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**PREVENT BLINDNESS AMERICA RELEASES NATIONAL PLATFORM
TO HELP PROTECT CHILDREN'S VISION**

CHICAGO (July 21, 2008) – In an effort to help put an end to unnecessary vision loss in children, Prevent Blindness America, the nation's oldest volunteer eye health and safety organization, and its network of affiliates released today a comprehensive platform on children's eye health. "Our Vision for Children's Vision: A National Call to Action for the Advancement of Children's Vision and Eye Health" provides a detailed strategy to promote children's vision and eye health. It also creates a framework for bringing key stakeholder organizations and individuals together to make children's vision health a national priority.

Because more than 12 million school-age children in America have some form of vision problem, Prevent Blindness America has drafted a comprehensive plan in an attempt to unify all the important resources from the vision health community to work together to expand vision care services.

"Our hope is that by developing this national platform and strategy, other organizations, specifically in the vision, healthcare, education and public health arenas, will join with us to help promote healthy vision for all children," said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness America. "Broad public-private collaboration will help ensure our children can enjoy the gift of sight."

"Our Vision for Children's Vision" was developed by volunteers from Prevent Blindness America's Program & Public Health, Pediatric Vision Advisory, and Eye Safety Committees. These committees consist of leading optometrists, ophthalmologists, and distinguished medical and public health professionals. The platform has six diverse planks designed to provide a framework for sight-saving initiatives and services including:

- Professional Vision Care;
- Vision Screening: A Common Approach and Understanding;
- School Readiness and Vision;
- Children's Eye Safety;
- Public Awareness and Understanding of Children's Vision and Eye Health; and
- Pediatric Vision and Eye Health Research.

"Prevent Blindness America was founded 100 years ago to put an end to the needless suffering of infants to ophthalmia neonatorum, or babies' sore eyes," added Parry. "We are going to continue on with the mission of protecting children's vision and have made it our goal that by

the year 2020, all children will have received a vision screening or eye exam by the time they enter school. This is definitely a tremendous challenge to undertake, but with the help of all our friends in the vision community we can make this dream a reality.”

To obtain a copy of Prevent Blindness America’s Our Vision for Healthy Vision in either electronic or hard copy form, please contact Prevent Blindness America at 1-800-331-2020 or visit www.preventblindness.org.

About Prevent Blindness America

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, divisions and chapters, it's committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020 or visit us on the Web at www.preventblindness.org.

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