

# Patient Profile

## SEEING WHAT OTHERS COULDN'T



Nine-year-old **Christopher Conley** loves sports and excels academically. “Christopher didn’t complain about his eyes and his teachers and coaches never said anything about his vision,” said his mother, Mrs. Conley. In fact, whenever Christopher went for his yearly eye exam, he was always able to read the eye chart with no problem. There was never any indication he had difficulty seeing.

Suddenly, tragedy struck the family. His father was involved in a traumatic accident that resulted in frequent and consistent visits from friends and family. Every time Christopher was introduced to a visitor, he would always ask who they were five minutes later, as

if he had never seen them before. Once Mrs. Conley realized Christopher had difficulty recognizing the faces of people he saw regularly, she decided it was time to take him to an optometrist. His father was already being treated at the Head Trauma Vision Rehabilitation Unit at University Eye Center for brain-related vision issues due to his accident, so she brought Christopher in to see the doctors at the renowned UEC Pediatric Service.

During his initial evaluation at the UEC, Christopher was able to read the eye chart clearly until the doctors began using different letters to test each eye. They soon realized that Christopher had a combination of great memorization

skills and high blur interpretation, which allowed him to deduce what the letters were at a distance.

“At the yearly eye exams I took him to the same chart was used for each eye,” Mrs. Conley explained. “He would memorize the letters he was able to interpret with the less myopic eye and repeat them back when they tested the other one.”

**Dr. Ida Chung**, Chief of Pediatrics, who was able to diagnose the myopia after performing a complete examination, said Christopher’s story “tells how important comprehensive eye exams are in helping diagnose eye problems in children. It also tells how parents don’t know whether their children have eye problems and even children with no apparent eye complaints can have eye problems.”

“What I am impressed about is how careful and meticulous they were during the eye exam they gave my son. They actually acknowledged him and listened to him when he spoke,” said Mrs. Conley. “I feel like the doctors at the UEC care about your vision as much as you do.” She adds, “Had I come here to have his eyes checked sooner, they probably wouldn’t have advised me to wait as the other doctors did, and we could have caught this problem earlier.”