

**National Eye Exam Month – Tips to Keeping Your Eyes Healthy**

Source: <https://noblehorizons.org/national-eye-exam-month-tips-to-keeping-your-eyes-healthy/>



August is National Eye Exam Month and there is a lot you can do to help keep your eyes healthy and protect your vision in between your yearly exams. Of course, the first step is getting that exam!

**Get a dilated eye exam every year.** It's simple and painless and it's the single best thing you can do for your eye health. Even if your vision seems fine and your eyes feel healthy, there could be an underlying issue you aren't aware of yet. A dilated eye exam is the only way to check for many eye diseases and catch them early on. Get the facts about dilated eye exams.

**Find out if you are at risk for eye diseases.** As we get older, our risk for some eye diseases increases. You may be at a higher risk for some diseases if you are:

- Overweight or obese
- Have a family history of eye disease
- Are African American, Hispanic, or Native American

Other health conditions, like diabetes or high blood pressure, can also increase your risk of some eye diseases. For example, people with diabetes are at risk for diabetic retinopathy — an eye condition that can cause vision loss and blindness.

**Take care of your health**

Protecting your overall health can go a long way toward keeping your eyes healthy! It's important to make healthy choices and take good care of yourself.

Keep in mind that healthy habits like eating well and being active can lower your risk for diseases and conditions that can lead to eye or vision problems, like diabetes or high blood pressure. Follow these tips for healthy vision:

**Eat healthy foods.** Be sure to have plenty of dark, leafy greens like spinach, kale, and collard greens. Eating fish that are high in omega-3 fatty acids — like salmon, tuna, and halibut — is good for your eyes, too.

**Get active.** Being physically active helps you stay healthy. It can also lower your risk of health conditions that can cause eye health or vision problems — like diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

**Quit smoking.** Smoking isn't just bad for your lungs — it can hurt your eyes, too! Smoking increases your risk of diseases like macular degeneration and cataracts — and it can harm the optic nerve. If you're ready to quit, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for free support. You can also check out the resources on [Smokefree.gov](http://Smokefree.gov).

**Protect your eyes**

You can take some simple steps every day to keep your eyes healthy.



**August 2024 Calendar**

*World Autism Month*  
*Sexual Assault Awareness Month*

- 1 – World Lung Cancer Day (International)
- 3 – Cloves Syndrome Awareness Day (International)
- 4-10 – International Assistance Dog Week (US)
- 8 – International Car Day
- 12 – International Youth Day (US)
- 13 – Fast of Ninth of Av (Judaism)
- 13 – Women's and Family Day (International)
- 15 – Feast of the Assumption (Christianity)
- 18 – Ullambana (Buddhist)
- 19 – Raksha Bandhan (Hinduism)
- 22 – Be An Angel Day (US)
- 25-31 – Be Kind To Humankind Week (US)
- 26 – Women's Equality Day (US)

- **Wear sunglasses.** Protect your eyes from the sun by wearing sunglasses — even on cloudy days! Be sure to look for sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of both UVA and UVB radiation.
- **Wear protective eyewear.** Safety glasses and goggles are designed to protect your eyes during certain activities, like playing sports, doing construction work, or doing home repairs. You can buy them from most eye care providers and some sporting goods stores.
- **Give your eyes a rest.** Looking at a computer for a long time can tire out your eyes. Rest your eyes by taking a break every 20 minutes to look at something about 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- **If you wear contacts, take steps to prevent eye infections.** Always wash your hands before you put your contact lenses in or take them out. Be sure to disinfect your contact lenses and replace them regularly.

Eye health and eye safety are huge factors in our quality of life, no matter the age. Protect your eyesight by practicing good eye care and schedule regular eye checks – if you are between 40 and 65, that's every 2-4 years; if you're 65+, every 1-2 years is a must.

## Youth Grapple with Interpreting the Unspoken for Their Immigrant Families

Source: <https://psychology.ucmerced.edu/news/2024/youth-grapple-interpreting-unspoken-their-immigrant-families>



UC Merced researchers are shedding light on a little-explored aspect of cross-cultural communication that involves no spoken words but sometimes can cause confusion and anguish for children acting as interpreters for older family members.

The moments are common in California's Central Valley, where English isn't the primary language in nearly 45% of households — and Spanish is the main language in about half of those. This leads to situations where children serve as language go-betweens for parents who aren't fluent in English and for service providers who can't speak Spanish, Hmong, Hindi, etc. The youngsters step in as interpreters at medical appointments, at the hardware store, at the tax preparer's office — wherever the answer to "What are they saying?" is important.

Countless studies have dived into the dynamics of these interactions. Researchers refer to them broadly as cultural brokering — a nod to the child's role as a vocal intermediary with the grown-ups filtering words through them.

But Sivenesi Subramoney, a UC Merced developmental psychology graduate student, wondered about a powerful subset of these interactions — unspoken moments when body language or facial expressions between adults are misinterpreted, leaving the child to fill a gap they didn't expect or may misunderstand themselves.

