

Protecting Elementary School Children from the Epidemic of Myopia (Nearsightedness) in this Era of Technology Use in Academics

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Abstract:

Did you know 1 in 4 children struggle seeing afar. This number could be one-half by 2050. Myopia or nearsightedness disproportionately affects young children aged 3-10 years, in grades N-5. Paradoxically due to their young age, this demographic group are often incapable of expressing about their advancing disorder coherently enough to get treated. Undetected high myopia is a risk factor for blindness in children. In interviewing families of 20 myopic children ≤ 10 years of age, we glean that such children begin to believe that their vision going blurry is the new normal for them, and don't report it. 80% of the academic information taught in elementary schools is presented visually; no surprise hence that myopia and learning disabilities are often confused. Through our organization, My Eyes My Life, we aim to go to the busy elementary school teachers and train them to take 10 minutes each semester to familiarize themselves with the signs and symptoms of nearsightedness. A vigilant teacher can flag undiagnosed pediatric myopia often before parents or pediatricians can. Unarguably, early childhood teachers are the first line of defense in our war to save elementary school children from the scourge of this technology-era epidemic

Keywords:

Myopia, nearsightedness, pediatric, learning disability, signs-and-symptoms, teachers.