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Made possible in part by a grant from the Save Our Sight Fund



"Helping Ohioans Enjoy good sight for life"

Preschool Vision Screener Survey Results

Thanks to everyone who took the time to return the Preschool Vision Screening Survey this past winter. Results from this survey help us to fine-tune our trainings to address screener concerns and problems, and also helps us evaluate the overall effectiveness of our vision screening training program.

Following is a summary of the results: Most individuals (62%) who attended a vision screening training and who received their certification, are in fact using their screening skills and equipment by providing vision screenings for young children.

Some of the primary reasons for not performing vision screenings include: job change, no opportunity and no time.

For those who are screening, most people (97%) are doing so according to the criteria presented in the training. For those who aren't, the main reasons are that screening three year olds is sometimes difficult, and it is hard to perform a vision screening when children do not know their shapes or have communication problems. A possible solution to these issues would be to use the pointing cards for the Lea Chart, remembering that children can call the shapes anything they want, as long as they are consistent. Or, a child can simply point to the matching shape on the cards, and doesn't have to verbally name the shapes. Some young three year olds do have trouble understanding what is required of them in the screening. In these instances, rescreening the child would be ideal, or when rescreening is not possible, refer to an eye care professional for a full eye examination.

Those that aren't screening according to PBO criteria most often leave out the Random Dot E test, which is such an important part of a complete vision screening. Children who pass the visual acuity screening can still (and do) fail the RDE screening, indicating that they are not seeing equally out of both of their eyes and may have amblyopia. Amblyopia can lead to permanent vision loss in one eye if it is not detected and treated before the age of 6 or 7.

Prevent Blindness Ohio is fortunate to have so many committed and hard working vision screeners across Ohio working to prevent blindness and preserve sight for young children. Many of you also wrote and told us about some of your vision screening success stories, which are so compelling and serve to emphasize the importance of your work. For example, last year, Randi Carnahan, a nurse from the Worthington school district was screening children who were at school for their kindergarten evaluation. One of the children that Randi performed a vision screening on was Mitchell. Mitchell passed his visual acuity screening, but did not pass his RDE test. Randi met personally with Mitchell's mother and recommended that he receive a full eye examination. Following is a letter from Mitchell's mother, Sherry, that explains the rest of his story:

*Dear Prevent Blindness Ohio Supporters & Volunteers,
Mitchell has come such a long way since last June, when the vision screener you trained, found he had an eye problem (he passed the distance acuity test, but had failed the Random Dot E test) which turned out to be retinoblastoma. He has had his left eye removed; he has had to wear an eye patch for six months; been fitted twice for a prosthetic eye; and had six months of chemotherapy. Now here we are nine months later, and we are so very thankful and feel so very blessed that Mitchell has done and is doing so well both physically and mentally. And more good news... it appears that Mitchell's hair is already starting to grow back in! I am happy to tell you that Mitchell will live a happy, healthy life. He is just like any other 5 year old boy and he loves going to kindergarten and he loves playing soccer and t-ball.*

Thank you so much for your support of Prevent Blindness Ohio. It is because of you, that children like Mitchell are given a chance to enjoy good vision and good health for a lifetime!

*Sincerely,
Sherry (Mitchell's Mother)*

PREVENT BLINDNESS OHIO

***Vision Screener's
Bulletin***

New Resource Available

Attached to this newsletter is a new resource called **Your Child's Vision** that we hope will be useful for the parents/guardians of the children that you provide vision screenings to. Please use this master copy to make additional copies for your office or log onto our website and click Vision Screening Resources.

Your Child's Vision is intended as an informational piece to be given to the parent/guardian of each child you screen. It contains information on the difference between a vision screening and a vision examination; the importance of good vision for every child; how to locate an eye doctor to schedule a full eye examination; and eye care resources that can assist those families who do not have resources to eye care through insurance or public assistance programs.

Light the Night for Sight

Prevent Blindness Ohio will be having its Annual statewide Light the Night for Sight Walkathons Saturday, June 25 in Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati and Dayton.

The theme of the event is "Safe Summer Celebrations" with the dangers of backyard fireworks being a priority message. Every year there are thousands of serious injuries in the United States due to consumer fireworks use. A quarter of these injuries are to the eye and half involve children. PBO works to advocate against the legalization of backyards fireworks use in Ohio. The LNS Walkathon gives us an opportunity to highlight this message, raise money and have fun with this family-oriented event.

