

## **School Screenings**

Connecticut State Statute § 10-214 mandate that students be screened for potential barriers to education in the schools. The most common problems which can be detected and for which early intervention can be successful are vision, hearing and posture. The school nurse is responsible for conducting and overseeing screenings in each school. It is important to note that special protocols have been established and the Health Offices will be practicing safe screening and cleaning/disinfecting of equipment between each student. Parents may opt out of the screenings by contacting your school nurse and completing a screening refusal form.

## **Vision Screening**

Vision screening for distance is mandated annually in kindergarten and grades 1, 3, 4 and 5. The National Society to Prevent Blindness has prepared the following list which may be used by parents and teachers to identify students with signs of possible vision problems:

- rubs eyes frequently; attempts to brush away blur
- has dizziness, headaches or nausea following close work
- is inattentive during chalk board lessons
- when looking at distant objects – holds body tense, contorts face in attempts to see things clearly, thrusts head forward, squints eyes excessively
- When reading – blinks excessively, holds book too far from face, holds book too close to face, makes frequent change in distance at which book is held, is inattentive during lesson, stops after brief period, shuts or covers one eye, tilts
- head to one side, tends to reverse words or syllables, tends to look cross-eyed, tends to lose place on page, or confuses words or letters.

Children observed to have any of the above signs should be referred to the school nurse for a vision screening regardless of age or grade placement.

## **Hearing Tests**

Undetected hearing loss in students presents a potentially critical barrier to academic, social and vocational success. Early identification of hearing loss is crucial to that medical, technological and education intervention can be implemented to avoid or reduce the adverse impact of these hearing impairments. CT statutes required that audiometric screening occur annually in kindergarten and grades 1, 3, 4, and 5, which is the responsibility of the school nurse.

The school nurse is responsible for coordinating referral and follow up for further diagnosis. This may be done via a letter to the parents. Teachers should also be notified of the screening results necessitating referral.

### **Postural Screenings**

Postural screening consists of screening for scoliosis and kyphosis. Scoliosis is a lateral curve of the spine and kyphosis is a rounded curve in the upper spine when viewed from the side. These screenings occur in grades 5 and 9, usually each spring. Early detection enables early treatment and the prevention of severe deformity. Parents should be made aware of basic information about the screening process and the need for early diagnosis and treatment. The school nurse is responsible for coordinating referral and follow up for further diagnosis.