

“Helping Ohioans Enjoy Good Sight for Life”

Fall, 2007

Sight Saving Services for Ohio's

Children

Funded by the Ohio Dept. of Health, Bureau of Child and Family Health Services,

Save Our Sight Program



Your Efforts Continue to Make a Difference:

Thank you all for sharing your “stories of success” with us about some of the children whose vision you have screened. Here are just a few stories:

- “The first child that I referred had her vision checked and was prescribed glasses. I was very excited to have been part of the reason her vision was corrected. I know it sounds strange, but this child exhibited no symptoms of eye sight problems and she would probably not have been screened if I had not received this training. I feel this is a valuable service that we offer our community.”
- “This is such a valuable service to our children and families that we serve. Many of our parents are not aware of the importance of having their children's eyes checked annually. One of our children failed their eye exam with us. We referred her to an eye specialist. Eyeglasses were prescribed for her. The child is so happy that she can see.”
- “A child received his glasses and looked at his mom and said “Mommy, you have freckles!””
- “I screened all of our Pre-K students in May prior to kindergarten enrollment. I referred three students-two of which needed patching & glasses treatment. One great young man has done so well he already doesn't need to patch anymore & is very successful in kindergarten.”

Preschool Vision Screening Training Opportunities:

This past year, over 400 health-care professionals, childcare providers and community volunteers took advantage of the opportunity to participate in Prevent Blindness Ohio's preschool vision screening training and certification program. Trainings were held across Ohio, providing instruction on how to perform vision screenings for preschool children, and providing the necessary equipment to do so.

Prevent Blindness Ohio worked with many statewide organizations to promote this program among their membership, including the Ohio Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics, the Ohio Osteopathic Association, the Ohio Ophthalmological Society, Ohio Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, the American Academy of Family Physicians Ohio Chapter, ODH Child and Family Health Service Providers, Ohio Association of Free Clinics, Ohio Association of School Nurses, Ohio Nurses Association, , Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association, Ohio Association of Community Health Centers, and the Ohio School Based Health Care Association.

The preschool vision screening training and equipment are funded by the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Child and Family Health Services, Save Our Sight Program.

Check for upcoming training dates and locations on our website at www.pb ohio.org.



PBO Provides Opportunities for Young Children to Learn About Eye Health and Safety

Prevent Blindness Ohio has researched, developed and constructed two exploratory hands-on learning experiences for children and their adult caretakers to better equip them to make wise, informed decisions about their eyes and their vision. Both are funded by the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Child and Family Health Services, Save Our Sight Program. We hope your travel schedule will include a trip to one of the host venues during the coming year so that you and the children that are important to you can become better educated about your precious gift of sight.

New Eye Health and Safety Exhibit Premieres at Boonshoft Museum of Discovery in Dayton



The **new** Wise About Eyes exhibit had its premiere at the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery in Dayton this past June, and was on display through September. Five interactive kiosks provide high-tech activities and learning experiences to educate you and your family about how you can keep your eyes healthy and safe for your lifetime. The learning objectives of each kiosk are aligned with the National Health Education Standards, which have been adopted by the Ohio Department of Health. According to an independent evaluation and analysis completed of the exhibit, the key educational messages contained in the exhibit are being effectively conveyed to both children and adults who interact with Wise About Eyes.

Activities for all ages include trying to work a maze with impaired vision from an eye disease or disorder; learning how normal vision changes as we age; trying to break eye safety lenses that are designed to protect our eyes from impact injuries; and trying to figure out how our brain helps us see.

Wise About Eyes will be traveling to the Children's Museum in Cincinnati next July, then will be on display at COSI Columbus in January 2009.



Wild About Eyes Kiosk traveling to a library near you!

The Wild About Eyes kiosk provides similar learning opportunities as the Wise About Eyes exhibit in a smaller kiosk design so that it can travel to smaller venues across Ohio. During the next twelve months, the kiosk will be on display at the following libraries: Barberton, Bluffton, Carroll County, Coshocton, Columbus, Fairfield County, Mechanicsburg, Twinsburg, Way, and Wickliffe.

