

## eye safety for children

a closer look

### EYE SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

Accidents resulting in eye injuries can happen to anyone. Each year, thousands of children have eye accidents at home, at play or in the car. These eye injuries can damage a child's sight and even cause blindness. Perhaps the most startling statistic is that **90 percent of all eye injuries could be prevented.**

It is important for parents to familiarize themselves with potentially dangerous situations at home and in school and to insist that their children use protective eyewear when participating in sports or other hazardous activities.

### CHILDREN AND SPORTS

Increasing numbers of children are participating in sports at an early age. Many sports have official standards for safety equipment.



Protective eyewear is recommended for racquet sports.

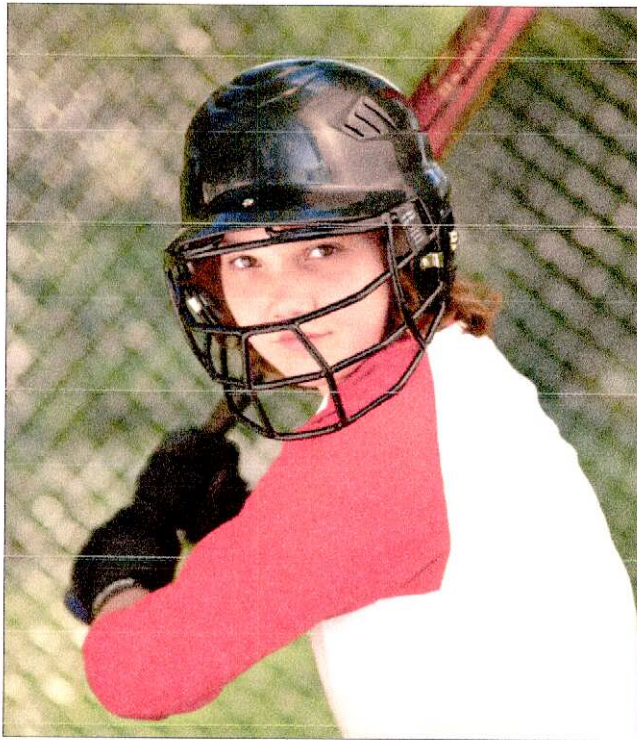
Some sports in which children should use protective eyewear are:

- Baseball;
- Basketball;
- Football;
- Paintball;
- Racquet sports;
- Soccer;
- Wrestling;
- All forms of hockey (ice, roller, street and field);
- Lacrosse.

In ice hockey, lacrosse, and when batting in baseball, a helmet with a polycarbonate (an especially strong, shatterproof, lightweight plastic) face mask or wire shield should be worn at all times. It is important that hockey face masks be approved by the Hockey Equipment Certification Council (HECC) or the Canadian Standards Association (CSA).

Sports eye protectors with polycarbonate lenses should be worn for sports such as basketball, racquet sports, soccer, field hockey and baseball (when fielding). Choose eye protectors that have been tested to meet the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards or that pass the CSA racquet sports standard.

Protective glasses or goggles with UV protection should be worn when snow or water skiing. They will help shield the eyes from sunburn and glare.



**Children should wear sports eye protectors when participating in a number of sports, including baseball.**

Boxing and full-contact martial arts pose an extremely high risk of serious and even blinding eye injury. There is no satisfactory eye protection for boxing, although thumbless gloves may reduce the number of boxing eye injuries.

Parents of a child with permanently reduced vision in one eye should consider the risks of injury to the good eye before allowing their child to participate in contact or racquet sports. Appropriate eye protectors may allow for participation. Check with your ophthalmologist (Eye M.D.).

Contact lenses offer NO PROTECTION and contact lens wearers require additional protection when participating in sports.

## EYE SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY

To provide the safest environment for your children, select games and toys that are appropriate for their age and responsibility level.

Provide adequate supervision and instruction when your children handle potentially dangerous items, such as pencils, scissors, forks and pen knives. Be aware that even common household items such as paper clips, bungee cords, wire coat hangers, rubber bands and fishhooks can cause serious eye injury.

Avoid projectile toys such as darts, bows and arrows, and missile-firing toys. Do not allow your children to play with non-powder rifles, pellet guns or BB guns. They are extremely dangerous and have been reclassified as firearms and removed from toy departments.

Keep all chemicals and sprays, such as sink cleaners or oven cleaners, out of reach of small children.

Do not allow children to ignite fireworks or stand near others who are doing so. All fireworks are potentially dangerous for children of all ages.

Do not allow children in the yard while a lawnmower is in use. Stones and debris thrown from moving blades can cause severe eye injuries.

Demonstrate the use of appropriate protective eyewear to children by always wearing protective eyewear yourself while using power tools, rotary mowers, line lawn trimmers or hammers. Children will learn by your example.

## eye safety for children



Protective sports eyewear

## EYE SAFETY IN SCHOOL

When participating in shop classes or some chemistry science labs, students should wear protective goggles or shields that meet the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z87.1 safety standard.

## GENERAL EYE SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

Ophthalmologists strongly recommend that children with good vision in only one eye wear protective eyeglasses to protect the good eye — even if they do not need eyeglasses otherwise. The lenses should be made of polycarbonate and have a center thickness of 2 millimeters for daily wear and 3 millimeters for sports.

Choosing a sturdy frame will reduce the risk of injury from the frames themselves. Frames that meet the ANSI industrial standards offer the best available protection for general spectacle wear.

Prescription lenses can be fitted into some types of sports eye protectors, but frames without lenses do not provide adequate protection.

## WHEN AN INJURY DOES OCCUR

When an eye injury does occur, it is always best to have an ophthalmologist or other medical doctor examine the eye as soon as possible. The seriousness of an eye injury may not be immediately obvious.

### COMPLIMENTS OF YOUR OPHTHALMOLOGIST:

San Antonio Eye Center, P.A.  
(210) 226-6169  
[www.saeye.com](http://www.saeye.com)

### Academy reviewed 08/10

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