Please sign up to participate in the walk at WWW.LNSWALK.org or call 800-301-2020 for more information.



Vision Service Plan *Sight for Students* Program

The Vision Service Plan *Sight for Students* program provides a **free eye exam and glasses**, if prescribed, to **qualifying children throughout the state of Ohio**. It is intended for children who meet the following criteria:

- **Applicant's family income is no more than 200% of federal poverty guidelines**
- **Child is 18 years old or younger**
- **Child is not enrolled in Medicaid or other vision insurance**
- **Child or parent is a U.S. citizen or documented immigrant with a social security number**
- **Child has not used our program during the last 12 months**

Sight for Students provides free eye examinations and glasses for qualifying children

Qualifying children who are in need of this service are identified by VSP Partner Agencies. As a VSP Partner

Agency, you agree to work with Prevent Blindness Ohio to receive vision care benefits for your clients through the Vision Service Plan *Sight for Students* program and adhere to the five criteria listed above. Once a qualifying child is identified, a one-page application form must be completed by the parent with the assistance of the VSP Partner advocate. The form must then be sent/faxed to Prevent

Blindness Ohio so that a voucher can be issued for the child. The voucher will be sent directly to you, the VSP Partner, within 2-3 weeks. Included in the packet is a list of

participating doctors in your area who accept the voucher.

To learn how to participate in the *Sight for Students* program, contact PBO at 614-464-2020 ext. 112.

Advocacy

Contact Congress to support programs at the Maternal Child Health Bureau aimed at improving the screening, detection and treatment of vision problems that could result in delayed learning and education in children. Go to www.preventblindness.org and click on "Contact Congress" or call 800-301-2020 for a sample letter that you can send.

Vision disorders (including amblyopia, also known as "lazy eye," strabismus and refractive errors) are the leading cause of impaired health in childhood. Considering the

fact that 85 percent of a child's learning in a normal classroom setting is visual, it is easy to understand how a young child with poor vision might quickly fall behind.

One in four school-age children has a vision problem significant enough to affect their learning. Despite this fact, only 21 percent of children are screened prior to entering school.

Your message to Congress can help change these facts. Contact Congress today!



Eye Health Information for Medical Students and Residents

Prevent Blindness Ohio has been working in cooperation with the Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics to develop a preschool vision screening medical education program that focuses on eye health, the importance of vision screening and methods for vision assessment for young children. This program was piloted this winter at Metro Health Center in Cleveland with the Family Practice and Pediatric residency programs. It is our intent to present this program on a regular basis at each of the 30 programs in Ohio (8 pediatric residencies and 22 family practice residencies) so that physicians and primary care nursing staff begin to incorporate vision screenings in 100% of well-child check ups.

American Academy
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

Ohio Chapter

Vision Screening Recertification

If you attended a preschool vision screening training session in 2002, your vision screening certification has expired (it is good for a three year time period). Prevent Blindness America requires all screeners to apply for recertification. You can do this easily by logging onto our website at www.preventblindness.org/ohio, and clicking the Vision Screening Resources and Certification tab. Go to the Screening Certification section and complete the appropriate test based on your level of screening activity. You will receive your new certification card from PBA a few weeks after you pass the test.

Support the Save Our Sight Fund

When renewing your car registration, whether in person, on the phone, in the mail or via the internet, please remember to support the Save Our Sight (SOS) Fund by donating \$1 or more. It is only through individual donations to the SOS Fund that Prevent Blindness Ohio can continue to train and equip individuals to be preschool vision screeners and to educate thousands of children, their teachers and parents about how to keep their vision healthy and safe. For more information about the SOS Fund, log onto www.saveoursight.org.



Subscribe to PBO's E-Newsletter

Log on to our website at www.preventblindness.org/Ohio and subscribe to our monthly e-publication that provides important information about our sight saving programs and services as well as links to website updates, upcoming events and other news about eye health and safety.



Let us know:

If you or others in your office (i.e. new employees) would like additional preschool vision screening training and equipment, please call our office at 614-464-2020 ext. 103. We would like to be able to accommodate your screening and training needs.

Also, please let us know if you have moved and have new contact information. (i.e. address, phone number or employer) We try to maintain the most current information on all our vision screeners. Email us at: wendyk@pbohio.org. **Thanks!**



1500 W. Third Avenue
Suite 200
Columbus, OH 43212