

## How can I help my child adjust to wearing glasses?

- Be patient and give your child time to get used to the glasses and how they feel on the face.
- Start in quiet surroundings and gradually build up to noisier environments.
  - Remove equipment when transitioning from one location to another.
  - Experiment where and when the eye glasses works best for your child.
- **Practice**
  - Try it out! Equipment introduction should be done during a child's preferred activity.
  - Track the times you practiced and the outcome.
  - Determine how you will remind them when practice will occur.
    - Introduce them to a visual schedule
    - Use a calendar
- **Provide lots of specific praise** for when he/she puts on his/her glasses. Use stickers, high fives, and specific language to praise efforts. For example, *"I really like that you are keeping your glasses on – great job!"*
  - Ignore when they are taken off or thrown.
  - Attention can be a *very* strong motivator. Remember this during times when you are practicing with the equipment.
  - Give attention for appropriate behaviors.
- **Create Goals:** Adjusting to wearing glasses can be difficult. Children need to work up to having them on for longer periods of time and work up to the steps necessary to be more independent with them. If a child is just starting out using glasses don't expect them to be able to wear them all day. Help them get used to the glasses by letting them wear them for longer and longer periods.
- Help children keep track of eyeglasses achievements and goals in regards to self-advocacy and independence.
  - Create a customized visual chart that helps your child track how long they wear their glasses. Incorporating a reward at the end of the day can be motivating as well.
  - Think about when the motivator would need to occur and determine what type of motivator would work best for them.
    - During the time they are wearing the equipment
    - After the time for wearing the equipment
  - Determine how you will indicate that the time is up for wearing the equipment (*timer, end of a show, end of an activity*)
    - **TIP:** if they are not experiencing distress and are not fighting wearing equipment, you can introduce an extension of time by saying, "Your glasses are great! Would you like to wear them for 5 more minutes or 10 more minutes?") Praise for success and allow for continuation. If you notice even a small amount of distress, end on a good note and then remind the child when the next practice session will be.

- Be clear that only a caregiver or adult can remove the equipment.
- Practice only when you can give your undivided attention.
- Remove equipment when transitioning from one location to another.
- Be clear about expectations and tell what to do, instead of what not to do.
- Be consistent.
  - All caregivers should be on the same page and following the same rules/ goals.
- Teach acceptance.
  - Have equipment for your child's favorite dolls, stuffed animals, or toys.
  - "Everybody counts!" Show peers how equipment works
- Keep a record of any questions and concerns you have and bring those to your child's follow-up examination.

### **Equipment Considerations and Adaptations**

- Plastic frames are best for kids under two. Elastic straps help keep the glasses in place and kids will fiddle with their glasses less. If you choose a metal frame, make sure it is durable and has spring hinges. Also check the warranty terms for repairs and replacement.
- When you pick out glasses with your child, talk with the optician about which materials best fit your child's lifestyle. Should they consider a specialized pair of sports glasses? Should they have metal or plastic frames? What about special straps and loops to help glasses stay secure? Or special polycarbonate lenses for added durability?
- Proper fit is critical to successful glasses wear and adjustment. Make sure that your child's glasses fit perfectly and that they are comfortable for them to wear.
  - Thing to look for is the fit on the nose. If any gaps exist between the bridge of the frame and the bridge of the nose, the weight of the lenses will cause the glasses to slide down.
- Stay puts go on the end of the glasses and sit right behind the ears. They are very soft because they are made of silicone.



- Having a non-slip silicone or adjustable strap that goes behind the head and keeps the glasses in place.

