



Eye Safety Policy

Background

The Healthy People Program was developed as the disease and injury prevention framework for the United States. With the Healthy People 2010 initiative, objectives specifically related to vision have been included in the program. At least three of these objectives address the issue of eye injuries:

- 28-4 Reduce blindness and visual impairment in children and adolescents aged 17 years and under
- 28-8 Reduce occupational eye injury
- 28-9 Increase the use of appropriate personal protective eyewear in recreational and hazardous situations around the home

The American Optometric Association (AOA) is an ardent supporter of these objectives and believes that the human and economic costs associated with eye injuries are preventable with proper education and intervention. The AOA believes that the use of protective eyewear is a necessary component of a healthy lifestyle to help ensure a lifetime of functional vision. No one should participate in any activity without knowing the risks of eye injury; and, where appropriate, personal protective eyewear should be made available to encourage routine use. The American Optometric Association makes the following recommendations to promote eye safety as appropriate and reasonable for each patient:

Recommendations

1. Primary care practitioners should educate their patients on the risks of eye injury during work, play and other activities that fill one's daily life.
2. Eyecare practitioners should provide information on the availability of appropriate eye protection and encourage the use of eye-protective devices.
3. Supervisory officials in the workplace, schools and at recreational events should mandate wear of eye protection in all activities in which a risk of eye injury exists.
4. Parents should set a good example by wearing protective eyewear themselves as well as encouraging good habits by requiring protective eyewear for their children early in life.