

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**For more information:**

Prevent Blindness Texas

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**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-Prevent Blindness Texas  
SAVE YOUR EYES NOW-PROTEJA SU VISTA HOY  
Texas Vision Health Education Collaborative:  
Through September 30, 2011**

**August 22, 2011**-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-Prevent Blindness Texas SAVE YOUR EYES NOW-PROTEJA SU VISTA HOY

Beginning now through September 30, Prevent Blindness Texas and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are conducting a family eye health awareness campaign with area school districts in East Texas in Galveston County (La Marque Independent School District), and in the lower Rio Grande Valley in Hidalgo County (Hidalgo Independent School District), and in Willacy County (La Sara Independent School District). All three school districts grades Pre-K-12 with teachers in primary subjects such as biology, health education, physical education, and language arts are promoting the vision health campaign in a variety of ways including information about chronic disease—especially diabetes and injury prevention. Selected school buses in Hidalgo ISD and La Sara ISD will advertise the availability of free eye health examinations during the next six weeks and the importance of protecting the vision health of the entire family.

The La Marque, Hidalgo and La Sara elementary and secondary teachers are invited to compete using the Prevent Blindness America eye health curriculum for chronic disease and eye safety by teaching a lesson plan of their own creation in either Spanish or English. There are two \$300.00 prizes (one for the winning entry from the elementary level and one for the secondary level) for each participating school district. In addition students may compete on the elementary and secondary levels for \$100.00 and \$50.00 prizes for their artistic interpretation and messaging in poster format for eye health education and protection.

Fliers will be sent home to parents notifying them of the opportunity to call Valley Retina Institute's 1-800-363-7061—a number set up to specifically answer questions about gift certificates provided by VSP Vision Care (headquartered in Sacramento, California) for comprehensive eye examinations available for adults and children in the lower Rio Grande Valley and East Texas between now and the end of September. Prevent Blindness Texas, a 56 year-old private non-profit serving residents across the state received funding from the Centers from Disease Control and Prevention to conduct an eye health awareness campaign in Valley—especially in Cameron, Willacy and Hidalgo counties and in Galveston County due to the high rates of diabetes and corresponding eye health concerns. Sixty-five clinics and health care centers in Willacy, Hidalgo, Cameron and Galveston will also be in receipt of fliers promoting free eye health examinations for the entire family. In efforts to inform the public regarding the necessity of obtaining comprehensive eye examinations and eye glasses, Prevent Blindness Texas organized the Texas Vision Health Collaborative, chaired by Victor H. Gonzales, M.D. who also leads the Department of State Health Services Texas Diabetes Council and has offered to provide staff for the 1-800-363-7091 number at his offices in McAllen, Texas.

Billboards on Highways 77, 83 and I-45 will promote the SAVE YOUR EYES NOW-PROTEJA SU VISTA HOY CAMPAIGN until the end of September.