

Primary Health Care Services for Children and Youth in Canada: Access, Quality and Structure

Appendix 1 to module page 5.1.2: Vision Screening and Optometric Practices for Children across Canada, by Province and Territory (January 2013)

P/T	Public Health--Funded Vision Screening	Other/Voluntary (non-universal) Screening	Optometric Coverage
NL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye alignment and motility, visual acuity (VA), stereopsis, Sheridan-Gardner, cover-uncover test, corneal light reflexes • Public health nurses • 3 years, 9 months to 4 years, 4 months of age^{1,3,4,5} 		
PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive vision health history, brief vision history, external inspection, pupillary examination/light response, observation for alignment, corneal light reflex, cover-uncover test, distance visual acuity, stereopsis, Frisby stereotest, LEA symbols • Public health nurses • Vision screening done from birth to 4.5 years of age (age 2m, 4m, 6m, 12m, 15m, 18m, 4-4.5 years)^{1,3,4,5} 		
NS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual acuity testing, stereopsis • Public health nurses • 4.5 to 5.5 years of age^{1,3,4,5} 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive Eye Examination (CEE), every two years for children under 10 years of age • CEE exams payable once a year for persons with chronic conditions or using medications affecting vision • Partial assessments available for diagnostics and treatment for select ocular conditions^{2,3}
NB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual inspection of the eyes, visual acuity, stereopsis, Randot, HOTV tests 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services covered for children on social assistance^{2,3}

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public health nurses 3.5 years of age^{1,3,4,5} 		
QC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screening among kindergarten children performed by public health nurses or family physician^{3,4} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage available for children ages 0 to 17 years for eye exams, tonometry/ biomicroscopy, visual field test Diagnostic services covered for ocular emergencies^{2,3}
ON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red reflex, corneal light reflex, cover-uncover test. Vision screening conducted as part of 18-month well-baby visit by primary care providers, and subsequent testing annually between ages of 2 to 5 years. ESEL piloted in select regions in 2009 & 2010.^{3,4,5} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic eye examination covered annually for children and youth under 20 years of age. Partial assessments available as needed for insured patients^{2,3}
MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESEL program launched as a pilot in 2008 in select school districts as initiative to encourage parents to have their children examined by an optometrist in Kindergarten⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete & partial eye examinations, full threshold visual fields, tonometry and dilated fundus exams are covered every two years for children and youth under 19 years of age^{2,3}
SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public health nurses recommend examination by an optometrist during routine well-child and immunization visits ESEL program piloted in select school districts as initiative to encourage parents to have their children examined by an optometrist before starting Kindergarten^{3,4} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual eye exams covered for children and youth under age 18; partial and repeat exams covered. Coverage is provided for initial and follow-up of ocular emergencies^{2,3}
AB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESEL program launched in 2003, encouraging parents to have children examined by an optometrist prior to starting kindergarten.^{3,4,5} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine and partial eye exams, and procedures based on clinical needs are covered for youth under the age of 19.^{2,3}

BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SureSight vision screeners, preschool Randot stereotest, HOTV charts • Public health nurses • 4 to 5 years of age ¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative underway to transition from current kindergarten screening program to pre-school <i>a-b-See</i> program; intention to provide universal coverage for 3 year olds. ⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual routine eye exams covered for children and youth under 19 years of age • Services based on clinical needs, i.e. trauma, ocular diseases, conditions or medications affecting vision are fully covered ^{2,3}
YT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye motility, visual acuity, stereopsis tests • Public health nurses, primary care nurses • Pre-kindergarten children ¹ 		
NT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual acuity, illiterate E test/ symbol chart, stereopsis, corneal light reflex, cover-uncover • Public health nurses • Pre-school children ^{1,3,5} 		<i>Note: No optometrists practice in NT ¹</i>
NU		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light reflex, visual acuity test • Public and community health nurses • Children ages 4 to 6 years ^{3,4,5} 	<i>Note: No optometrists practice in NU ¹</i>

ESEL=Eye See.... Eye Learn Program

Sources for table:

1. Mema SC, McIntyre L, Musto R. Childhood vision screening in Canada: Public health evidence and practice. *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 2012;103(1):40-5.
2. Canadian Association of Optometrists. Provincial health coverage of optometric care. March 2012.
3. Muzychka M. Environmental scan of vision health and vision loss in the provinces and territories of Canada. 2009.
4. Institute of Health Economics. The safety and effectiveness of preschool vision screening. Edmonton AB: Institute of Health Economics; 2012.
5. Dunfield L, Keating T. Preschool vision screening [Technology Report number 73]. Ottawa: Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health; 2007.