



Ellis Hollinshead trying on his new glasses.

Lions Club helps young boy

What an exciting year! We have a preschooler; he's a boy, a boy who hates coloring, drawing, and learning his alphabet. We've been excited for this moment all year because maybe it will miraculously change. In November we had our very first parent teacher conferences, and it was everything we expected. He still hates coloring, knowing a few letters by sight, but he LOVES school. At home I've tried every method I could think of to make learning fun, but it always ended in pencils being thrown down and tears.

Fast forward to December 5th, we ventured home to New Rockford for Santa Days. We were successful at playing several games before we were told about a vision screening in another room. If you went in there, you received a sticker just for going. What kid doesn't love stickers? We ventured in and were met by Mary Gehrtz and Kristi Swenson. Ellis sat in a chair and faced Kristi who was holding an eyesight computer. All he had to do was look at the nose of the face that was on the machine. She told us all the great things it does. Based on the data from Ellis, it gave us a referral. I was truly hoping the machine had failed. Our 3-year-old daughter, Ashtyn, was up next. She passed with flying colors. Before long the light

bulb went off. Maybe he wasn't just 'a boy who hated everything learning' he was a boy that couldn't see.

The following Monday I was able to get Ellis into our family eye doctor in Jamestown. I was still hoping and praying the Lions Club test was wrong. It wasn't 10 minutes into our appointment and the doctor advised that Ellis does not have bad vision, one for the win in a family of horrible eye vision. However, he does have severe astigmatism. He can't see up close, he can't see far away. Two weeks later we received his glasses. His first statements were, "Wow! Theoflor is huge," "My feet are so huge, mom" and "Mom, I can see your eyes!" The whole day was filled with firsts for an almost 5-year-old little boy. We went out to eat at the Pizza Ranch and for the first time ever he wanted to color, and colored inside the lines!

At no time, had we ever suspected his eyesight to be the root of our problems. He has only known the way he has ever seen things, he never knew there was a clear world out there. Thanks to the New Rockford Lions Club for taking time to be at Santa Days. Without the chance of our paths crossing, I would still be a frustrated parent with a frustrated child.

Submitted by Jeff, Melissa, Ellis and Ashtyn Hollinshead, Rogers, North Dakota.