

HEARING & VISION SCREENING



HEALTH
Department



What Schools Should Know

What is the Hearing & Vision Screening Program?

Michigan law (The Public Health Code 368 of 1978) requires Allegan County Health Department (ACHD) to provide no cost hearing and vision screenings to preschool and school-age children.

Screenings occur in most Allegan County public, private, and charter schools, preschools and at ACHD clinics by appointment. The program is done in 3 steps over the course of a child's school years:

- Screenings before kindergarten entry.
- Screenings in select grades up to 9th grade.
- As needed, medical referrals for children not passing the screening.

ACHD Public Health Technicians help identify potential concerns related to a child's ear or eye health. They are not doctors and do not diagnose conditions or prescribe treatment. Technicians complete a Michigan Department of Health & Human Services Technician Training Course and receive continuous training.

Screening Requirements	Hearing	Vision
Pre-School	X	X
Kindergarten	X	
1st Grade		X
2nd Grade	X	
3rd Grade		X
4th Grade	X	
5th Grade		X
7th Grade		X
9th Grade		X

Why screen students hearing and vision?

Hearing and vision difficulties can affect school performance, speech and language skills, self-esteem, and social development. Regular hearing and vision screenings identify any problems and ensure they are caught early. Screenings are safe and help children get prompt medical care to reduce disease, physical damage to ear/eye and permanent loss of sight or hearing. They also help parents and teachers make accommodations to help children succeed.

Will parents be notified that their students were screened in school?

Each school is responsible for communicating with parents about when screenings are scheduled. All children are screened unless the school office is notified otherwise by a parent/guardian. School personnel must note this on the classroom list that parent requests no screening. Parents may also choose to opt their student(s) out of the screening annually by completing the opt-out form on the ACHD website.

If a child is absent or unable to be screened, the technician will send a letter to the parent/guardian(s) of the student.



Parents/guardians will be notified by ACHD if the student does not pass a screening with a referral letter to follow-up with the appropriate doctor. State of Michigan law requires ACHD to request follow-up documentation that a child who has received this referral receives further evaluation by a physician. If a child does not pass a hearing screening, they may be referred to their physician.

How can teachers and school personnel assist hearing and vision screenings?

- Notify parents/guardians when screenings will occur and stress the importance of student attendance on those dates.
- Direct parents/guardians to ACHD's website or phone number to answer their questions.
- Avoid scheduling field trips or special events on screening days.
- Collaborate with Public Health Technicians regarding any documentation and accommodations needed to enable successful and efficient screenings.
- Ensure adequate time and space to screen every child appropriately.
- Notify the Public Health Technician if you are aware a student has an implanted medical device such as a shunt, pacemaker, vagus nerve stimulators for preventing seizures, Baclofen pumps for spinal cord injuries, etc. Children with implanted medical devices will not be screened for hearing because they may be at risk for unintended changes in device settings. Children with cochlear implants also are not screened at school. If the student has a medically implanted device and the parent would like a hearing screening, they need to contact their physician for a referral to an audiologist.
- Help distribute any correspondence to parents/guardians in a timely manner.
- Let parents, guardians, or Public Health Technicians know if you notice any of the following in a student:

Vision

- Squints, closes one eye, leans forward, or tilts head to see the board
- Eye that crosses or wanders even if only when child is ill or tired
- Holds books or worksheets close to the eyes
- Eyes are frequently red or tearing
- Complains of painful or itchy eyes repeated often
- Complains of headaches after reading
- Holds books and worksheets close to the eyes

Hearing

- Drainage from the ears
- Asks for you or others to speak louder
- Asks for audiovisuals to be played louder
- Misunderstands directions or asks to have things



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Where can I get more information?

www.allegancounty.org/health
www.michigan.gov/mdhhs

