**Long General – 346 words**

**Go Beyond the Eye Chart to *Really* Check Your Child’s Vision**

Does homework and school bring frustration and fights in your family? What if you could turn decades of school dread into a lifelong love of learning for your child? The first step might be as simple as a thorough vision exam by an optometrist.

According to Dr. Lynn Hellerstein, author of ***See It. Say It. Do It!,*** most kids don’t complain about a vision problem. They just avoid activities or behaviorally act out. Many children with 20/20 vision can read an eye chart just fine. But they can’t read a book because they have underlying vision problems. If unchecked, children with vision issues can struggle in school and even be labeled with learning disabilities.

How can you tell if your child has a vision problem? Carefully observe your child for these common signs. If you check off even a few items, take your child to an optometrist trained in “near point testing” and vision therapy for a vision exam testing visual efficiency skills.

**Physical Observations:**

* One eye drifts of points “in” or “out,” in different directions
* Turns head to see
* Frequently tilts head to one side
* Squinting, closing one eye, or covering an eye
* Excessive blinking
* Poor eye-hand coordination
* Frequently bumps into things
* Fatigues easily

**When Reading or Doing Homework:**

* Holds the book unusually close
* Frequently loses place
* Uses finger or marker when reading (after 2nd grade)
* Rubs eyes during or after short periods of reading
* Unable to read for long periods of time
* Difficulty concentrating
* Avoids homework

**Behavioral Signs:**

* Headaches or eyestrain
* Dizziness
* Motion or car sickness
* Visual complaints (blur, double vision, etc.)

Send your children to school with the strategies and visual skills for learning success.

*Optometrist* ***Dr. Lynn Hellerstein****, O.D., FCOVD, FAAO, has been a pioneer in vision therapy for more than 30 years.* ***See It. Say It. Do It!*** *provides easy, practical, step-by-step strategies and activities to enhance children’s visualization skills.* [*www.LynnHellerstein.com*](http://www.LynnHellerstein.com)*.*