

Myopia Profile and Essilor join forces to tackle childhood myopia through education and awareness

(Charenton-le-Pont, 22nd October 2020) – Leading international myopia educational company, Myopia Profile Pty Ltd, and the world leader in ophthalmic optics, Essilor International, announced their partnership to empower eye care practitioners with clinical knowledge, skills and practice in managing childhood myopia. The partnership will also see a boost to public awareness of the consequences of myopia, also called short-sightedness or near-sightedness, and will encourage more parents to have their children’s vision tested worldwide.

Essilor International’s new partnership with Myopia Profile will see the development of specific educational content to increase primary eye care practitioners’ knowledge and skills in prescribing spectacle lenses to young children; getting started in myopia management; clinical communication and understanding the latest research. This content will include research summaries with clinical relevance, clinical case studies, podcasts and resources to use in practice. Content will be housed on MyopiaProfile.com and shared across the partnership’s multiple platforms.

“We are thrilled to work with Essilor, the world’s largest manufacturer of ophthalmic spectacle lenses, to increase professional skills and public awareness of childhood myopia. This is the biggest sight issue affecting our children today and will increasingly become an eye health problem for our adults of tomorrow. Essilor intrinsically recognizes the value of education and public awareness as their social responsibility to bring good vision to all, and we share this key value. With various optical and pharmacological interventions to slow down the typical pattern of childhood myopia progression, it is of vital importance we educate practitioners and parents to improve children’s sight now and their eye health for the future” said Dr. Kate Gifford, Director of Myopia Profile.

Olga Prenat, Global Director of Education and Professional Relations, Essilor International and Chief Editor of Points de Vue, International Review of Ophthalmic Optics, shed light on the collaboration: *“We are excited to partner with Myopia Profile who are the world leaders in globally accessible and clinically translatable education in the field of myopia management. Combining Essilor’s and Myopia Profile’s reach will help educate and boost knowledge-sharing among eye care professionals worldwide, which we hope will ultimately contribute to widespread adoption of myopia management. More importantly, it will help us promote better vision and eye health for children with myopia across the world.”*

Myopia Profile, based in Queensland, Australia, is the world’s largest and most popular multi-platform digital suite for myopia management. Founded in 2016 by optometrist husband-and-wife Dr. Paul Gifford, PhD, and Dr. Kate Gifford, PhD, Myopia Profile has grown from sharing Kate’s self-developed clinical paper-based tools to a comprehensive website, online learning academy, professional Facebook group and more, with over three million active engagements per year across the platforms. Myopia Profile’s public awareness arm, MyKidsVision.org, includes a [website](#), short survey on myopia risk factors, How-To video guides, and social media platforms for parents to learn about childhood myopia and how they can seek the best options for their children.

Myopia currently affects around one-third of the world’s population,(1, 2) and is projected to affect half of the world’s population by 2050, with almost 1 billion people at significant lifelong risk of eye disease due to high myopia.(1)

More on myopia

Global myopia prevalence is rapidly growing, appearing to be driven primarily by environmental factors such as intensive education, less childhood time spent outdoors.(2) Increased time spent on digital devices may also be a factor, although current findings on this relationship are mixed.(3)

Myopia typically onsets in childhood and rapidly progresses, or worsens, until early adulthood.(4) Higher levels of myopia are associated with higher lifelong risks of eye diseases such as cataract, retinal detachment and myopic maculopathy.(5)

Childhood myopia progression cannot be stopped, but a growing body of research indicates that specific spectacle lenses, contact lenses and pharmacological interventions (eye medications) can slow down this progression. Altering a child's visual environment to manage near-work time and increase time spent outdoors can also help.(6) Reducing childhood myopia progression has the benefit of clearer vision with less changes, but even more so reduces lifelong risk of vision impairment due to myopia-associated eye diseases.(7)

For more information on myopia in children, visit www.mykidsvision.org.

References

1. Holden BA, Fricke TR, Wilson DA, Jong M, Naidoo KS, Sankaridurg P, et al. Global Prevalence of Myopia and High Myopia and Temporal Trends from 2000 through 2050. *Ophthalmology*. 2016.
2. Morgan IG, French AN, Ashby RS, Guo X, Ding X, He M, et al. The epidemics of myopia: Aetiology and prevention. *Prog Retin Eye Res*. 2018;62:134-49.
3. Lanca C, Saw S-M. The association between digital screen time and myopia: A systematic review. *Ophthalmic and Physiological Optics*. 2020;40(2):216-29.
4. Parssinen O, Kauppinen M, Viljanen A. The progression of myopia from its onset at age 8-12 to adulthood and the influence of heredity and external factors on myopic progression. A 23-year follow-up study. *Acta Ophthalmol*. 2014;92(8):730-9.
5. Flitcroft DI. The complex interactions of retinal, optical and environmental factors in myopia aetiology. *Prog Retin Eye Res*. 2012;31:622-60.
6. Bullimore MA, Richdale K. Myopia Control 2020: Where are we and where are we heading? *Ophthalmic and Physiological Optics*. 2020;40(3):254-70.
7. Bullimore MA, Brennan NA. Myopia Control: Why Each Diopter Matters. *Optom Vis Sci*. 2019;96(6): 463-5.

About Essilor

Essilor International is the world's leading ophthalmic optics company. Essilor designs, manufactures and markets a wide range of lenses to improve and protect eyesight. Its mission is to improve lives by improving sight. To support this mission, Essilor allocates more than €200 million to research and innovation every year, in a commitment to continuously bring new, more effective products to market. Its flagship brands are Varilux®, Crizal®, Transitions®, Eyezen™, Xperio®, Foster Grant®, and Bolon™. It also develops and markets equipment, instruments and services for eyecare professionals. Essilor International is a subsidiary of EssilorLuxottica. The EssilorLuxottica share trades on the Euronext Paris market and is included in the Euro Stoxx 50 and CAC 40 indices. Codes and symbols: ISIN: FR000121667; Reuters: [ESLX.PA](#); Bloomberg: EL:FP.

For more information, please visit www.essilor.com

About Myopia Profile

Myopia Profile is the internationally trusted go-to information resource on clinical myopia management for eye care professionals. Developed by husband-and-wife optometrist team Drs Paul and Kate Gifford, it was first built around the Clinical Myopia Profile patient communication tool developed by Kate from 15 years' experience in her Brisbane CBD practice. Starting as a bulk email to share the tool, then a website, then a Facebook group, Myopia Profile has now grown into a thriving, engaged community of thousands of optometrists around the world, across web and social media platforms. It is the largest and most popular, multi-channel educational resource dedicated to childhood myopia management.

Contacts Essilor

Olga Prenat
Global Director of Education and Professional Relations
Chief Editor of Points de Vue, Essilor International
olga.prenat@essilor.com

Media relations

Maïlis Thiercelin
Tel.: +33 (0)1 49 77 45 02

Contacts Myopia Profile

Kate Gifford
kate@myopiaprofile.com