

Hearing and Vision Screening

Unfortunately, children can not judge when they don't see or hear adequately, and even if they could, they often can't express it. For this reason, all children should have a complete hearing and vision examination during the preschool years and periodically throughout school life. That's where Berrien County Health Department Hearing and Vision Screening program comes in!

Frequently Asked Questions about Hearing and Vision

My children had their eyes & ears checked at school. Who did it and why?

Michigan's Public Health Code (Act 368 of 1978) requires your local health department to conduct free hearing and vision screening services to preschool and school-age children. The Berrien County Health Department (BCHD) has 3 technicians who screen hearing and vision in all public and parochial schools in Berrien County. Kindergarten students have their hearing screened, 1st & 3rd graders have hearing and vision screened and 5th, 7th, & 9th graders have only their vision screened.

The school said my child has to have his/her eyes and ears checked before going to kindergarten, why?

Michigan's Public Health Code requires all children to have their hearing and vision screened before entering kindergarten. This needs to be done at least once after the age of 3 and prior to entering kindergarten. Some pediatricians offer this service at the time of your child's routine physical. You must provide documentation of screening to your child's school. Berrien County Health Department offers free hearing and vision screening for preschool and kindergarten entrance.

How do I know if my child passed his screening test at school?

No news is good news. If your child is referred to a doctor, you will be contacted by mail, telephone or both.

If your child is referred on hearing you will receive a copy of the audiogram (hearing test) and a letter inviting you to bring your child to a free clinic (Otology Clinic) at the Berrien County Health Department. At the clinic your child will be examined by an ENT (ear specialist). They may also see an Audiologist to have their hearing rechecked. *Or* you can take your child to your own doctor at your expense. We will send a postcard to be filled out and returned after your child's exam.

If your child is referred on vision you will receive a yellow postcard to take with to the eye doctor. We ask that you take your child to an eye doctor of your choice at your expense. If you do not have insurance we may have information that can help with the cost. If you have



Medicaid we have a list of doctors for you to pick from.


What if I don't take my child to an eye doctor or have their ears checked?

The BCHD technicians are responsible for following up on the school referrals. Vision follow-up postcards are blue. Hearing follow-up postcards are white. You may also receive a telephone call or letter. Your responsibility is to have your child evaluated for vision or hearing, fill out the postage paid postcard and drop it into the mailbox.

My baby's eyes look crossed sometimes. What should I do?

If your child's eyes cross or one eye wanders when your child is tired or ill they should go to an eye doctor. If your baby is under one year old, there is a program for a free eye assessment by a qualified eye doctor. **InfantSee** is a public health program designed to ensure that eye care become a part of infant wellness. Under this program, eye doctors have volunteered to provide a *free* one-time infant eye exam within the first year of life between the ages of 6 and 12 months. To learn more about **InfantSee**, call (888) 396-3937 or visit www.infantsee.org.

Upcoming Hearing and Vision Screening Clinics

BCHD - 1205 Front St., Niles	Thursday, August 2	8:30-11:30 and 1-3:30	
BCHD - 21 N. Elm St., Three Oaks	Thursday, August 9	8:30-11:30 and 1-3:30	
BCHD - 769 Pipestone, Benton Harbor	Monday, August 20	1 - 3:30 pm	
BCHD - 2106 S.M-139 Benton Harbor	Wednesday, August 22	8:30-11:30 and 1-3:30	
Orchards Mall, Community Room, BH	Thursday, August 23	10:30-2:30 and 4-7pm	
BH Charter School, Riverview Dr., BH	Tuesday, August 28	8:30-11:30 and 1-3:30	
BCHD - 2106 S.M-139 Benton Harbor	Wednesday, August 29	8:30-11:30 and 1-3:30	

The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

Benton Harbor			Niles	Three Oaks
769 Pipestone	M-139 Office	School Based	1205 N. Front St.	21 N. Elm
P.O. Box 706	2106 S. M-139	870 Colfax Ave	684-2800	756-2008
926-7121	927-5623	925-4500		

Or visit us on the web at www.berriencohthdept.org

Berrien County Health

Department:
Preventing Disease,
Prolonging Life and
Protecting the
Health of the
Community.



Back to School!

Although August marks the end of summer break for students, there is still much fun to be had! The Berrien County Health Department wants you to stay safe as you enjoy the end of summer, and get prepared for school. This month we will provide you with information on E.Coli and outbreaks, immunizations, hearing and vision screening, head lice, and healthy eating and physical activity. For more information about any of these topics, **please call the health department at 926-7121. Happy Summer!**

Hearing and Vision FACTS

- Over 30% of children have a vision problem by high school graduation
- Each year, over 650,000 Michigan children are screened for hearing and 23,000 referrals to doctors are made.
- 850,000 Michigan children are screened for vision with approximately 5-10% identified as having eye difficulties.



Since the early 1940's the Michigan Department of Community Health has worked collaboratively with local health departments and school systems to provide hearing and vision screening services to the children of Michigan.

Screening helps to identify hearing loss and vision difficulties as early as possible. Early identification of problems results in treatment and thus enhances children's ability to learn and succeed.

If you have any questions please call the health department:

**Amy Harper 926-7121 ext.5293,
Dawn Mitchell 926-7121 ext.5292,
Kelly Clark 684-2800 ext. 6525.**

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