

Summer 2010



Letter From the Chair of the NEHEP Planning Committee

Although numerous innovations have improved the diagnosis and treatment of eye disease in recent years, many people do not receive timely eye care, allowing eye diseases to develop into advanced stages and delaying potentially sight-

saving treatment. As with other facets of health care, a multitude of environmental, behavioral, and social factors can serve as barriers to accessing appropriate eye care.

A key resource for promoting eye health at the community level is the National Eye Institute's (NEI's) Healthy Vision Community Awards (HVCA) Program, currently in its eighth year. This program provides up to \$10,000 in seed money to nonprofit, community-based organizations to support grassroots eye health education efforts. The HVCA program has provided award funds to hundreds of community-based projects across the country in support of the broader effort to achieve healthy vision for everyone.

The following success stories, among many others described in the Healthy Vision Community Programs Database at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/hvcpdatabase>, provide examples of how these awards can help you make a difference:

- A Clear Vision, a program of Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa, screened more than 1,000 children in preschools and childcare settings and produced a toolkit for childcare staff members and other educational materials that promote eye health.
- The Whittier Street Health Center, a nonprofit organization in the Boston area, performed more than 200 diabetic eye examinations at numerous community events to reach underserved individuals in an urban, disproportionately minority population.

Educational Resource Spotlight: *Eye Safety at Work Magnet*

USE THEM OR LOSE THEM!



The ABCs of Prevention:

- A**ssess your hazards and have a safe worksite.
- B**e sure your eyewear fits properly.
- C**omply with eye safety requirements.



For more information call: 1-800-35-NIOSH



Order other NEI
materials online at
<http://catalog.nei.nih.gov/>.

Healthy Vision Community Programs Database



This easy-to-search resource can help you learn about new ways to address eye health issues and replicate eye health-related projects in your community.

Visit the Healthy Vision Community Programs Database at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/hvcpdatabase>.

- The Poarch Band of Creek Indians in Alabama increased the demand for eye examinations through successful promotion activities, with resources being leveraged by their work with community agencies to provide glasses to medically indigent patients.

The HVCA program is incorporating some added features for the 2011 funding cycle. These include an updated website, new project topic areas, an online application process, and accompanying tools such as an online tutorial. Forming partnerships is strongly encouraged, with capacity-building as a long-range goal. To learn more about the HVCA program, please visit <http://www.nei.nih.gov/hvca>. In addition, if you have a program to share, please click on “Submit a Program” on the Healthy Vision Community Programs Database.

Remember, as always, you can take advantage of the many NEI educational resources that are described on the NEHEP Website and at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/resources/hvca/resources.asp>. Thank you for your many efforts in support of our shared public health goals.

Anne Louise Coleman, M.D., Ph.D.

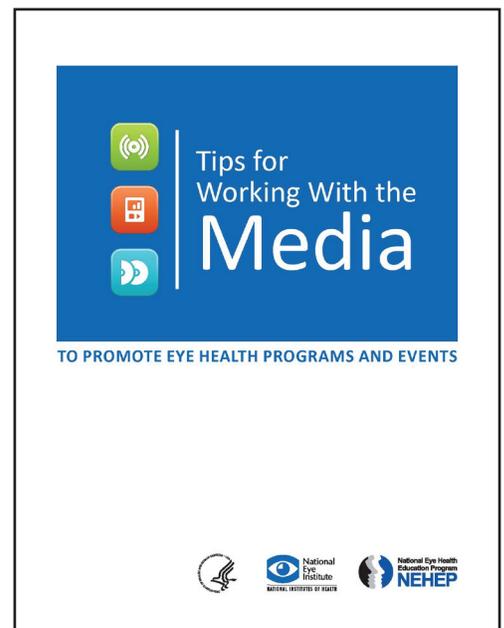
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NEHEP Guide to Working With the Media

The media have an enormous influence on our society by shaping public opinion, and it can play a vital role in educating Americans about ways to lead longer, healthier, and more productive lives. Healthy vision programs can benefit when the media help to deliver health-related messages to the public. As you carry out your own community-based programs, you can develop positive working relationships with print and broadcast professionals and other organizations in your community.

To assist you in these efforts, the National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) has developed the Media Guide: Tips for Working With the Media to Promote Eye Health Programs and Events. You can access it at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/media/pdf/MediaGuide.pdf>.



This guide is filled with practical information that you can use to develop media materials, learn about ways to generate positive news media coverage for your program, and raise awareness about eye health in your community.

NEHEP also offers a variety of radio and print public service announcements in English and Spanish that you can customize for your media efforts. These resources are not copyrighted and may be reproduced without permission. To see the available announcements, visit the links in the Audio Visuals and Graphics section at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/media/index.asp>.

