



# Eye on Health

## Vision Therapy Offers Hope For Many Children

(NAPSA)—Increasingly, treatment for a common vision problem is helping make achievers out of many young students who'd previously struggled in the classroom.

The problem, according to the College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD), is that many children have difficulty getting their eyes and brain to work together. Most often these problems are not related to how clearly they can see the board at the front of the classroom—20/20 visual acuity—but how effectively their eyes and brain can acquire and process what they are seeing.

Such learning-related vision problems cause children to struggle unnecessarily, and for many can result in their being mislabeled as learning disabled or having an Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Fortunately, effective treatment for these types of vision problems is available with vision therapy.

Vision therapy is an individually prescribed program of visually guided procedures or “exercises” used to change and improve how we see. Developmental optometrists use vision therapy and special lenses to train the eyes and brain to work together more effectively. Once the vision problem is corrected, the child becomes a more effective learner.

Often children will not mention specific difficulties they are having with their eyes or vision because they think the way they see is the same as everyone else. Limited school vision screenings or traditional testing for 20/20 visual acuity does not detect learning-related vision problems.

Here is a checklist of some of the common signs and symptoms parents and teachers should look for that may indicate the presence of a learning-related vision problem and the need for a thorough



**Even a child with 20/20 eyesight could have a learning-related vision problem.**

vision examination. Does the child:

- Have difficulty following a line of print in a book or on a computer screen?
- Have difficulty reading or doing homework for any length of time?
- Frequently lose his/her place while reading?
- Get headaches and pain in the eyes after reading for a short time?
- Get fidgety when doing close work?
- Close or rub one eye when reading?

“Even children with 20/20 eyesight can have these problems caused by the inability of the brain to adequately process the visual information the eyes are sending to it,” stated Dr. Leonard Press, President of COVD.

COVD has embarked upon a nationwide public education program to raise parent and teacher awareness of learning-related vision problems and their treatment and to provide resources for locating developmental optometrists for local evaluation and treatment. To learn more, visit [www.covd.org](http://www.covd.org).