

BACK TO SCHOOL

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Kids helping kids

Setting an impressive example of selfless generosity, sisters McKenna and Victoria Murray celebrated their birthday this year by asking friends for new backpacks and school supplies instead of gifts which they donated to the Links2Care Backpack Program along with \$60.00 cash. Links2Care, assisted by local high school students and community mentors, distributed 191 backpacks to Halton Hills children this August in order to make back to school time a little better for families in financial need.

Submitted photo

Eye See...Eye Learn may be most important test for kids

New shoes for gym...CHECK. New backpack for books... CHECK. Eye exam to read and learn... CHECK.

This year don't overlook the most important back to school readiness decision that can help your child cope with the challenges of learning. With school starting shortly, parents of Junior Kindergarten children should book their child's Eye See...Eye Learn exam when they start school.

As of July 1, children entering Junior Kindergarten this fall are eligible

to participate in the free Eye See...Eye Learn (ESEL) program that encourages parents to book a comprehensive eye exam with a participating Doctor of Optometry for their JK child.

The eye exam is covered by the child's health card (OHIP). If the child requires glasses, they will receive a pair of high quality, impact resistant and UV protected glasses free of charge courtesy of ESEL partners Jungle Eyewear® and Hoya Vision Care.

The Eye See...Eye Learn program

was created to address the alarming fact that only 25 per cent of children between the ages of five and nine have had their eyes examined by a Doctor of Optometry and a staggering 93 per cent of all children under the age of five have never been tested; despite the fact that annual eye examinations are covered by OHIP for children 19 years of age and under.

"Children can be labeled as having behavioural or learning disabilities because they are unable to see or fo-

cus on the work when all they require is a pair of eyeglasses. An eye exam can give parents the piece of mind of knowing whether their child can see well or not," says Dr. Sheldon Salaba, President of the Ontario Association of Optometrists (OAO).

Dr. Shirley Ha, Chair of the Halton Region ESEL Program agrees. "Optometrists have child friendly assessments for determining the complete

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