Applications Now Available for 2011 Healthy Vision Community Awards

The National Eye Institute (NEI) recognizes the importance of strengthening the capacity of community-based organizations to expand existing eye health education programs or start new ones. Through its



Healthy Vision Community Awards (HVCA) Program, NEI provides up to \$10,000 in seed money to nonprofit, community-based organizations to support grassroots eye health education efforts. NEI encourages you to help make vision a health priority in your community by applying for a 2011 award or encouraging others to apply. For the first time since the HVCA Program was established in 2003, the application process will be completely electronic. A web-based tutorial will be available to assist applicants in using the new online system.

Nonprofit organizations—including, but not limited to, community-based organizations and groups, minority-based organizations, schools, faith-based organizations, civic and fraternal groups, and local health departments and agencies—may apply. Universities and university-affiliations, such as medical centers, are precluded from receiving an award directly, but are welcome to

collaborate with community-based organizations. Proposed projects must focus on eye health education and promotion, be innovative, have the potential for sustainability once funding ends, and address one or more of the following topics:

- Age-related macular degeneration
- Diabetic eye disease
- Glaucoma
- Occupational eye safety
- Vision rehabilitation

Because new topic areas have been chosen for 2011 projects, HVCA 2010 recipients are not eligible to apply for a continuation (renewal) project. They may, however, submit an application to receive funding for a new program.

Applications for the 2011 funding cycle are now available at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/hvca>. Please make note of the following dates:

- **August 30, 2010**—Applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. EST
- **March 2011**—Awardees are notified

For additional program information visit <http://www.nei.nih.gov/hvca>. If you need additional information about the HVCA Program, including eligibility requirements, please e-mail your questions to HVCAMail@shs.net.

To find program ideas or to search for programs that have been funded in your state, visit the Healthy Vision Community Programs Database at <http://www.nei.nih.gov/hvcpdatabase>.

NEHEP Partnership Efforts Contribute to a Successful Healthy Vision Month 2010

The National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) gratefully acknowledges Partnership organizations who helped make Healthy Vision Month (HVM) 2010 a success. These organizations include the following:

- American Academy of Ophthalmology
- American Foundation for the Blind
- American Optometric Association
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- EyeCare America
- Glaucoma Research Foundation
- Macular Degeneration Partnership
- National Council on Aging
- National Diabetes Education Program
- Prevent Blindness America
- The Vision Council



Held each year since 2003, HVM was established to elevate vision as a health priority for the Nation. The purpose of the NEHEP Partnership is to establish ongoing, interactive, mutually beneficial relationships between the the National Eye Institute (NEI) and other organizations to achieve healthy vision for everyone. Their efforts are a powerful force in giving HVM a national voice and are vital to educating the

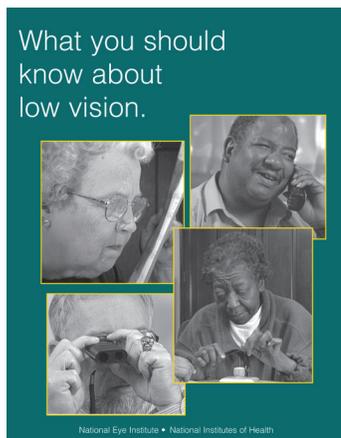
community all year long about the importance of comprehensive dilated eye exams in detecting eye diseases and conditions. During HVM in May, NEHEP Partnership organizations collectively employed a variety of innovative activities that include the following:

- Posting an announcement on their website, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn pages.
- Sending an e-blast to members.
- Developing a podcast on the importance of comprehensive dilated eye exams.
- Sending information through RSS feeds (RSS, or Really Simple Syndication, publishes frequently updated data—blogs, news headlines, audio/video—in a standardized format).
- Placing an article in print or electronic newsletters.
- Issuing a news release on HVM 2010.
- Using a promotional message on information call-in lines.
- Hosting a webinar.
- Placing a link to the HVM 2010 site on their webpage.
- Placing a Healthy Eyes web banner on their websites.

NEHEP sincerely thanks these Partnership organizations for their efforts during HVM, and year-round, to achieve healthy vision for all.

Even though HVM has passed, we encourage you to visit the Healthy Eyes Toolkit (<http://www.nei.nih.gov/healthyeyestoolkit>) for a variety of free resources you can use to help raise awareness in your community all year long about the importance of comprehensive dilated eye exams. Resources include web badges and banners, drop-in articles, print public service announcements, fact sheets, downloadable stickers and bookmarks, electronic postcards, and more.

NEI's *What you should know* Publication Series Available on CD and Cassette



The National Eye Institute's (NEI) *What you should know* publication series is available in CD and audiocassette formats. This patient education series offers information on age-related macular degeneration, cataract, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma.

Each publication uses a question-and-answer approach to explain the disease or condition and to provide information about the characteristics of at-risk people, detection and treatment, current research, and vision protection. The publications also suggest questions to ask an eye care professional and resources for more information.

