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The National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness Convenes New Children’s Vision Equity Alliance

-The “Children’s Vision Equity Alliance” was created to advance equity in children’s vision and eye health-

CHICAGO (Nov. 17, 2021) – For more than 10 years, [The National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness \(NCCVEH\)](#) has worked to ensure that children across the country have equitable access to quality vision and eye care services. To further this commitment, the NCCVEH is working with other leading stakeholders to establish [The Children’s Vision Equity Alliance \(CVEA\)](#). By bringing together experts and resources from eye health, education and public health organizations in the United States, the CVEA will work to advance equity in children’s vision and eye health through education, access, policies, and partnerships.

According to the recent report from the NCCVEH, “[Children’s Vision and Eye Health: A Snapshot of Current National Issues 2nd Edition](#),” children experiencing health and socioeconomic inequities have lower rates of vision testing, experience disparities in visual impairment, and have reduced access to care. Additionally, Latino and Black/African-American children are two to three times more likely to have unmet vision needs. Without early detection and treatment, uncorrected vision disorders can impair child development, interfere with learning, and even lead to permanent vision loss.

To help address these challenges, the initial goals of the CVEA are to:

- Foster education about the role of vision in the learning, health, and development of children in the target population of underserved communities of color (specifically Black/African-American, Indigenous and Latinx communities), beginning with a social media campaign to educate targeted populations.
- Advocate for policies and practices to support equitable access to vision care for children.
- Develop partnerships to support healthy vision and eye health equity for children.

- Continue to attract leaders from the fields of ophthalmology, optometry, public health, school nursing, early childhood care and education, medical care, and parent education and engagement who work toward health equity.

“Since our founding in 1908, Prevent Blindness has worked to ensure all children have the eye care access they deserve to enjoy healthy vision across their lifetimes,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “Through the new Children’s Vision Equity Alliance, coordinated by our National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness, we are working collaboratively with leaders, stakeholders and advocates to make sure we evolve and grow to effectively and strategically respond to the needs of families in underserved populations and communities.”

In 2009, Prevent Blindness, with support from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau at the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, established the NCCVEH. The mission of the NCCVEH is to develop a coordinated public health infrastructure to promote and ensure a comprehensive, multi-tiered continuum of vision care for children. In 2019 and 2020, the NCCVEH provided technical assistance to more than 35 states, several national organizations, and Community of Practice teams across the country. In total, assistance was provided to 4,895 professionals, impacting 2,927,000 children across the nation.

For more information about The Children’s Vision Equity Alliance or children’s vision health topics, please visit <https://nationalcenter.preventblindness.org/childrens-vision-equity-alliance> or contact Donna Fishman at (800) 331-2020 or dfishman@preventblindness.org.

About Prevent Blindness and its National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health

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. In 2009, Prevent Blindness established the National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health (NCCVEH), with support from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration’s Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Serving as a national resource for the establishment of a public health infrastructure, the NCCVEH advances and promotes children’s vision and eye care, providing leadership and training to public entities throughout the United States. The NCCVEH is advised by a committee of national experts and leaders from the fields of ophthalmology, optometry, pediatrics, nursing, family advocates and public health to guide the work and recommendations of the NCCVEH. 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 <http://nationalcenter.preventblindness.org>.

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