

Health Screenings

Vision and Hearing Screening Requirements

The Vision and Hearing Screening Program, Texas Health and Safety Code requires that all children enrolled for the first time in any public, private, parochial, or denominational school or in a Department of Family and Protective Services licensed child-care center and licensed child care home in Texas, or who meet certain grade criteria (specified below), must be screened or have a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems.

The requirements apply each year for children enrolled in any licensed child-care center and licensed child care home or school program at the ages or grades listed below:

| WHO MUST BE SCREENED | WHEN SCREENING MUST BE DONE |
|---|---|
| 4-years-old by September 1st Kindergartners Any other first-time entrants (4 years* through 12th grade) | Within 120 days of admission |
| 1st-, 3rd-, 5th-and 7th graders | Anytime within the school year (preferably within first semester) |

Acanthosis Nigricans

The Texas Risk Assessment for Type 2 Diabetes in Children is a legislatively mandated program developed, coordinated, and administrated by The University of Texas Pan-American Border Health Office (BHO). The program assesses children who may be at high risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes in Texas Education Agency Regional Education Service Centers 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 13, 15, 18, 19, and 20. During vision/hearing and scoliosis screenings of 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th graders in public and private schools, certified individuals assess children for the Acanthosis Nigricans marker, a skin condition that signals high insulin levels. Children who are positively identified with the marker undergo additional assessments of body mass index (BMI), BMI percentile, and blood pressure. Referrals are issued to the parents of these children, alerting each parent of their child's risk factors and encouraging further evaluation from a health professional. Becoming aware of and understanding what the risk factors suggest can help stimulate the changes necessary to prevent or delay future health problems for children at risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes and other conditions.

Spinal Screening Program

Grade-based screening is considered an acceptable alternative to age-based screening in a school setting. The grades, however, must align with the professionally recommended ages so that most children are screened at the appropriate age, or as close to it as reasonably possible.

In compliance with Health and Safety Code, Chapter 37, all children shall undergo screening for abnormal spinal curvature in accordance with the following schedule:

- Girls will be screened two times, once at age 10 (**or fall semester of grade 5**) and again at age 12 (**or fall semester of grade 7**).
- Boys will be screened one time at age 13 or 14 (**or fall semester of grade 8**).

It is incumbent on schools to identify outliers (i.e., children promoted to higher grades or held back) and ensure their screenings align with appropriate ages rather than grades.