

CHILDREN'S EYESIGHT

The state of the nation's attitudes to children's eyecare – are parents doing enough to look after their children's eyesight, has the stigma of wearing specs gone away and are more children facing sight problems?

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST SOUND INSIGHT REPORT...

where we have teamed up with national survey agency OnePoll, to see what 2,000 UK adults think and do when it comes to eye care and hearing loss.

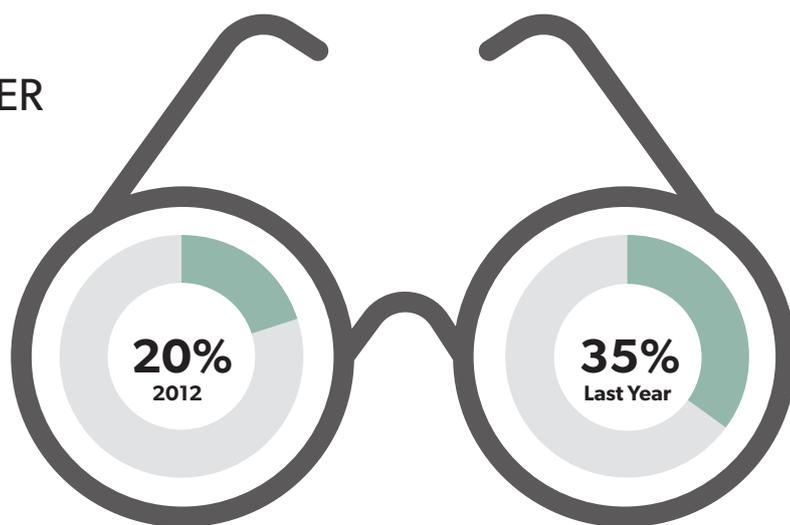
This first Sound Insight report focuses on the state of the nation's children's eye health.

TESTING TIMES FOR TEENS

At Scrivens Opticians & Hearing Care we have seen the number of...

13 TO 16 YEAR OLDS NEEDING GLASSES ALMOST **DOUBLE** OVER THE PAST SEVEN YEARS.

IN 2012, **20%** OF THOSE IN EARLY TEENS REQUIRED GLASSES BUT THIS FIGURE INCREASED TO **35%** AS OF LAST YEAR.



AND OF THOSE 13 TO 16 YEAR OLDS WITH A PRESCRIPTION, **66% ARE SHORT-SIGHTED (MYOPIC).**

Why is this significant?

Our stats are in line with a global trend that has seen the diagnosis of myopia in children double in just one generation.

And researchers predict that by 2050, 50% of the population will be myopic that's almost 60 million children under 17 years old

(Source: World Health Organisation).



There is growing academic evidence this trend could be linked to screen time. Looking at screens for prolonged lengths of time can lead to eye strain, which in turn can cause blurred vision.



ACCORDING TO OUR RESEARCH WITH ONEPOLL, TYPICALLY 13 TO 16 YEAR OLDS SPEND 26 HOURS A WEEK LOOKING AT THEIR MOBILE PHONES, TABLETS, WATCHING TV AND PLAYING VIDEO GAMES.

Our research also found half of parents have attempted to curb their teen's screen time amid fears that too much of it has a negative impact on their children's vision.

SCRIVENS OPTOMETRIST SAYS

"Children's eyes continue to grow until early adulthood, and their vision is changing too. Because conditions such as short or long sightedness can happen gradually over time, neither children nor parents can 'see the signs', which is why regular eye checks are so important.

"There is more research that needs to be done into why myopia, in particular, is presenting itself in children in such higher numbers, especially when it comes to determining if there is a link to screen-time."

"Trying to encourage children away from their tech to playing outside, is not only going to be good for their vision but their overall wellbeing too."

