Visual Hygiene Pointers

Good visual habits can reduce eye stress and therefore reduce the likelihood of adverse visual adaptations.

1. Learn to take regular breaks with prolonged near work.
   - During study, computer work and other sustained close work, take regular rest periods.
   - Utilising a bookmark may help you get into the habit of doing this.
   - Place the bookmark three or four pages in front of where you are reading.
   - When you get to it, it will remind you to stop and look up at something in the distance.
   - Make sure it is clear when you first look up. Any blur even if it is only for a second or two means your focusing system is stressed and tired. You need a longer break or put the close work away.
   - Look back down to your work move the bookmark another three or four pages in front.

2. Make sure you do not get too close to your near work.
   - You should not be any closer than the distance between your knuckles to elbow when placed against your nose.
   - You may not be aware of the fact that you are pulling the work closer to you as your visual system gets tired.

3. Good lighting for all near work is important.

4. Sit up to read. Avoid reading lying in bed or on the floor.

5. Do not sit too close to the TV.
   - No closer than 5 times the screen width or 2 of the child’s body lengths.
   - Very young children naturally sit very close to the TV because they want to be involved using all their senses including tactile.

6. Do not let your child spend long periods reading or on the computer.
   - For every 1 hr take a 15 min break.
   - Off-set high demand near tasks with outdoor activities.
   - Restrict near demands during acute illness.