

Proper procedures for conducting a successful ECVS project

In an effort to make future vision screenings operate more effectively and assure the public appreciates the professionalism of the screenings enough to take action when a referral is made the following suggestions are made to help future screenings be more successful:

Service clubs should plan ahead how to promote the screening.

Remember that this project was developed by and brought to your service club by the Registered Opticians Association of Texas. Include them in all your promotions for this project when ever possible. All referrals go to the doctors not the Registered Opticians. They see this project as a way to serve the public and to raise public awareness of their profession.

If more than one club is sponsoring the screening, both clubs need to, in advance, determine how they are going to present recognition to the public, and not wait until the day of the screening to decide about who's signage goes where and who is going to take the credit for the screening.

Pubic awareness is a must and each club, when signing up to sponsor a screening, is given a packet with a detailed format of how the screening should be managed. It is important to promote the upcoming screening at fund raisers and make lists of interested families to contact the week before the screening.

Service clubs should verify that the doctors that they refer to currently accept one year old children as patients.

Many eye doctors do not have the specialized training or experience to work with six- month old through four year old children. If you find one that does work with this age group on a regular basis, you will still need to get their permission to refer patients to them and you will need to either email them the 36 page PDF file or give them a full copy of the file, so that they will know how to read the referral sheet that is presented to the children' parents by the ROATx Certified Vision Screeners.

Use the samples of newspaper articles provided in packet.

Included in this packet is an example of a newspaper write up that has been successfully used during the pilot screenings given at several locations throughout the state including, but not limited to Cedar Park/Liberty Hill and San Angelo Texas. Rewriting the press release examples and changing the format may negatively affect the success and public turn out the day of the screening. If a service club member speaks directly to the editor of their local paper about the importance of educating the public about why screening the very youngest children is needed, the editor of the newspaper in the area should provide (at no charge) as much space as the service club feels necessary to make the public aware of the community service being offered, allocation of space and the location of the article should not be an issue.

Choose an easily accessible location and keep the screening to two hours in length.

Another critical factor in having a successful screening is, while the professional ROATx screeners will stay as long as there are children to screen, to make sure it is kept to two hours in length (usually 10 AM till Noon). Be sure that the public is aware of the location and the location is easily accessible for all individuals. Having a screening on the first floor of a building makes it possible for not only the public to not have to search out the screening, but also makes it accessible to people who may be coming in for other reasons. (i.e.: The Public Libraries are excellent due to family's regular use to check out a book or attend a reading activity.)

It would also be beneficial for the members of the service clubs to greet the public at the entrance of the building and to inform the public entering the building of the:

“FREE” screening that is taking place for 6 months through four year old children and how important it is to take advantage of the opportunity to have the Certified Registered Optician’s Association of Texas Vision Screeners screen their children.

Also, that we are targeting preventable blindness in children.

Only appropriate gifts should be given to the children.

Appropriate gifts for these age children should be limited to stickers, coloring books, or inflated balloons. It may be hazardous to a small child to reward them with small objects that can be inhaled and possibly choke on, such as M&M’s, and un-inflated balloons, or other small objects. Not only are these items dangerous to small children and can hurt them, it can also place our organization in a liability situation.

This project should be conducted in a professional manner at all times.

The screenings should be conducted in a professional manner and operated like a business and not a fundraiser. The Certified Vision Screeners from the Registered Opticians Association of Texas are professionals who are held accountable for what they tell the families of the children concerning the results of the vision screening. In order to become a vision screener they must first become a Texas Department of Health Registered Optician, they must be a member of the Registered Opticians Association of Texas, they must become certified by the Texas Department of Health as a Vision Screener for school age children, and they must become certified by the Registered Opticians association of Texas as a Vision Screener for children six month old through four year old.

Due to the proper training and professionalism offered by the trained and qualified vision specialists of The Registered Opticians Association of Texas, who are certified by the Texas Department of Health and the Registered Opticians Association of Texas to conduct vision screenings, the Early Childhood Vision Screening project has great potential of helping our children throughout the State of Texas and potentially the entire United States to become a stronger better educated and more productive group of adults for all our futures as a whole.

Thank you for partnering with the Registered Opticians Association of Texas to target preventable blindness in children.

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