** classroom program provides general information about contact lenses and some things for parents and teens to discuss together and with their Eye Care Professional to determine if a child is a good candidate for contacts. And, to encourage healthy habits, the program provides advice and resources on how to properly wear and care for contacts.

### Eye Safety

Healthy vision also means protecting your eyes. Each year, hospital emergency rooms treat more than 40,000 sports-related eye injuries. More than one-third of the victims are children. In fact, sports represent the number one cause of eye injuries in children under the age of 16. It is estimated that more than 90 percent of these injuries could be prevented simply by wearing proper helmets or goggles.<sup>3</sup>

We encourage you to talk with your child about the information he or she has learned in class that will help them develop healthy eye habits.

Sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup>Global Attitudes and Perceptions About Vision Care, THE VISION CARE INSTITUTE®, LLC, 2010, [www.thevisioncareinstitute.com/globalsurvey](http://www.thevisioncareinstitute.com/globalsurvey).

<sup>2</sup>Walline JJ, Jones LA, Sinnott L, et al; the ACHIEVE Study Group. Randomized trial of the effect of contact lens wear on self-perception in children. *Optom Vis Sci* 2009;86(3).

<sup>3</sup>Children's Eye Injuries: Prevention and Care, [www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/living/children-preventing-eye-injuries.cfm](http://www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/living/children-preventing-eye-injuries.cfm).