



**Suburban Eye Care, P.C.**  
*Eye care for the way you live today...and tomorrow.*

## Here are 5 examples of how vision problems can affect a child.

Let's first define functional vision. Functional vision is how your brain, eyes and visual pathways interact to allow you to see and interact with an object in space. It includes visual skills such as depth perception, tracking an object as it moves through space, and orienting yourself to other objects.

Typically, parents contact Suburban Eye Care Vision and Learning Center because a functional vision problem is affecting their child's academic success. There may be a problem following a line of text; copying down notes from a Smartboard or chalkboard; or paying attention.

These problems really come to the forefront during the school year. But during the summertime, you could spot a functional issue, too. Here are some prime examples.

**Funky spelling with the sidewalk chalk.** Kids love to draw pictures and write messages with sidewalk chalk. Take a look at what you child is writing. Are they reversing the letters "b" and "d", or "p" and "q"? This is a symptom of a problem with laterality, or the ability to distinguish directions such as left or right.

**Little interest in reading.** When a child has idle time, most parents will encourage their kids to pick up a book. However, if a child has a poor span of recognition, reading may prove extra difficult.

A poor span of recognition results when a child can only focus on a single word or letter, due to a functional vision problem. It's like trying to read a book through a straw - you can't "see" the rest of the text. As a result, a child can't stay absorbed in an entire book.

**Can't catch or hit a ball.** If your child is playing baseball or soccer, they may have problems tracking the ball as it's moving through space. Their hand-eye coordination (or foot-eye coordination) will be affected, and they won't be able to make contact as effectively.

**Clumsy on the playground.** A child who suffers from amblyopia, or lazy eye, has a visual system that favors the image of one eye over the other. As a result, the child's binocular vision is impaired, and they lack good depth perception. If this occurs, it will be more difficult for the child to effectively gauge where objects are in space, and they may seem clumsy or uncoordinated.



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**Headaches and watery eyes during movies.** A child with a functional vision problem will have problems keeping up with all the images, and their system may experience overload and eye strain. A headache may result, or their eyes may begin to water. Due to a lack of depth perception, a child may not notice any 3D effects if they're watching a film with the added dimension.

If your child is exhibiting any of these symptoms, do they have a functional vision problem? How many symptoms are a cause for concern?

Consider bringing your child in for a functional vision test if they exhibit any of these symptoms. Even if they only have one or two symptoms, but they occur on a consistent basis, then testing is warranted.

These issues tend to surface during the school year, but you may also see them during the summer months. Use this time to investigate the issue further before next year's school year is upon us.