



Vision Loss

What is vision Loss?

Vision loss means that a person's eyesight is not corrected to a "normal" level. Vision loss can vary greatly among children and can be caused by many things.

What Causes Vision Loss?

Vision loss can be caused by damage to the eye itself, by the eye being shaped incorrectly, or even by a problem in the brain.

When should my child be checked?

Your child should be checked for vision problems by an ophthalmologist, optometrist, pediatrician, or other trained specialist at:

- Newborn to 3 months
- 6months to 1 year
- About 3 years
- About 5 years

Make sure to have your child's eyes checked regularly, especially if someone In the family has had vision problems.

What are some signs of vision loss?

A child with vision loss might:

- Close or cover one eye
- Squint the eyes or frown
- Complain that things are blurry or hard to see
- Have trouble reading or doing other close up work, or hold objects close to eyes in order to see
- Blink more than usual or seem cranky when doing close up work(such a looking at books)

How can the Commission of the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) help with educational services for children with visual impairments?

CBVI provides educational services from birth through age 21 eligible children and their families. These services are designed to allow students who are blind or vision impaired to participate equally with their sighted peers in classroom activities.

Once a child is found eligible for services, CBVI works closely with the student, their family members and local school personnel. Teachers of the Blind or Vision Impaired provide educational instruction to the following students:

- **Infant Services (birth to age 3)**

CBVI staff will assess a child's vision and, if eligible, offer specialized instruction tailored to his or her needs in the home. CBVI staff also works closely with family members, early intervention providers and health care professionals to assist the child in making a smooth transition to preschool at age three.

- **School Age Services (ages 3 to 21)**

CBVI contracts with local school districts to provide comprehensive services to children in school. These services include assessment and evaluation of a child's visual abilities, and when applicable, instruction in Braille and blindness- related skills.

Instructors provide information and training to family members, teachers, child study teams, and other school personnel. CBVI also will loan the student appropriate adaptive equipment and available adaptive educational materials.

- **Deaf-Blind Services (birth through 21)**

CBVI offers special services to help meet the needs of children who have both vision and hearing deficits. These include assessing the level of the child's impairment, consulting with family members, teaching staff, and loaning the student adaptive equipment and materials.

- **Other special services**

These special services are also available to all students when appropriate:

- Training in how to travel independently
- Eye Health Nursing Services
- Vocation Rehabilitation / Transition Services
- Summer Development Programs

Resources:

- **[Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Home Page](http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/cbvi/home)** (<http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/cbvi/home>)
- **[Coping With Vision Loss](http://www.webmd.com/eye-health/coping-vision-loss#1)** (<http://www.webmd.com/eye-health/coping-vision-loss#1>)
- **[CDC Fact Sheet: Facts About Vision Loss](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/visionlossfactsheet.pdf)** (https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/visionlossfactsheet.pdf)
- **[Vision Loss Alliance of New Jersey](http://vlanj.org)** (<http://vlanj.org>)
- **[American Foundation for the Blind: Resources for Living with Vision Loss](http://www.afb.org/info/living-with-vision-loss/1)** (<http://www.afb.org/info/living-with-vision-loss/1>)