Indicators of Visual Impairments

Physical Appearance
- Obvious abnormalities in the shape or structure of the eye
- Drooping eyelids
- Red eyes or eyelids
- Persistent tearing
- Unusual eye movements (jerky eye movements, eye turn, crossed eyes, eyes not working together, etc.)

Behavioral Observations
- Light Gazing
- Unable to see things clearly
- Lack of eye contact
- Squinting, closing eyes or head turning (may indicate high sensitivity to light)
- Covering or shutting one eye
- Inaccurate reach or grasp
- Persistent rubbing of the eyes and/or blinking
- Tilts head in certain positions when looking at an object
- Averts gaze or seems to be looking beside, under or above the object of focus
- Holds items close to eyes
- Inattentive, loses interest and has low frustration level
- Moves cautiously and/or bumps into things
- Depth perception issues (may include difficulty with stairs, curbs, etc.)
- Difficulty Reading
  - Loses place, skips words, letters or lines
  - Uses finger to keep place in text
  - Covers one eye while reading
  - Experiences reversals
  - Often guesses words
  - Skews face while reading
  - Skipping and/or missing punctuation marks
  - Holds book close to eyes
  - Has problems with print size and/or complexity of the page
- Has difficulty learning colors
- Has difficulty seeing at night
- Has difficulty seeing the blackboard, movies or television

If a child is experiencing one or more of these difficulties, then a professional eye examination should be sought. If financial assistance is necessary, the following resources may be able to help.
- InfantSEE Program - <http://www.infantsee.org>
- South Dakota Lions Club - <http://sdlions.org>