

# Vision Screening

## CHILD AND TEEN CHECKUPS (C&TC) FACT SHEET FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

Vision screening is important for all ages. Early identification in young children can help prevent amblyopia and other vision problems.

### C&TC Requirements

#### General

Vision risk assessment is required at all C&TC visits up to 3 years of age or until vision screening can be performed. Vision screening is required starting at age 3 years and at ages as indicated on the [C&TC Schedule of Age-Related Screening Standards](#).

#### Personnel

Trained clinic personnel (such as nurses and medical assistants) can perform vision screening. A licensed health care provider must interpret the results, perform a physical exam, and ensure appropriate follow-up: physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or registered or public health nurse (RN, PHN) who has completed the C&TC Comprehensive Screening training through the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH).

#### Documentation

Document exam findings and screening results. If screening is not completed, state the reason.

For documentation examples or for use as a template with your electronic medical record, refer to the [C&TC Provider Documentation Forms](#).

### Procedure

#### Physical Exam

Observe external eye, alignment, and presence of nystagmus. Note extraocular movements, red reflex, pupillary and corneal light reflex.

#### Risk Assessment

Refer to [Child and Family Vision History and Risk Assessment Questionnaire](#).

#### Visual Acuity Screening

Refer to [Vision Screening Procedures](#).

#### Distance Visual Acuity

Perform distance visual acuity screening for ages three to five using HOTV or LEA SYMBOLS® wall or flip charts at 10 feet. Wall charts are the gold standard for distance visual acuity screening. Use instrument-based vision screening as an alternative for children 3-5 years old unable to perform visual acuity screening with wall charts. Perform distance visual acuity screening for ages 6 and older using a Sloan wall chart at 10 feet. If children/youth have corrective lenses, they should be worn for the distance visual screening.

## Near Visual Acuity (Plus Lens)

Perform near visual acuity screening at 10 feet using 2.50 plus lens on children 5 years and older who pass distance visual acuity screening and do not use corrective lenses.

## Importance of Screening

Early identification of vision abnormalities can prevent amblyopia, a potentially lifelong, permanent vision problem (United States Preventive Services Task Force, 2017).

## Professional Recommendations

### American Academy of Pediatrics

Vision risk assessment begins at birth and continues throughout childhood. Visual acuity screening should begin at 3 years (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2022).

### United States Preventive Services Task Force

Vision screening is recommended at least once for all children between 3-5 years (United States Preventive Services Task Force, 2017).

## Vision Screening Mandate

[Minnesota Statute § 121A.17](#) requires children ages 3-5 to receive vision screening before public school kindergarten entry.

## Resources

### Minnesota Department of Human Services

- [C&TC Schedule of Age-Related Screening Standards](#)
- [Minnesota Health Care Programs \(MHCP\) Provider Manual - C&TC Section](#)

### Minnesota Department of Health

- [Child and Teen Checkups \(C&TC\)](#)

## Other Resources

- [American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus \(AAPOS\)](#)
- [National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health](#)
- [National Eye Institute](#)

## References

- American Academy of Pediatrics. (2022, July). *Recommendations for Preventive Pediatric Health Care*. Retrieved from [www.downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity\\_schedule.pdf](http://www.downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf)
- United States Preventive Services Task Force. (2017, September 5). *Vision in Children Ages 6 Months to 5 Years: Screening*. Retrieved from [www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/vision-in-children-ages-6-months-to-5-years-screening](http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/vision-in-children-ages-6-months-to-5-years-screening)

## For More Information

The Child and Teen Checkups (C&TC) program is administered through a partnership between the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Department of Health.

For questions about this fact sheet or to obtain this information in a different format, call 651-201-3650 or email [health.childteencheckups@state.mn.us](mailto:health.childteencheckups@state.mn.us).

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## Resource Links

- [C&TC Schedule of Age-Related Screening Standards \(https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-3379-ENG\)](https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-3379-ENG)
- [C&TC Provider Documentation Forms \(https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/policies-procedures/minnesota-health-care-programs/provider/types/ctc-resources\)](https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/policies-procedures/minnesota-health-care-programs/provider/types/ctc-resources)
- [Child and Family Vision History and Risk Assessment Questionnaire \(www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/childreyouth/ctc/visioncreen/childvisnquestre.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/childreyouth/ctc/visioncreen/childvisnquestre.pdf)
- [Vision Screening Procedures \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/childreyouth/ctc/visioncreen/procedures.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/childreyouth/ctc/visioncreen/procedures.html)
- [Minnesota Statute § 121A.17 \(www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/121A.17\)](http://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/121A.17)
- [C&TC Schedule of Age-Related Screening Standards \(https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-3379-ENG\)](https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-3379-ENG)
- [Minnesota Health Care Programs \(MHCP\) Provider Manual - C&TC Section \(www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET\\_DYNAMIC\\_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestRelease&dDocName=dhs16\\_150092\)](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestRelease&dDocName=dhs16_150092)
- [Child and Teen Checkups \(C&TC\) \(www.health.state.mn.us/divs/cfh/program/ctc/index.cfm\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/cfh/program/ctc/index.cfm)
- [American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus \(AAPOS\) \(www.aapos.org/home\)](http://www.aapos.org/home)
- [National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health \(https://nationalcenter.preventblindness.org\)](https://nationalcenter.preventblindness.org)
- [National Eye Institute \(www.nei.nih.gov\)](http://www.nei.nih.gov)