

Vision Screening for the Younger Child or Child with a Developmental Delay

Created with Guidance from **Prevent Blindness Georgia** <http://georgia.preventblindness.org/>

It's important to remember:

- Children who are difficult to screen often have vision problems
- Children with special needs, including those with communication concerns and children with autism, are more likely to have vision problems

Performing the screening:

- Make the screening process a game and avoid the term "test"
- Avoid excess distractions by screening in a quiet place away from others
- Allow for extra time as needed
- If using the Lea Symbol chart, allow the child to name the optotypes

Tip for Screeners:

- Younger children may not be developmentally able to complete the screening but the screener should not just assume that development is the problem. Children may be "uncooperative" or squirmy when their good eye is covered, but this may not indicate a behavior or development issue. Remember that it is possible that they are agitated or uncooperative because they cannot see.
- As the screener, don't fall into the trap of "passing" children for fear of marking "needs further evaluation." It is important for screeners to understand that this does not prevent a child from being admitted to school. The intent of the Form 3300 screenings is to notify parents of potential problems that impact a student's ability to learn. The screener should not feel bad about marking "needs further evaluation" if this is appropriate. The greater disservice would be to pass a child just to be nice with the result being that the child does not get the care he/she needs.
- If the screener thinks that the child's difficulty with the screening is solely a development issue (not old enough and squirmy as opposed a vision problem), then the child needs to be rescreened later. The child should not be "passed" just to be nice or to make it convenient for the parent. A note can be written on the form that the screening was attempted and needs to be attempted later. In most cases, if child cannot be rescreened within one month, he/she should be referred.