



Media Contact:

Yessenia Anderson

yessan@vsp.com | 916.204.3392

VSP Vision Care and Prevent Blindness Launch ‘Clicks for Kids’ to Enhance Access to Vision Screenings and Eye Exams for Head Start Children

Campaign to help fund vision screening trainings in 25 Head Start Programs throughout the U.S. and provide access to eye exams and glasses for children in vulnerable communities

Rancho Cordova, Calif., October 16, 2017 – Healthy vision is essential to a child’s ability to learn, play sports or carry out daily tasks, and receiving eye care early on can help to detect problems that could impair eyesight for life. [VSP Vision Care](#) and [Prevent Blindness](#) launched Vision to Share: ‘Clicks for Kids’ as a way to help bridge the gap in access to care for a population whose need for eye care is often unmet. With every click or share, VSP will donate \$1, up to \$20,000 in total, so that Head Start children ages 3, 4, and 5 years old, in 25 underserved communities across the United States, have increased access to vision screenings and comprehensive eye examinations, and treatment as needed before they enter school.

A vision screening will assess a child’s vision for the most common vision problems and refer the child to an eye care professional for further evaluation. The screening can also help introduce the conversation around eye health to the child and their parent/guardian to ensure the child’s eyes stay safe and healthy- for example by receiving regular comprehensive eye exams as their child grows.

To ensure each child identified with a potential vision issue has access to a comprehensive eye exam, each Head Start center will also receive VSP Global Eyes of Hope gift certificates. The certificates provide vulnerable Head Start families with access to comprehensive eye exams and glasses from a local VSP network doctor at no cost.

“Head Start is the national commitment to give every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, an opportunity to succeed in school and in life. We offer vulnerable families a unique whole child program model designed to enhance their child’s growth and development,” said Yasmina Vinci, Executive Director of the National Head Start Association. “With support from insightful partners such as VSP, Head Start provides children with the critical health services that are essential to our comprehensive approach to early childhood development.”

“In the United States, one in five Head Start children has a vision problem,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “With support from VSP, we’ll be able to provide Head Start programs with new equipment and training to help them as they identify possible vision problems and support families in accessing comprehensive eye exams and glasses for their children.”

At the end of the campaign VSP will provide one of the 25 Head Start centers with additional vision screening equipment and educational toys to make learning fun. To enter, the center must submit a photograph via e-mail to ClickforKidsVision@preventblindness.org by October 31, 2017. The email submission should demonstrate the importance of vision and learning in their program. The winning Head Start center will be announced in November.

About VSP Global

As a doctor-governed company, VSP Global® exists to create value for members and opportunities for VSP network doctors. VSP Global’s complementary businesses include VSP® Vision Care, the only national not-for-profit vision benefits company, which provides access to eye care for its 84 million members around the world through a network of 38,000 eye doctors; Marchon® Eyewear, Inc., one of the world’s largest designers, manufacturers and distributors of

high quality eyewear and sunwear; VSP Optics Group, industry leaders in ophthalmic technology and lab services, providing custom lens solutions for the vision and lifestyle needs of patients; Eyefinity®, the eye care industry's largest electronic health records and practice management software company, and VSP Omni-Channel Solutions, which creates connected consumer experiences designed to strengthen the relationship between VSP members and their eye doctors. To date, VSP network doctors have provided eye exams and eyewear at no-cost to over a million people in need through a partnership with VSP Global's Eyes of Hope®.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness 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 touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and 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, Prevent Blindness 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 or facebook.com/preventblindness.

About National Head Start Association (NHSA):

The National Head Start Association is a not-for-profit organization committed to the belief that every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, has the ability to succeed in school and in life. The opportunities offered by Head Start lead to healthier, empowered children and families, and stronger, more vibrant communities. NHSA is the voice for more than 1 million children, 200,000 staff and 1,600 Head Start grantees in the United States. Visit www.nhsa.org and follow @NatlHeadStart for more information.

**1 in 5 preschool children has a vision problem: This statement specifically references pre-school children enrolled in Head Start (Ying G, Maguire MG, Cyert LA, et al. Prevalence of Vision Disorders by Racial and Ethnic Group among Children Participating in Head Start. Ophthalmology, 2014;121(3):630-636).*