



PRESS RELEASE

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Vision Screenings for Preschoolers Detect Early Vision Problems

St. Louis, Mo. (June 21, 2005) – When Deana Rosi signed a permission slip allowing her son, Nicholas, to receive a vision screening by the Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation at his daycare, she had no clue how much it would positively impact his vision. The simple and non-invasive screening that aids in detecting common vision disorders like amblyopia, also known as “lazy eye,” helped to save her son’s sight.

“We had no idea that he had amblyopia,” said Deana Rossi of St. Peters, Mo. “He didn’t display any abnormal signs to us that there was a vision problem.”

Amblyopia effects approximately 4 percent of the population and occurs when the brain ignores messages or information sent from one eye. Eventually the weak or amblyopic eye will cease functioning properly and the stronger of the two eyes will take over, leading to vision problems. If left untreated, vision in the amblyopic eye may be completely lost.

The Foundation’s free vision screening program for preschool aged children works with local daycares and other community events to provide simple and accessible amblyopia screening. In the past year alone, the Foundation was able to screen over 10,000 children in the state of Missouri. During a screening, a special photorefractive camera is used to take a picture of the child’s eyes. The photos are sent to volunteer pediatric ophthalmologists who study a red eye flash pattern in the photo to determine if a vision condition like amblyopia might exist. Parents are notified within a month’s time of the screening results. If the child exhibits abnormal results parents are urged to take their child to see an eye care specialist for further testing and treatment.

The Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation will be offering free vision screenings for children from 6 months to five years of age on June 23-25 at the St. Louis Zoo. The screenings will be conducted from 10 a.m. through 4 p.m. each day in the Living World Exhibit. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to the Foundation’s screening area for a potentially sight-saving vision screening.

The Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation based out of Columbia, Mo. The Foundation is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of sight through its vision programs including: Amblyopia Prevention Screening, Glaucoma Detection Screening, Eyeglass Recycling, Eye Care Assistance, the Heartland Lions Eye Banks and the support of ocular research. For more information on our programs, please visit www.mlerf.org.

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