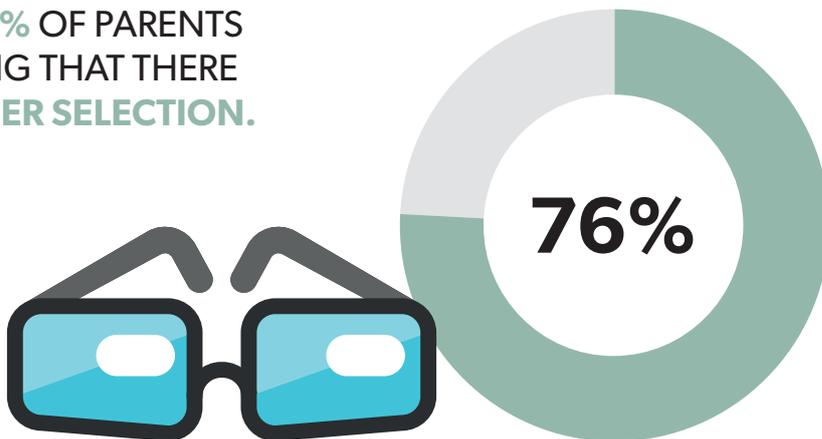


SPECS ARE COOL

With the number of children requiring corrective glasses on the rise, the good news is that it seems the stigma associated with wearing specs is steadily becoming a thing of the past,

WITH MORE THAN HALF (61%) OF PARENTS NOT HAVING ANY DIFFICULTY GETTING THEIR CHILD TO WEAR THEM.

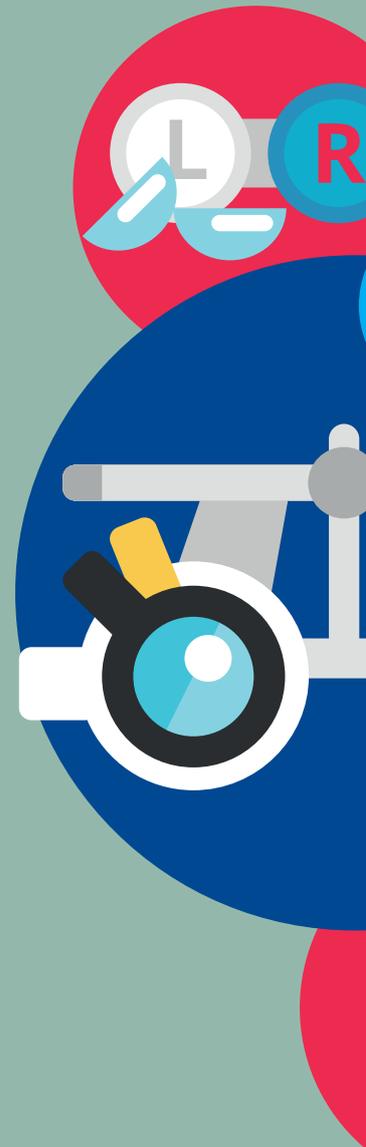
THIS COULD BE DRIVEN BY THE FACT THAT **THE CHOICE OF FRAMES AVAILABLE** FOR CHILDREN HAS IMPROVED OVER THE YEARS, WITH **76% OF PARENTS AGREEING THAT THERE IS A WIDER SELECTION.**



The good news for parents is, teens are not being drawn to costly designer frames.

THE FOUR MOST POPULAR FRAMES FOR FASHION-CONSCIOUS 13 TO 16 YEAR OLDS, IN OUR 180 STORES NATIONWIDE, ARE FREE WITH AN NHS VOUCHER.

And surprisingly it's all about colour with purples and blues coming out on top. Unsurprisingly, however, girls are opting for pinks, purples and blues. Boys on the other hand are more conservative, going for blues and blacks.



5 Tips On Making it Easier For Children To Wear Glasses

1. Make sure the glasses fit properly: Wearing glasses should be as comfortable as putting on a cosy pair of slippers. They shouldn't feel tight or pinch behind the ears – no child is going to wear their glasses if this is the case. Also, children are always growing, so glasses that fit perfectly initially may need adjusting in a few weeks' time.

2. Let them choose their frames: Playground name calling might be less commonplace, but children can still feel self-conscious when it comes to wearing their new glasses. A great way to help them overcome this feeling is to let them choose their own frames.