Subramoney and her fellow researchers gave it a name:

Emotion brokering.

"I searched the literature and couldn't find anything quite like it," she said.

Subramoney and a group of UC Merced researchers initiated a project to survey Latinx students at the university about being caught between hit-and-miss emotions. The results were published in "Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology," a journal of the American Psychological Association.

UC Merced developmental psychology Professor Eric Walle, who has worked for years with Subramoney, is a report co-author, along with two colleagues — developmental psychology Professor Alexandra Main and Spanish linguistics Professor Dalia Magaña.

The report concludes emotion brokering is a common occurrence in parent-child relationships and that "further research is warranted" to study its existence among younger intermediaries and other cultures. Most of all, the report pointed to its effect on the young brokers.

"This collaboration highlights the remarkable capabilities of young Latinx bilinguals who navigate cultural differences and language gaps, as well as interpreting emotions," Magaña said. "Yet we are increasingly recognizing the negative impacts on their mental health and well-being."

The report presented the results of two surveys. The first looked for instances of intercultural misunderstandings that involved UC Merced students' close family members. The second zeroed in on emotion brokering, seeking context and more details about each incident, such as whether the emotion was perceived as positive or negative.

"One time I went with my mom to return some jeans and the cashier had a serious face the entire time," one student respondent wrote. "My mom thought that was completely disrespectful, but I'm used to it. I see it everywhere. I did tell my mom it's normal to see that and it's not a sign of disrespect. It could be that the cashier was shy."

“My mom got into an argument with a neighbor,” another wrote. “My mother corrected him. This led to his face turning red. But it wasn’t because he was mad. He was embarrassed that my mom was correct. After the neighbor left, I explained that to her.”

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*Dalia Magaña*

“So, what we’ve done here is like a proof of concept,” Walle said. “The students were saying, ‘Yes, this is the thing I do all the time with my family, and it’s distinct from language.’”

Ongoing research indicates that interpreting language for their elders is often an accepted family role. It’s what the young bilinguals grew up doing; they are often proud of the responsibility. But they aren’t nearly as prepared to interpret the unspoken. Emotion brokering catches them off guard and can lead to escalation, frustration or embarrassment.

“It’s like they know in advance about one type of brokering, but the other is more spur of the moment,” Main said. Some respondents didn’t think to characterize such non-verbal, emotional interactions until the survey asked about it.

Walle said a next step in their research was to ask students how they feel about navigating these cross-cultural tasks; how are they faring emotionally?

“They could view this labor as a lot of work but could still feel good about helping their parent and working through a difficult experience together,” he said. The results of that research are under review.

Main noted that emotions are an important overlay of everyday social interaction. They give words context and significance. But one culture’s emotional signals can vary wildly from another’s. She said young emotion brokers need support to help them navigate these differences.

On one level, counselors or clinicians could be trained to help young family members be better prepared for linguistic and emotion brokering and to strengthen positive feelings about their roles. More broadly, health care providers need more cultural training to help avoid disconnections and misunderstandings, Main said.

“I think of it as an intervention on both a family level and societal level,” she said.

## New Staff Profile: Conrado Fernandez

Conrado is the newest addition to UC Davis Health Spanish interpreting team. Originally from Argentina, Conrado has always had a love for music and dreamt of becoming a musician. Back in Argentina, he played music with a local cover band, and his passion for music and the guitar fueled his aspirations. However, he soon realized that pursuing music alone wouldn’t pay the bills.

Conrado shifted gears and began working at Quest Diagnostics laboratories, where he worked for 12 years, but his entrepreneurial spirit led him to explore new paths. He started experimenting with importing, exporting, and selling of Argentinian olive oils to an Italian community of wholesale buyers in San Francisco and exporting frozen pizzas from Argentina to American consumers under the Trader Joe’s brand.

His educational background is diverse: one year in CPA accounting, another in social anthropology, and finally, an Associate of Arts (AA) degree in business. Conrado’s journey didn’t stop there. He returned to college, this time focusing on marketing—a secondary passion of his. During this period, a phone call from a friend in California changed everything. The opportunity to play and record music drew him back to the U.S., where he discovered a new calling: language interpretation.

In 2016, Conrado accepted a job as an interpreter, a path he had never considered before. Balancing his role as an account manager and part-time interpreter, he eventually decided to commit fully to interpreting. The work was rewarding, and he found joy in helping people communicate across language barriers. He dedicated himself to interpreting, working with multiple agencies and receiving training from Alta Language Services in medical interpreting (40 hours). He also specialized in court interpreting, with a focus on immigration cases, through the Southern California School of Interpretation in Los Angeles.

Since joining our team at UC Davis Health, he continues to make a positive impact, bridging gaps and improving lives through effective communication.

Welcome to the team, Conrado!

