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**New “Prevent Blindness Children’s Vision Health Map” and Report Released to Provide New Data on Children’s Vision and Eye Health Issues and to Help Identify Gaps in Eye Care Access for Kids**

***– New Prevent Blindness Children’s Vision Health Map and Corresponding Report Provides Public, Professionals and Policy Makers with First-ever County and State-level Data on Children’s Vision Issues –***

**CHICAGO (Sept. 10, 2024)** – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s leading eye health and safety organization, is debuting the new [Prevent Blindness Children’s Vision Health Map](#), the first-ever online interactive tool specifically designed to display geographic variations in common children’s vision problems as well as visual impairment and blindness. Data used in the map was provided by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s \(CDC\) Vision and Eye Health Surveillance System](#) and other sources collected and reported by [NORC at the University of Chicago](#).

Currently, more than 600,000 children in the US have uncorrectable visual acuity loss, including over 45,500 who are blind. Eye conditions such as amblyopia (lazy eye) and strabismus (crossed eyes) may be successfully treated if detected early.

The purpose of the Prevent Blindness Children’s Vision Health Map is to provide the public, healthcare professionals, public health professionals, program partners, and government representatives, with county- and state-level characteristics that may impact children’s vision and eye health conditions and outcomes. This data can in turn support the development of policies and practices that improve systems for early detection and treatment of visual acuity loss in children. Users can easily select different visual health indicators, add filters, or explore relationships between vision health and community-level characteristics, including state child vision screening requirements, math and reading scores, health and disability measures, socioeconomic determinants of health, and eyecare providers per capita.

“As a public health advocacy organization, part of our mission is to make the case for ensuring that vision issues are addressed appropriately, whether through public education or by shaping public policy,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “The new Prevent Blindness Children’s Vision Health Map was created as a resource for professionals and laypeople alike to better understand the breadth of vision problems in the communities in which they live and work, along with the challenges faced in addressing them.”

The Prevent Blindness Children's Vision Health Map is accompanied by a comprehensive report, which includes the following findings and more:

- One out of every 122 children in the U.S. have uncorrectable vision loss. This includes one out of every 137 children aged 0-11 and one out of every 102 children aged 12-17.
- There are 25% more girls with vision loss than boys.
- Non-Hispanic Black children have the highest rates of vision loss and blindness. One out of every 89 black children have vision loss, and one out of every 1,000 are permanently blind.
- The 5 states with the highest prevalence of visual acuity loss among children were the District of Columbia, Mississippi, West Virginia, Arkansas, and Nevada.
- Over 760,000 children enrolled in [Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Programs \(CHIP\)](#) insurance coverage were diagnosed in 2019 with either amblyopia (360,000 children) or strabismus (486,000 children).

Data from the Prevent Blindness Children's Vision Health Map also provides new information for advocates to help advance the recently introduced [Early Detection of Vision Impairments for Children \(EDVI\) Act](#). The EDVI Act, (H.R. 8400), is legislation which will provide grants from HRSA to states through a competitive process, with the funds designed to support schools, early childhood professionals, health care providers, public health professionals, and families with eye health information, updated and evidence-based vision screening methods, improve referrals to eye care, and advance follow-up protocols.

The EDVI Act will also establish a national technical assistance resource center, housed at the CDC, to promote research in preventive practices in pediatric eye disease, and encourage collaboration to support children's eye health among federal agencies.

An overview of the report and the map will be presented at the [Prevent Blindness World Sight Day Congressional Briefing](#) this Thursday, Sept. 12, in Washington, D.C., beginning at 11:30 am ET in the Rayburn House Building Room 2044.

"The new data from the Prevent Blindness Children's Vision Health Map and report allows us to effectively identify and address the various eye health needs of different populations across the country," said Donna Fishman, director of the [National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness](#). "We look forward to working with stakeholders, public health advocates and community groups to help ensure our children can enjoy a lifetime of clear and healthy vision."

To access the Prevent Blindness Children's Vision Health Map and the report, please visit [PreventBlindness.org/childrens-vision-map](https://PreventBlindness.org/childrens-vision-map). For information on the EDVI Act,

please email [advocacy@PreventBlindness.org](mailto:advocacy@PreventBlindness.org), or visit <https://preventblindness.org/edvi-act>.

### **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](https://PreventBlindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#), [TikTok](#) and [YouTube](#).

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