



Disclaimer: This fact sheet is for educational purposes only. Please consult with your doctor or other health professional to make sure this information is correct for you or your child.

C: Facts for parents and carers— make your child’s world ‘eye safe’

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Fact 1: Adult supervision can prevent eye injuries

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- Children are most likely to injure their eyes in their own home. This can be best prevented by adult supervision.
- Eye injuries often occur when younger children copy what they have seen parents or older siblings doing. Supervise children at all times when using scissors, knives and sharp items.
- Adults should always be good role models for children by demonstrating safe use of scissors, knives and sharp items.

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FACT 2: Make your home ‘eye safe’ indoors

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- Keep sharp items such as knives and scissors out of a child’s reach or locked in a drawer/cupboard 1.5 metres above ground level.
- Keep hazardous household chemicals and medicines locked in a cupboard 1.5 metres above ground level.
- Make sure sharp corners of furniture are covered or rounded.
- Children can injure their eyes by falling. Prevent falls wherever possible by using good lighting, removing trip hazards and using childproof safety gates on stairs.
- Make sure children do not twirl or throw objects that may harm them.

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FACT 3: Make your home ‘eye safe’ outdoors

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- Protect your child’s eyes from harmful UV rays from the sun while outside. Wearing a hat and wrap-around sunglasses with lenses that meet the Australian Standard for UV blockout offers the best protection when outdoors.
- Keep hazardous chemicals such as petrol, pesticides, fertilizer, pool chlorine, paints and solvents in secure, labelled, original containers in a locked garden shed or garage 1.5 metres above ground level.
- Always supervise your children when animals are present.
- Trim branches that are at children’s eye level back to the trunk.
- In the garden, be careful of plants with spiky leaves or sticky sap. Remove any poisonous weeds or plants that may harm children.
- When mowing the lawn:
 - never let a child follow you or watch from a close distance as projectiles can easily end up in a child’s eye
 - keep children indoors, or if they need to be outside ensure they keep a good distance away from the lawn mower and are wearing safety goggles/ sunglasses
 - use a lawn mower with safety guards in place, and wear safety goggles or sunglasses yourself. Always remove hazardous debris from the lawn before mowing.

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FACT 4: Make sure toys are safe for children’s eyes

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- Only allow toys to be used for their correct purposes.
- Keep toys intended for older children away from younger children.
- Avoid buying toys that have projectiles that can be fired or shot such as toy darts.
- Avoid toys with points, spikes, sharp edges and small removable pieces.
- Never allow children to play with laser pointers, as these are very dangerous to vision.
- Outside, beware of potential hazards such as unsafe playground equipment, broken toys and toys that could be used as projectiles.
- Always remind children not to throw sand when playing in sandpits.
- Ensure toys comply with Australian standards. More information on Australian Standards for toy safety can be found at www.kidsafensw.org

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Fact 5: 'Eye safe' behaviours at school

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- Teach your child to use pens, pencils, rulers and erasers correctly—they are never to be used as weapons.
- Your child should be taught never to flick a rubber band.
- Play is important for health and development. Encourage your child to play with balls, bats, and skipping ropes. Remind them to always watch out for other children.
- Fighting with other children should not be allowed or tolerated as eyes can easily be injured.

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Fact 6: 'Eye safe' behaviours at the park and playground

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- Never let your child play under trees where magpies are nesting.
- Inspect the playground equipment to ensure it is safe and does not have broken parts.
- Teach your child not to pick up and play with an object that does not belong to them.
- Warn your child that slingshots are very dangerous.
- Make sure your child wears a helmet that complies with the Australian Standard while roller skating or roller blading, or riding a bike, scooter, skateboard or caster board.
- Teach your child to wear a hat and sunglasses to protect their eyes from the sun.

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Fact 7: Dealing with eye infections

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- Eye infections can spread easily, so avoid infections by washing hands and practising good hygiene.
- If a child is being treated for an eye infection it is important that the eye medications are used as indicated. Symptoms may stop but could recur if medications are not used for the prescribed course.
- Children and adults should wash their hands after contact with animals.
- Eyedrops, contact lenses or eye makeup should never be shared with anyone else.
- An adult with a cold sore should never kiss a child as the cold sore (herpes) virus can be spread to the eyes and may permanently damage the child's vision.

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The Statewide Ophthalmology Service (SOS), a network of the Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI), a statutory health corporation, NSW HEALTH.