Since these eye diseases and conditions may cause vision loss, an audio version of *What you should know about low vision* is included with each publication. In addition to defining low vision and identifying

signs that can indicate vision loss, the low vision publication provides information on how an eye care professional can help and gives examples of devices and services that can be of assistance.

Share this information with others and help them hear the useful information that these publications provide. CDs and audiocassettes can be ordered by calling 301-496-5248.

NEHEP Welcomes New Partnership Organization

The National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) is pleased to welcome a new organization to the Partnership—The National Keratoconus Foundation (NKCF).

Keratoconus is a progressive thinning disorder of the cornea and is the most common corneal dystrophy in the United States. NKCF is dedicated to advancing the awareness and treatment of this disorder through education and information, research, and support. NKCF informs eye care professionals and serves individuals diagnosed with keratoconus and their families. To learn more about NKCF and what they do, visit <http://www.nkcf.org>.



The purpose of the NEHEP Partnership is to establish ongoing, interactive, mutually beneficial relationships between the National Eye Institute (NEI) and other organizations to achieve NEHEP goals and objectives.

To learn more about the NEHEP Partnership, visit <http://www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/about/partnership.asp>.

ACTIONED: The New Online Resource for Eye Care Professionals



The Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO®) is pleased to announce the launch of a new educational website: ACTIONED (Assessment, Certification, Training, Interactive Ophthalmology Network)

<http://www.actioned.org>. Launched in May 2010, ACTIONED provides online continuing education and training resources for people who work in the field of eye care.

The collaborative creation of six organizations, ACTIONED was developed to provide accessible and affordable educational resources to improve efficiency and performance, and to provide on-demand learning options for people who work in the field of eye care. JCAHPO, together with the American Society of Ophthalmic Registered Nurses (ASORN), the Association of Technical Personnel in Ophthalmology (ATPO), the Canadian Society of Ophthalmic Medical Personnel (CSOMP), the

Ophthalmic Photographers' Society (OPS), and the American Society of Ophthalmic Administrators (ASOA) established the innovative resource to increase the availability of training and development for personnel in the eye care profession.

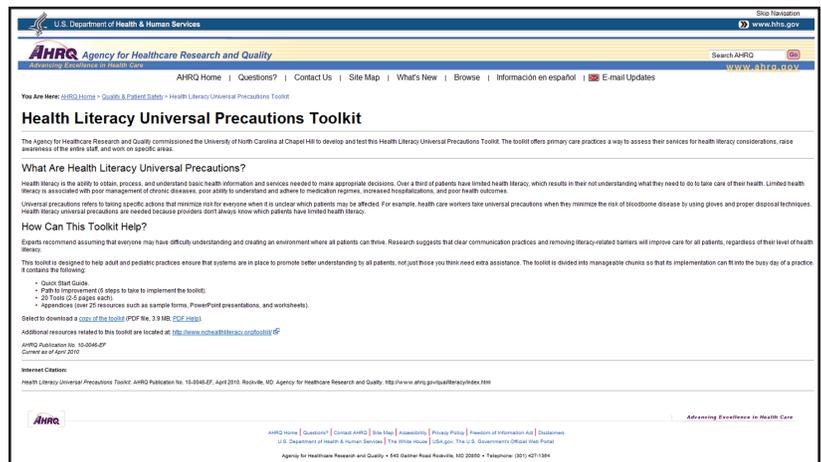
ACTIONED's course catalog contains more than 60 courses, from basic to advanced levels, with a stream of new courses launching each month. The site uses a variety of interactive media and features assessments, including the following:

- Interactive simulation
- Downloadable audio/text
- Online audio/video

Eye care professionals and administrators can visit <http://www.actioned.org> to create a personal profile and begin their online career development today. For more information on ACTIONED, contact JCAHPO at 1-800-284-3937.

AHRQ Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is proud to announce the publication of the *Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit*. The toolkit is based on the principles of universal precautions, or specific actions that providers can take to make health information more understandable for all patients. It is designed to be used by all levels of staff in practices providing primary care for adults and/or pediatric patients.



The toolkit includes the following:

- The *Quick Start Guide*
- The *Path to Improvement*, which outlines the six steps to fully implement the toolkit
- Twenty short tools to identify and address areas that need improvement
- Links to Internet resources
- An appendix with resources to support implementation, such as sample forms, posters, PowerPoint presentations, and worksheets

The toolkit was developed for AHRQ by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Download a copy of the *Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit* from <http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/literacy/>. You can also access an online version of the toolkit at <http://www.nchealthliteracy.org/toolkit>.

EyeCare America's No-Cost Eye Exams Are Now Only a Click Away



EyeCare America, a public service program of the Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, is expanding its award-winning referral program in order to reach even more patients. Now, those interested can go online to <http://www.eyecareamerica.org> to determine if they are eligible for a no-cost eye exam. It takes only minutes to fill out the online form and instantly determine one's qualification status for EyeCare America services. Exams are offered by more than 7,000 volunteer ophthalmologists across the United States.