Please log onto our website at www.pbohio.org to view a full display schedule. To date, the kiosk has been on display at 24 libraries, providing over 235,000 children and adults with an interactive, educational eye health and safety experience. A special story hour is held in conjunction with the kiosk being on display at each library. Local and state elected officials, as well as the local Bureau of Motor Vehicles employees, are invited to read books about eye health and safety to the children. The children then engage in hands-on activities related to eye health and safety, and each child attending receives a special goody bag containing brochures relating to eye health and safety and a special book to keep for themselves.



State Senator Kevin Coughlin reading to children at Twinsburg Library

2nd Annual Eyes On Capitol Hill Advocates for Children's Vision Issues

Ohio brought a delegation of 12 participants to the second annual "Eyes On Capitol Hill" campaign, held in Washington, DC in March. "Eyes On Capitol Hill" was developed in an effort to allow Americans to meet with our nation's leaders to discuss their vision challenges and to educate and empower the participants to become advocates in their own state.

Among the participants in the Ohio delegation was Laura Glass and her daughter Kylie from Alliance, Ohio. The Glass family is well aware of the financial and emotional challenges that families with vision problems experience. Two of the three Glass children (Kylie is 7, her sister is 5 and her brother is 3) were born with congenital cataracts, but all three wear glasses. Kylie has already had one cataract removed and has had eye muscle surgery, along with countless hours of patching one eye. She still has more surgery to come. Laura's second daughter has astigmatism and wears glasses. Her son, who is three, had both of his cataracts removed earlier this year and then developed "second cataracts" and spent his summer with a retina specialist having surgery on both eyes again trying to fix them.

Laura and Kylie were able to tell their story to our Ohio Senators Sherrod Brown and George Voinovich and Representatives Pat Tiberi, John Boehner, Deborah Price, Ralph Regula, Charlie Wilson, Mike Turner and Zach Space.

The Ohio delegation sought support for an appropriation to the Maternal & Child Health Bureau that would provide screening, detection and early treatment of vision problems that would otherwise result in delayed learning and education in children and H.R. 507, the Vision Care Act for Kids, which establishes a fund to assist needy families in obtaining professional eye care for their children.

For more information on Eyes on Capitol Hill or on how you can contact your state representative to ask for their support on vision-related issues, please visit www.pbohio.org or call 800-301-2020.



Laura and Kylie in Washington, D.C.

Is It Time for You to Recertify?

If you attended preschool vision screening training session in 2004 or before, your vision screening certification has expired (it is valid for a three year time period). Prevent Blindness America requires all screeners to apply for recertification after three years. You can do this easily by logging onto our website at www.pbohio.org, and clicking the Vision Screening tab. Go to the Online Vision Screening Recertification Exam tab and complete the appropriate test based on your level of screening activity. You will receive your recertification notification from Prevent Blindness Ohio after you pass the test.

Support the Save Our Sight Fund

When renewing your motor vehicle 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. Be sure to tell your family and friends to say "Yes!" and donate to the Save Our Sight Fund today!

For more information about the SOS Fund, log onto www.saveoursight.org.



Tips to Improve Your Vision Screenings:

Based on the responses we received from the Vision Screener Survey, following is a listing of the most-often expressed difficulties that our screeners encounter when they are performing vision screenings on preschool children along with some tips on how to improve the screening:

Difficult to screen young three year olds because they have a short attention span, have difficulty naming the shapes, are shy/unresponsive/fearful, and they often do not follow directions. These problems occur mostly in children that are young three year olds and/or those with cognitive difficulties. You can try to use the picture cards that came with the Lea chart and have the children point to the shapes. You can screen the child over several days (doing one part of the screening at a time) if you have the resources to do this. If the child cannot or will not participate, refer him/her to an eye care professional for a full eye examination.

Difficult to get the child to participate in the acuity screening until we get to the critical passing line. When this occurs, start the screening at the passing line (20/30 for Head Start and day care guidelines and 20/40 for pediatric medical offices) instead of working your way up the chart to the line. How-ever, for all other children, it is important that you screen to the threshold for two reasons: amblyopia can develop from an unequal refractive error and unless you screen both eyes to threshold, this may not be discovered AND you can track the student's progress if you have them for successive years.

Need to attend a "refresher" vision screening class. Any of our certified vision screeners can always participate in the vision screening training again as a refresher. Check out the current training schedule on our website at www.pbohio.org.

