

NCEF Vision Initiative

Since 2012, NCEF has invested \$14,291,917.76 into the community.

The Issue

Research indicates that significant vision problems are prevalent in one in four of all school-aged children in the United States and one of the most prevalent handicapping conditions in childhood. Low-income and minority children are at a greater risk of under-diagnosis and under-treatment of vision problems as well as an unmet need for vision care services. Due to lack of funding and access to quality care, children are being screened at low rates and vision issues are often missed. Further, those screened often do not receive the necessary follow-up treatment.

The failure to treat vision disorders in children affect such issues as childhood development, learning performance, self-esteem, social-emotional behavior, academic achievement, high school drop-out rates and juvenile delinquency. Experts estimate during the first twelve years 80% of what we learn comes through the visual processing of information, yet two out of three children in the United States do not receive any preventative vision care before entering elementary school. Prior to NCEF's Vision Initiative, students in Collier County were only screened for vision issues in grades kindergarten, first, third and sixth grade.

Fast Facts*

- **One in four children** has a vision problem.
- **80% of what children learn** is through the visual processing of information.
- Among Title I* students and academically and behaviorally at-risk children, research indicates that up to **85% have vision problems** that are either undetected or untreated.

** Title I refers to schools with high numbers or high percentages of children who are disadvantaged.*

**Data from National Center for Children's Vision & Eye Health, American Academy of Ophthalmology.*

Collaborative Successes

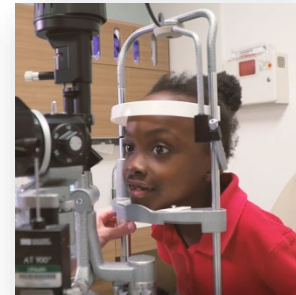
- To-date, **183,427 screenings** have been performed and **45,745 pairs of glasses** have been distributed.
- **Over 1,000 children** receive comprehensive vision exams annually.*
- **Over 300 children** receive tertiary care annually.*
- **94% of children with new glasses** improved at least one letter grade in two or more subjects.

- **96% of children with new glasses** improved significantly in behavior and attendance.
- A **full-time Vision Initiative navigator** liaises with Collier County Public Schools, tertiary care partners and families to ensure children receive follow-up exams and treatment.
- **100% of children needing glasses** were provided with two pairs within a month of their screening, one for home and one for school.
- NCEF funds support early intervention services, transition programs and an annual summer camp for **nearly 50 children with limited or no eyesight**.
- With NCEF funding, Florida Lions Eye Clinic purchased **Spot Vision Screeners** for the majority of local pediatric offices in the county to integrate ocular care with pediatric visits, enabling early detection for vision issues.

**Numbers vary depending on need*

Meet the Louis Family

Through the Vision Initiative, Woody Louis was referred to the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute for further tertiary care. During the evaluation, Dr. Schwartz learned that Woody had a twin sister and 4 other siblings at home, and after determining that Woody had strabismus and amblyopia, he felt it was best to evaluate all of the children. Since that time, all of the Louis children have been in the care of Bascom Palmer, some with a similar diagnosis but also varying vision related obstacles including glaucoma and keratoconus. Two of the children including Julie, Woody's twin sister, have already undergone surgery. Most recently, the youngest in the family, now just three years old was also diagnosed with strabismus, but it was caught so early that it will likely be corrected in time without needing surgery.



How your dollars make a difference:

\$50,000 supports a vision navigator to assist with connecting parents to vision services

\$25,000 ensures 6 children receive surgery to correct amblyopia (*lazy eye*)

\$10,000 provides 70 children with eye exams performed by a pediatric ophthalmologist

\$5,000 provides one Spot Vision Screener for a pediatrician's office

\$2,500 provides 100 children with vision screenings

\$1,000 supplies 14 children with two pairs of eyeglasses—one for home and one for school



Strategic Initiative Partners



LIGHTHOUSE
FOR BLINDNESS & VISION LOSS
OF COLLIER COUNTY