3. Are the glasses age appropriate? While letting your child choose frames is a positive step, they may need some general guidance on what style is going to be age appropriate and fit them properly. We would recommend asking branch staff for help and presenting a selection of styles and colours for your child to choose from.

4. Keep glasses clean: Children get mucky and so do their glasses. Dirty glasses can hinder rather than help their eyesight. Make sure that they clean their lenses frequently, so they have one less excuse not to wear them.

5. Be positive: Reinforce confidence and remind your child how great they look in their glasses.

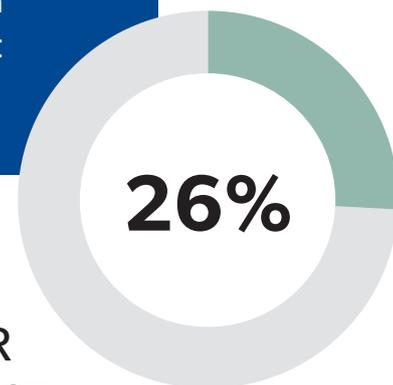
SCRIVENS OPTOMETRIST SAYS

"It's really encouraging to see this generation of spec-wearing youngsters are facing less discrimination in the playground. For children, including teens, the range of frame designs and colours on offer also means wearing glasses are as much a fashion statement as anything. But this doesn't mean breaking their parents' bank, as the range of glasses offered by opticians that are free with an NHS voucher have come a long way from the plastic frames of the 1970s.

"There will also be a reluctant few who might not want to wear their glasses, but by making sure they are comfortable and have had a say in style of frame, they are far more likely to wear them without any fuss. Popping into your local opticians at regular intervals in between appointments, to make sure they are still the right fit, is something we highly recommend as children are growing all the time."

BACK TO SCHOOL - FOCUS ON LEARNING

Our Sound Insight study has revealed that 26% of those polled have never taken their children for an eye test. Therefore, there is still a long way to go before sight tests are considered an essential part of a child's back to school routine that is too important to miss.



26% OF THOSE POLLED
HAVE NEVER TAKEN THEIR
CHILDREN FOR AN EYE TEST



THIS IS DESPITE THE FACT THAT **MESSAGING** AROUND **FREE EYE TESTS** FOR CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS OLD, OR UNDER 19 AND IN FULL-TIME EDUCATION, HAS **REACHED OVER 82% OF RESPONDENTS.**

Likewise, **78%** knew under 16s were entitled to free glasses on the NHS, although almost a quarter (**22%**) were still in the dark.

Undiagnosed sight problems can be harmful to children, especially when it comes to school and future prospects. It is an established fact that up to 80% of learning is visual. Therefore, having excellent vision goes hand in hand with doing well at school. The summer holidays are a perfect time to get your child seen by an optician in preparation for the new school year.

80% OF LEARNING **IS VISUAL**

SCRIVENS OPTOMETRIST SAYS

“Parents always have a long back to school check list, but getting your children’s eyes tested should be a priority. As parents we don’t think twice about taking our kids to the GP should they become ill, or the dentist for regular checks, but arguably an annual eye health examination is just as important.

“For many children they don’t understand what is ‘normal’ when it comes to their vision, so probably won’t know if they are having problems. That’s where an eye test will reveal any issues that in most cases can be corrected through prescription glasses or contact lenses. Not only will seeing clearly make reading and writing easier but it will help children’s levels of concentration and remember what is being taught in class.

“Being able to detect any issues with sight at this crucial stage of development and education can help to ensure your child doesn’t fall behind.”

SO, WHAT WERE THE **TOP FIVE SIGNS** FOR PARENTS THAT TRIGGERED AN EYE TEST FOR THEIR CHILD:





SOUND INSIGHT
REPORT | 2 0 1 9

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SOUND INSIGHT REPORT.

To find out more about children's eyesight visit [scrivens.com](https://www.scrivens.com)
Look out for our next Sound Insight report in the Autumn,
focusing on the nation's attitudes to age related hearing loss.

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