

## **National Nonprofit Prevent Blindness to Celebrate “Prevent Blindness Day” on June 1, the organization’s 115<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

[Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s oldest eye health and safety nonprofit organization, will be celebrating its 115<sup>th</sup> birthday on June 1, 2023. The group is marking the occasion by declaring it as “Prevent Blindness Day.”

Prevent Blindness was founded in 1908, as the “Committee on Prevention of Blindness” under the previously-established New York Association for the Blind. In 1928, it was renamed the “National Society for the Prevention of Blindness,” and shortened to the “National Society to Prevent Blindness” in 1928. Then in 1978, the organization began doing business as “Prevent Blindness America,” which was later shortened to “Prevent Blindness.”

Established as a public health advocacy organization, the earliest Prevent Blindness volunteers were dedicated to eradicating a preventable form of blindness in newborns called ophthalmia neonatorum, also known as “babies’ sore eyes.” Through successfully leading legislation that mandated the application of sight-saving eyedrops (a solution of silver nitrate) at birth, the incidence of blindness due to babies’ sore eyes was reduced by 75 percent.

Over the next century, Prevent Blindness expanded by addressing eye safety in the work place in the mid-1950s during the industrial revolution, opening affiliate offices across the country, implementing the nation’s earliest screening programs for children and for glaucoma detection, focusing attention on vision population health research initiatives, advocating for increased government funding for vision and eye health programs at the state and national levels, and developing programs to support and create community among patients. Highlights from the history of Prevent Blindness may be found at [PreventBlindness.org/our-history/](https://PreventBlindness.org/our-history/).

As part of the celebration, Prevent Blindness is asking for gifts to support its mission. Supporters are encouraged to visit [PreventBlindness.org/birthday](https://PreventBlindness.org/birthday) and give a gift of \$115 or any amount.

Additionally, the public is encouraged to send a birthday message to Prevent Blindness across various social media channels, including the hashtags #HBDPreventBlindness and #PreventBlindnessDay.

“Our 115<sup>th</sup> birthday is a great opportunity for us to reflect on the impressive history of our organization and to recognize the amazing people who helped get us to where we are today,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “We are thrilled to continue the legacy of our founders and work towards saving sight among generations to come.”

For information about Prevent Blindness and its programs, please visit [PreventBlindness.org](https://PreventBlindness.org). To make a donation to support its sight-saving programs, please go to [PreventBlindness.org/birthday](https://PreventBlindness.org/birthday).

**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, visit us at [PreventBlindness.org](http://PreventBlindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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