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Poster Abstracts

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A market study on compliance factors and the assessment of children's suitability for contact lens wear with a perspective on a screening questionnaire

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Purpose: Many eye care professionals were sceptical about fitting contact lenses for children and adolescents because of concerns regarding compliance with care and hygiene guidelines. This study investigated which factors influenced children's compliance with contact lens wear. The findings were intended to provide the basis for developing a tool to support contact lens fitters in assessing the suitability of children and adolescents.

Method: A comprehensive literature review was used to analyse relevant influencing factors, and an online questionnaire was developed on this basis. 85 professionals (43% male, 56% female) from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland who regularly fitted contact lenses for children provided their assessment of factors influencing children's compliance. The collected data were analysed descriptively (frequencies and mean values) and compared with scientific findings to derive practical criteria for evaluating children's suitability for contact lens wear.

Results: The analysis showed that intrinsic motivation, individual developmental stage (e.g. cognitive maturity and sense of responsibility), hygienic behaviour, and parental support were significant influencing factors. Regarding the age at which children were suitable for contact lens wear, there was considerable variation among the participants. According to the professionals' assessments, the average age for independent insertion and removal was 7 years, and 8 years for independent care. Participants also reported that intrinsic motivation usually developed at around 10 years of age.

Conclusions: The results clearly demonstrated that age alone was not sufficient to assess a child's suitability for contact lens wear. Individual factors such as intrinsic motivation, cognitive maturity, sense of responsibility, and parental support were essential and should be included in the assessment of children and adolescents.

Keywords: compliance, contact lenses, children, suitability

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