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**Uveitis**  
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**Vitreo-Retinal Surgery**  
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Dear Parents and Educators

Regarding: The Partial Eclipse occurring **4/8/24** that will occur from approximately the hours **2:05PM through and until 4:33PM** with a maximal, yet partial coverage of the Sun, at **3:21 PM** (Dismissal time for most of our schools)

I am quite concerned that children who will be outside (and riding in cars) at that time, might be quite intrigued, interested, and curious to gaze at the Eclipse as it unfolds and as their surroundings become darker and darker.

Unfortunately, this places the children (and adults) at considerable risk for a permanently blinding condition known as Solar Retinopathy.

Solar retinopathy (also known as eclipse retinopathy) refers to a photochemical injury to the macular tissue (central retina). It is commonly associated with sungazing or eclipse viewing.

A short duration of exposure, as little as a few seconds of fixation on the sun, without the proper protective lenses properly in place - can cause solar retinopathy. It can result in moderate to significant loss of vision, with a poor prognosis of any recovery in one or both eyes.... Forever.

There is no proven treatment for solar retinopathy. The mainstay of management is prevention through patient education.

Special Sunglasses known as "Eclipse" glasses can help prevent Solar Retinopathy. Eclipse glasses are NOT regular sunglasses; **regular sunglasses, no matter how dark, are not safe for viewing the Sun.** Safe solar viewers are thousands of times darker and ought to comply with the ISO 12312-2 international standard. One would have to guarantee That the glasses provided the children are manufactured properly to the highest of standards.

Viewing the eclipse through faulty glasses can lead to irreversible blind spots, called scotomas, in a person's vision. Solar retinopathy besides damaging the retina in the back of the eye can also burn sensitive tissues in the front of the eye, leading to an eye "sunburn" called solar keratitis.

Even if one Purchases the approved "Eclipse Glasses" for the children, Supervisors of the children would have to be responsible to ensure Proper fit of the Glasses and Proper full coverage of both eyes of each and every child. The eclipse glasses must completely cover the child's eyes and fit snugly so that no light peeks through. If the Eclipse Glasses are bent or scratched, they will not then provide the proper protection.

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One would also have to firmly ensure that each and every single child would put their eclipse glasses on before looking at the sun and take them off after they look away from it; lest they stare at the marvelous view for even a short time - leading to untreatable, perpetual decreased vision, Chas V'Shalom.

Even should one carefully discuss with the children and Teachers in every class how important these steps are to ensure eye health (and that if they take the eclipse glasses off at any time, they run the risk of causing permanent and lifelong vision loss...) It seems to me this would be quite the challenge to carry through successfully with young, inquisitive children. Children are always pulling off their Glasses or looking over or around them. Some kids are averse to having things on their face, and that's not a child who should be outside peering upward towards the fascination of an eclipse.

The risk of a child even briefly unsupervised, for just a few seconds gazing at the sun without the proper fitting protection snugly in place, is great.

If a Teacher/Supervising adult, would have a small group of students going outside for educational purposes, I think this would be a more controlled safer situation. However, with many children out and about, running and Playing all at the same time, it might be impossible to control the situation safely for all.

It is for these concerns that one might consider keeping the children and the school entirely out of harm's way, by not exposing the children on school grounds during the entire time period when the Eclipse shall be taking Place .....Habah aleinu L'tova.....

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