



Leading Eyecare Industry Advocates Team Up to Fight for Mandatory Comprehensive Eye Exams before Students Enter Kindergarten

'Kids See: Success' Initiative Created through a Partnership with Optometry Giving Sight, Vision Impact Institute and VSP Global

New York, August 11, 2016 – As parents prepare for the upcoming school year, they are making sure their children have all the right tools to succeed - from three-ring binders, to well-fitting shoes – but many overlook a critical piece to the 'school success puzzle' – a comprehensive eye exam. Without this, parents may be sending their children to school with an undetected vision condition that can impair development, interfere with learning, and contribute to behavioral issues.

As 80 percent of learning takes place through our eyes, a comprehensive eye exam is the only way to ensure a child can see clearly and has healthy eyes that work properly. It is also one of the most important ways parents can give their child the best possible chance at success.

To advocate for every child's right to see clearly, [Optometry Giving Sight](#), [Vision Impact Institute](#) and [VSP Global](#) have teamed up to form Kids See: Success, with the goal of educating parents, state and city legislatures, child advocacy groups, school nurses, teachers and administrators about the need for mandatory comprehensive eye exams prior to entering kindergarten.

"Kids See: Success is a natural extension of the Vision Impact Institute's mission to promote the importance of healthy vision and draw attention to uncorrected refractive errors which negatively impact quality of life in children and adults," said Maureen Cavanagh, president, Vision Impact Institute. "The initiative will focus its efforts on one city in the United States to raise awareness of the need for a comprehensive eye exam. If we establish a baseline by the age of five, we can ensure many of the negative effects of uncorrected vision are avoided. In addition, vision conditions like amblyopia, which can lead to permanent blindness if not identified and treated by age seven, can be diagnosed through early vision exams."

According to the National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health, the economic costs of children's vision disorders amount to \$10 billion annually in the United States, taking into account the costs of medical care, vision aids and devices, caregivers, special education, vision screening programs, federal assistance programs and quality of life losses. In addition, children with untreated amblyopia will earn 12% less over their working lifetime than a treated child, according to the Children's Eye Foundation.



“Participating in the Kids See: Success pilot perfectly aligns with our mission to help expand access to eye care,” said Pat McNeil, chief communications officer, VSP Global. “While many states and cities require vision screenings prior to entering school, we know that is not enough. We believe a comprehensive eye exam from an eye doctor is the best way to determine whether a child’s eyes are healthy and working properly, which is critical to positioning them for academic success.”

While vision screenings can detect some problems, more serious vision issues may go undetected, including binocular vision problems and amblyopia (lazy eye), which can cause vision loss in children. However, a comprehensive eye exam can help detect and treat these conditions earlier.

“A comprehensive eye exam can make the difference between poverty and opportunity, and we want to give all children that opportunity as early as possible,” said Clive Miller, Global CEO of Optometry Giving Sight. “With one in four children in the US having an undetected vision condition, our goal is to drastically improve this statistic and help provide all children with a level playing field.”

About Kids See: Success

It is a fundamental right for children to see clearly. However, in the United States, one in four children has an undetected vision condition that can limit their academic and social success. That is why [Optometry Giving Sight](#), [Vision Impact Institute](#) and [VSP Global](#) founded Kids See: Success – to encourage cities and states across the U.S. to require a comprehensive eye exam for children entering kindergarten. Only through a comprehensive eye exam can parents and teachers ensure that a child can actually see, that his or her eyes are healthy and working properly, and that he or she is equipped to learn!

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