With the Random Dot E test, do not think the children always understand what they are looking for and then they just guess. Again, if the child doesn't understand what you are asking him/her to do, please refer directly to an eye care professional for a full eye examination. Try using the model "E" included in your kit to help the child understand.

Children's Vision Screening Educational Materials

If you have been conducting vision screenings on a regular basis, you have probably run out of the initial supply of educational materials on children's eye health and safety that you received at your training. Inserted in this newsletter is an order form. Simply

complete the order form and mail or fax back to PBO along with your payment. These materials contain valuable information for the parents/guardians of the children that you screen. Please consider re-ordering for all of your future preschool vision screenings.

Donate to Prevent Blindness Ohio

Your tax-deductible donation to Prevent Blindness Ohio will help ensure that our eye health and safety programs and services on behalf of all Ohioans are able to continue, and to grow. Please send your donation to: Prevent Blindness Ohio/1500 W. Third Avenue, Suite 200/Columbus/Ohio/43212 or online at www.pbohio.org.

Please remember to "shop smart" when purchasing toys for your children this holiday season, and avoid any toys with projectile parts that can cause permanent vision loss or blindness. Have a happy and safe New Year!

New Programs Funded by the Save Our Sight Fund:

During 2007-08, Prevent Blindness Ohio will be working on several new eye health and safety initiatives with our Save Our Sight partnering agencies, including:

- ⇒ Researching, developing and constructing a new eye health, eye safety and vision development permanent display in the Little Kidspace © exhibition area of COSI Columbus. This area is specially designed for children ages newborn through age six and their adult companions. PBO and COSI will also be developing materials and activities for children who are between the ages of seven through eighteen in the Big Kidspace© area (otherwise known as the “Hang Out Room” as older children hang out there while their younger siblings play in Little Kidspace©). Look for both exhibit areas to open in May, 2008.
- ⇒ Developing and establishing an internet portal on our website (www.pbohio.org) to support all of our vision education initiatives, including Wise About Eyes, Wild About Eyes, Play It Safe With Your Eyes curriculum, and Wise About Eyes Exhibits-To-Go. This will provide children, adults, educators and health care professionals continual access to all of our eye health and safety education programs, regardless of whether they can participate in a program in person (i.e. visiting the exhibit or the kiosk, etc.). The website will include specific eye health and safety information and interactive learning experiences for each of our target audiences: children ages 7-11, their parents/guardians, educators and healthcare professionals. Look for this to go “live” on our website by early 2008.

Check Out Our Website:

Prevent Blindness Ohio is the statewide consumer advocate for sight conservation. A wide variety of information and resources are available on our website (www.pbohio.org), including:

Preschool and Adult vision screening training and equipment opportunities;

Descriptions of PBO’s sight saving programs and services and how you can access them;

Volunteer opportunities;

Copies of our most recent newsletters, press releases and annual reports;

Free Fact Sheets for you to download and print that provide the most up-to-date information on children’s and adult’s vision problems and eye diseases;

Details on how you can be an advocate for local and national public health policies with your elected representatives in Washington, D.C.;

The latest details on how Prevent Blindness Ohio and Prevent Blindness America are funding clinically-based research investigating public health issues related to the burden of illness of eye-related health and safety topics. All research grants focus on preserving sight and preventing blindness;

Information and resources specifically for healthcare providers including the latest research and resources for your patients;

And, much more!





Preschool Vision Screening Materials Order Form

Please indicate which brochures you would like to order, along with the quantity. Include payment with your order. Checks should be made out to: Prevent Blindness Ohio.

- Signs of Eye Trouble in Children** **Quantity** _____
(\$17 for 100 brochures)
- Don't Play Games With Your Eyes** **Quantity** _____
(\$28 for 100 brochures)
- Your Child's Sight** **Quantity** _____
(\$28 for 100 brochures)
- First Aid for Eye Emergencies** **Quantity** _____
(\$20 for 100 stickers)
- Common Eye Problems** **Quantity** _____
(\$28 for 100 brochures)
- Signs of Possible Eye Problems in Adults** **Quantity** _____
(\$17 for 100 brochures)

Other: Please describe and indicate quantity: _____

Your Name: _____

Organization: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Mail this form with your payment to:
Prevent Blindness Ohio/1500 W. Third Avenue, Suite 200/Columbus, OH 43212

Prevent Blindness Ohio

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Columbus, OH 43212