**News Release**

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**Here’s What Ophthalmologists are Buying for Their Kids This Holiday Season**

[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] *and the American Academy of Ophthalmology offer last-minute gift ideas that are easy on the eyes*

<INSERT CITY, STATE>– [INSERT DATE] —  Ophthalmologists have long cautioned against purchasing toys that pose a danger to children’s eyes. This year we’re adding digital devices to our usual list of BB guns, Nerf guns, and slingshots. That’s because evidence is mounting that too much screen time and not enough time outside may be behind the recent rise in [nearsightedness](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/myopia-nearsightedness) in children. We know reducing screen time has been especially challenging for parents during the pandemic. To help, [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] and the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](http://www.aao.org/) released a screen-free [holiday gift guide](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/news/doctor-approved-holiday-gift-guide-kids-toys) focused on healthy kids and healthy eyes.

“As a parent, I know how hard it is to limit screen time, but several new studies conducted during the pandemic show increased time on digital devices for online learning and entertainment may be causing an increase in nearsightedness among children,” said Dianna Seldomridge, MD, clinical spokesperson for the American Academy of Ophthalmology. “So, in addition to cautioning parents to [avoid toys with sharp, protruding or projectile parts](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/news/really-toy-guns-are-dangerous-your-eyes), we’re asking parents to consider gifts that encourage kids to step away from their screens.”

[INSERT YOUR SPOKESPERSON’S QUOTE HERE]

So, skip the [blue light-blocking glasses](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/are-computer-glasses-worth-it) and buy your child something that will finally get them [off their screens](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/screen-use-kids). Here are some ophthalmologist-approved gift ideas:

* **Arts & crafts supplies for all ages.**Get their creative juices flowing with paint sets, coloring books, easels, jewelry beads for younger kids or knitting/sewing kits for older kids. Just make sure to check the recommended age group on each before buying.
* **Outdoor inspired gifts**. Sports equipment like snow gear, roller skates, hiking boots, or the classic bicycle gift are all good ways to encourage healthy outdoor play. Have a kid athlete in your life? Get them the right protective eyewear for their sport of choice. For skiers or snowboarders, that means [UV-protected goggles](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/winter-sun-eye-safety) — cold weather does not shield the eyes from the sun!
* **Educational games.** As your toddler’s hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills [naturally develop](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/children-vision-development), toys such as building blocks or puzzles become easier to use. Age-appropriate board games for learning how to count, tell time, memory games, and other educational themes are good options. For older kids, find classic board games in foreign languages — such as Guess Who or Scrabble — to practice basic language questions and grammar.
* **Social card games**. Examples include Tabletopics Teen Edition or What Do You Meme. These are great for getting teens away from their phones and interacting with friends and family.
* **Ugly produce subscriptions boxes.** These services deliver good produce not being sold on farms for cosmetic reasons straight to your door. Cook a meal together as a family or set your master chef teen up for success with these [nutritious ingredients](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/fabulous-foods-your-eyes). Just make sure to forward them a copy of these [kitchen eye safety tips](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/eight-kitchen-safety-tips).

For more information about the rise in nearsightedness in children, watch the [Academy’s YouTube video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezP3oCRaBBQ&t=12s).

**About the American Academy of Ophthalmology**

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is the world’s largest association of eye physicians and surgeons. A global community of 32,000 medical doctors, we protect sight and empower lives by setting the standards for ophthalmic education and advocating for our patients and the public. We innovate to advance our profession and to ensure the delivery of the highest-quality eye care. Our EyeSmart® program provides the public with the most trusted information about eye health. For more information, visit [aao.org](http://www.aao.org/).

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