



Star Pupils is a trademark program
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Prevent Blindness America Wants All Children to be Star Pupils

Prevent Blindness America Launches National Children's Eye Health Campaign to Help Save Sight

CHICAGO (March 1, 2010) – Because one out of three children in the United States do not receive critical eye care services before the age of six, many children are at risk of suffering vision loss. Prevent Blindness America, the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization, is launching its "Star Pupils" campaign, the organization's children's platform, designed to educate parents on children's vision issues. The campaign also seeks donations to provide disadvantaged children with access to vision care.

The Star Pupils campaign will arm parents with information they need in order to protect their kids' eyes at play and school to ensure a lifetime of quality vision. Parents may simply visit starpupils.org to receive free sight-saving information about their child's eyes including information on:

- Common Eye Problems in Children
- Eye Safety
- A Family At-Home Vision Test

Starpupils.org also provides useful information for parents of school-age children. Since every state has regulations that vary, the Web site houses a comprehensive database for children's vision care requirements for entering schools. Parents are also encouraged to share stories of how their child's vision health has impacted their lives.

"We are excited to launch this public awareness campaign. Healthy eyes and vision are imperative to a child's success in the classroom," said Hugh R. Parry, president and

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CEO of Prevent Blindness America. "With 25 percent of students in grades kindergarten through sixth having some form of visual problem that is serious enough to impede learning, it is critical for us to make our children's vision health a priority today to ensure their success well in to the future."

Without a certified vision screening or eye exam, a child may have serious undetected vision problems. In fact, some potentially blinding eye diseases and conditions can be successfully treated if detected early in life. Possible vision conditions in children include amblyopia, or "lazy eye," strabismus, or "crossed eyes." Amblyopia is the most common cause of visual impairment in childhood and is responsible for more loss of vision in people age 45 and younger than all other eye diseases and trauma combined.

According to vision industry statistics, 80 percent of children diagnosed with a learning disability have an undiagnosed vision problem. And, 70 percent of juvenile delinquents have visual problems.

President Barack Obama stated "No child should be falling behind at school because he can't hear the teacher or see the blackboard. I refuse to accept that millions of our kids fail to reach their full potential because we fail to meet their basic needs."

"What concerns us more than anything is that many do not see vision as a basic need. We see changing that perception as our responsibility. We want to encourage parents, caregivers and even our government representatives to take a moment to think about the importance that vision has in their lives and ensure that our children are given every opportunity to have access to quality vision care," added Parry. "Our nation's future is in our children's eyes."

For more information on Star Pupils, please visit starpupils.org or call 1 (800) 331-2020. Prevent Blindness America also offers a variety of fact sheets and brochures on children's vision issues including an at-home eye test. All children's materials can be found at 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 screenings, 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, Prevent Blindness America is 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 preventblindness.org.

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