

## Time Outdoors For Healthy Eyesight in Kids

### *What is myopia?*

Myopia is commonly known as nearsightedness. It is the condition of not being able to see things far away very clearly

### *What causes myopia?*

Myopia can be caused by a few different factors, including genetics. But the preventable causes include too much time spent staring at devices close up, and not enough time spent outside in the sunlight. "When children spend too many hours inside, their eyes fail to grow correctly and the distance between the lens and retina becomes too long, causing far-away objects to look blurry". (Michigan State University)

### *Why is staring at screens bad for eye health?*

Staring at screens causes us to blink less, which dries our eyes and can lead to blurry vision. Being close to screens forces the eye muscles to strain more, which can be damaging especially for kids

### *Is myopia dangerous?*

Yes, it is. The greater the myopia a child has, the larger risk there is of developing additional eye problems later in life. "High myopia raises the risk of vision-threatening eye conditions such as retinal detachment, glaucoma, early cataracts and myopic maculopathy, a leading cause of blindness world-wide." (American Academy of Ophthalmology)



### *Why is being outside in sunlight beneficial for eye health?*

Sunlight helps to regulate the release of dopamine, a chemical in our brains. Being outside also causes us to blink more, and to look off into farther distances

### *What else can kids do for eye health?*

- For every 20 minutes you are in front of a screen, take 20 seconds to look off a farther distance
- Hold devices or books at least the length of your forearm and hand away from your eyes