



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Photos Attached

COMPUTER USE ON YOUNG EYES

Simple Guidelines to Help Protect Children's Vision

(Honolulu, Hawaii), September 24, 2012 – With the new school year in full swing, children of all ages now have legitimate reasons to spend hours staring at a computer screen and a slew of other digital devices. But how does all that time spent with technology affect their eyesight? The American Academy of Ophthalmology has designated September Children's Eye Health and Safety Month to remind parents and teachers to educate children on proper computer use to help protect their eyesight.

The good news is that so far there is no concrete evidence that the use of computers or other digital devices cause any long-term damage to a child's vision. However, a child's developing eyesight is much more susceptible to strain and damage from external sources, and temporary discomfort and symptoms of overexposure may result in the form of computer vision syndrome (CVS).

CVS is prevalent amongst most of the computer-using population and varies in degree depending upon individual vision impairment and the amount of time spent using the device. Children are often more prone to the effects of CVS than the average adult because computer equipment is not usually made with them in mind, and they also tend to ignore the signs—eye strain, dry eyes, blurred vision, headaches, and neck and shoulder pain.

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“Children tend to ignore vision issues because they don’t recognize a problem exists and don’t have a reference point other than their own,” shared Dr. Christopher Tortora, M.D., Hawaiian Eye Center. “It’s important for adults to teach kids how to use technology appropriately and safely when it comes to their eyes.”

Here are a few guidelines for safe and comfortable computer use for children:

- Position the monitor at eye level between 20 and 26 inches away. The screen should be viewed from above at a 15 degree downward angle.
- Make sure equipment is appropriately adjusted for a child’s size. Feet should rest flat on the floor.
- Reduce glare through the use of screen covers, lower lighting, and curtains or blinds.
- Move and reposition the body as needed throughout each session.
- Remember the 20/20/20 rule—every 20 minutes take a break and spend 20 seconds focusing on an object at least 20 feet away.
- Limit use of computer and digital devices when not needed for schoolwork.
- Lookout for signs of eye strain such as squinting and rubbing of the eyes.

These simple guidelines along with yearly eye exams by a pediatrician can help to protect a child’s vision.

Dr. Tortora, a board certified ophthalmologist, is host of “The Hawaiian Eye Show,” a weekly informational radio program about healthy vision. He and his colleagues at Hawaiian Eye Center are committed to educating the public about the importance of preventative eye care. To learn more about a variety of eye health issues, please call the Hawaiian Eye Center at 621-8488 or visit www.HawaiianEye.com, where “*life has never looked better.*”

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