

Making Your Kids Cross-Eyed?

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BEFORE YOU READ:

1. What does “cross-eyed” mean?
2. Look at the headings. What do you think this article will be about?

Using an iPad

When my daughter had to learn English, Santa Claus gave her a new iPad. She started an online English lesson. It was so helpful for her. She enjoyed the lessons, and she also enjoyed using her iPad. But there is a problem with young children using these devices too much. It can make their eyes cross.

Too Close to Our Eyes

I’m an *ophthalmologist* in Japan, and I can tell you this is a serious problem. We always use tablets or smartphones too close to our eyes. During childhood, eyesight is growing and developing. If children spend a long time looking too closely at a screen, it is bad for their eyes. It can cause esotropia. *Esotropia* is when the eyes cross or the eyes look towards the nose.

Once children have *esotropia*, objects appear double. They might feel very dizzy. What is the treatment of this disease? Some children can be cured by reducing the time of looking at screens. Other children have to get surgery or wear special glasses. In the last 10 years, this condition has increased. Doctors do not understand it completely. They need to study it more.

Focus on Other Things

The important thing is when children use digital tools, they should give their eyes a break every 30 minutes. They should allow their eyes to focus on other things at other distances. When they use their screen, they should not have it too close to



A child with esotropia. Photo by Sfgin from wikimedia.org CC 4.0

their eyes. Keep them at least 12 inches away. Parents, please make sure your children use their devices correctly. Protect your children’s eyes.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. According to the author, how can we protect our children’s eyes? Be specific.
2. What is the author’s profession in Japan? How is that relevant to the main idea in this article? Practice pronouncing *ophthamologist* and try using it in several sentences.

Yui Nagata is a student at Shoreline Adult Education in Branford, Connecticut. She is from Japan, and she accompanied her husband, who is researcher, to the U.S. She is an ophthalmologist in Japan, but now she is a full-time mother of three children.