The program facilitates access to eye care professionals for U.S. citizens or legal residents who are without an ophthalmologist and who do not belong to an HMO or do not have coverage for eye health services through the Veterans Administration. To qualify for program eligibility, an individual must fall into one of the two categories below.

- **Those who are age 65 or older and who have not seen an ophthalmologist in three or more years may be eligible to receive a comprehensive, medical eye exam and up to one year of care at no out-of-pocket cost for any disease diagnosed during the initial exam.** Volunteer ophthalmologists will waive copayments, accepting Medicare and/or other insurance reimbursement as payment in full. Patients without insurance receive this care at no charge.
- **Those who are determined to be at increased risk for glaucoma (by age, race, and family history) and have not had an eye exam in 12 months or more may be eligible to receive a free glaucoma eye exam if they are uninsured.** Those with insurance will be billed for the exam and are responsible for any copayments. The initiation of treatment is provided, if deemed necessary by the doctor during the exam.

EyeCare America encourages people to take advantage of the eye care services offered through their volunteer physicians. Visit <http://www.eyecareamerica.org> to learn more.

Prevent Blindness America Wants All Children To Be Star Pupils

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one out of three children in the United States does not receive critical eye care services before the age of six.¹ Prevent Blindness America has launched the "Star Pupils" campaign, the nonprofit 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 eye care.



StarPupils.org

Star Pupils is a trademark program of Prevent Blindness America

The Star Pupils campaign arms parents with information they need in order to protect their kids' eyes at play and at school to ensure a lifetime of quality vision. Parents may simply visit <http://www.starpupils.org/pba> to receive free sight-saving information

about their child's eyes, including information on common eye problems in children, eye safety, and state-by-state children's eye care requirements for entering schools. Parents are also encouraged to share stories of how their child's eye health has impacted their lives. For more information on Star Pupils in English or Spanish, please visit <http://www.starpupils.org/pba> or call 1-800-331-2020.

Reference:

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2005). Visual impairment and use of eye-care services and protective eyewear among children—United States 2002. *MMWR*, 54(17). Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5417a2.htm>

Healthy Vision Community Awards Spotlight: YWCA Northern Rhode Island

As the recipient of a 2009 Healthy Vision Community Award (HVCA), YWCA Northern Rhode Island created the Eye-C project—an innovative program to present information to the community, children, and



adults about ways to reduce visual impairment in those aged 17 years and younger. Using a novel approach, this program also incorporates information about Rhode Island law, which requires eye screening for preschool children aged five and younger.

Using HVCA seed money, the YWCA contracted with a creative studio to create a life-sized puppet, which is used to provide eye health education. The YWCA worked with creative personnel to develop the concept for the puppet, including design materials, size, and colors for

the finished product. The result was a one-eyed puppet with an alien appearance. Program presenters refer to the puppet, whose large eye is its focal point, as Ret, Tina, and/or Retina.

Eye care professionals present eye health information and Retina responds to their comments and makes suggestions regarding eye health. In addition to the presentation, the YWCA distributes stickers that they had made depicting Retina, along with educational materials from the National Eye Institute.

The YWCA reached out to community organizations and parent groups about their eye health education efforts through press releases and the development of public relations packets to support program implementation. The Eye-C project was also unveiled at the New England Minority Health Conference.

Community presentations continue to take place. In April, the YWCA Northern Rhode Island, in conjunction with Quota Club, an organization dedicated to preventing visual impairment and hearing loss, held a community health fair that was attended by more than 400 people. The YWCA is planning to work with two local Latino groups who showed interest in the project to develop materials and a program in Spanish.

Retina was invited to the winter Olympics in Vancouver as part of a troupe created by Rhode Island's Big Nazo creative studio, whom the YWCA worked with to create Retina. Backed by a carnival band, the 75-member international performance group paraded in Place de la Francophonie 2010, a French Quarter in Granville Island, in the heart of Vancouver and amid a host of Olympic sites. Viewed by thousands of people, the Eye-C project puppet featured and proudly displayed a Healthy People 2010 Healthy Vision patch on the front of its costume.



The Eye-C project has generated press in local media, appeared in direct mail publications, and is included in a new community strategic plan as a model program to reach low- to moderate-income people who are medically uninsured or underinsured.

The program has great potential for sustainability. With proper care and maintenance, the puppet should last for years. The YWCA has incorporated the Eye-C project into the healthcare education services that they offer to the community. This summer, the YWCA will use the services of an AmeriCorps volunteer to promote and grow the program.

For more information about the Eye-C project, contact Deborah L. Perry at 401-769-7450 or ywcaofnri@aol.com.
