

# ***Strengthening the Eyes of the Future: Palmetto Health Vision Screening Program***

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# OVERVIEW

- Introduction to Institute for Partnerships to Eliminate Health Disparities (IPEHD)
- Learning Objectives
- Palmetto Vision Screening Initiative
- Evaluation Process
- Q&A



# WHAT IS IPEHD?

- A partnership between....
  - A large, research-oriented institution of higher learning
  - Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's)
  - 1890 Land Grant Network
  - Statewide public health agencies
  - Other community organizations

***Our mission:***

***To eliminate health disparities through academic, community and other strategic partnerships in South Carolina and beyond.***



# CURRENT PROGRAMS / ACTIVITIES

W. K. Kellogg Public Health Fellowship and Development Program

M.A.T.C.H (Mobilizing Against Threats to Community Health)

USC- Claflin EXPORT Center

Minority HIV/AIDS Council



SC DHEC



MID-CAROLINA AHEC

CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY



ALLEN UNIVERSITY

PALMETTO HEALTH

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE

Victory Tabernacle Church

1890 Land Grant Institutions

MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMISSION



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# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Discuss the significance of vision programs in public schools;
- Discuss the use of school performance records to strengthen the assessment of impact the vision program is having academically; and
- List five challenges the evaluation team faced during the data collection process

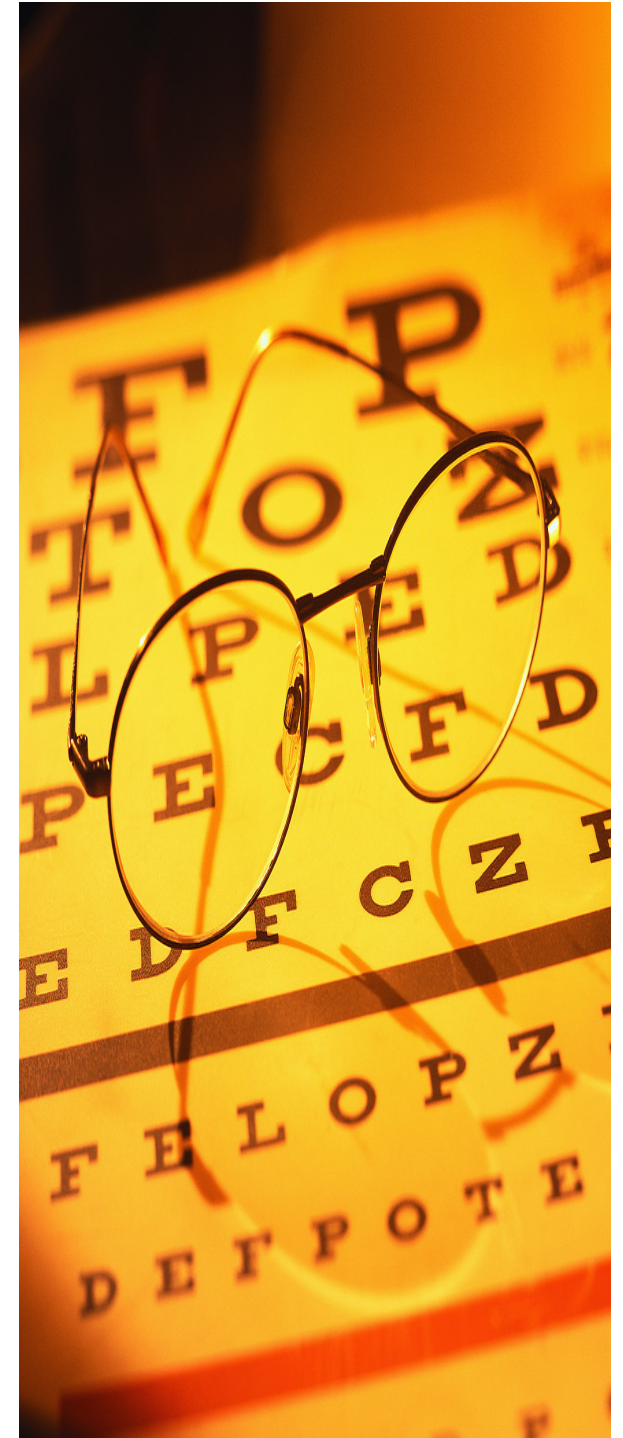
# Vision Screening

## OVERVIEW

- Vision Test
- Palmetto Health's Vision Initiative

## VISION SCREENING GOALS

- To reduce potential vision problems by intervening early and educating parents and children on the importance of following a recommended schedule for vision exams.
- The goal of the evaluation was to assess parent/child knowledge levels on vision care and to assess the impact of vision treatment on a child's school performance.



## ***VISION SCREENING: WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?***

- Visual problems are the leading handicap conditions for young people<sup>1</sup>;
- Vision screening is a valuable method for identifying potentially treatable visual abnormalities and reducing visual morbidity<sup>2</sup>;
- 75-90% of all information is obtained through the vision pathways<sup>3</sup>;



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## ***VISION SCREENING: WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?***

- As many as one in four school-age children have visual problems<sup>4</sup>;
- It is estimated that, in almost half of the children who are blind today, the underlying cause could have been prevented, or the eye condition treated to preserve vision or restore sight<sup>5</sup>;
- Unequal level of care received by special populations (i.e., the poor, uninsured, and minority groups)<sup>6</sup>;



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## ***VISION SCREENING: WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?***

- Length of time between identifying a problem and seeking treatment is reduced<sup>7</sup>;
- Under-screening is an increasing problem<sup>8</sup>;
- Screening differentiates children with reading disabilities from non-disabled children<sup>9</sup>; and
- The control of blindness in children is a priority within the World Health Organization's VISION 2020 Programme – The Right to See Programme<sup>5</sup>,



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# Why are School Performance Records Important?

- Serves as baseline data;
- Indicates vision and/or learning disorders;
- Monitors drastic changes in academic performance; and
- Addresses validity and reliability concerns.

# Evaluation Goals

- Create an overall evaluation framework for programs and services.
- Assess major program services and identify key faculty and staff to evaluate program progress toward objectives using the participatory evaluation model.



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# Participatory Evaluation Model

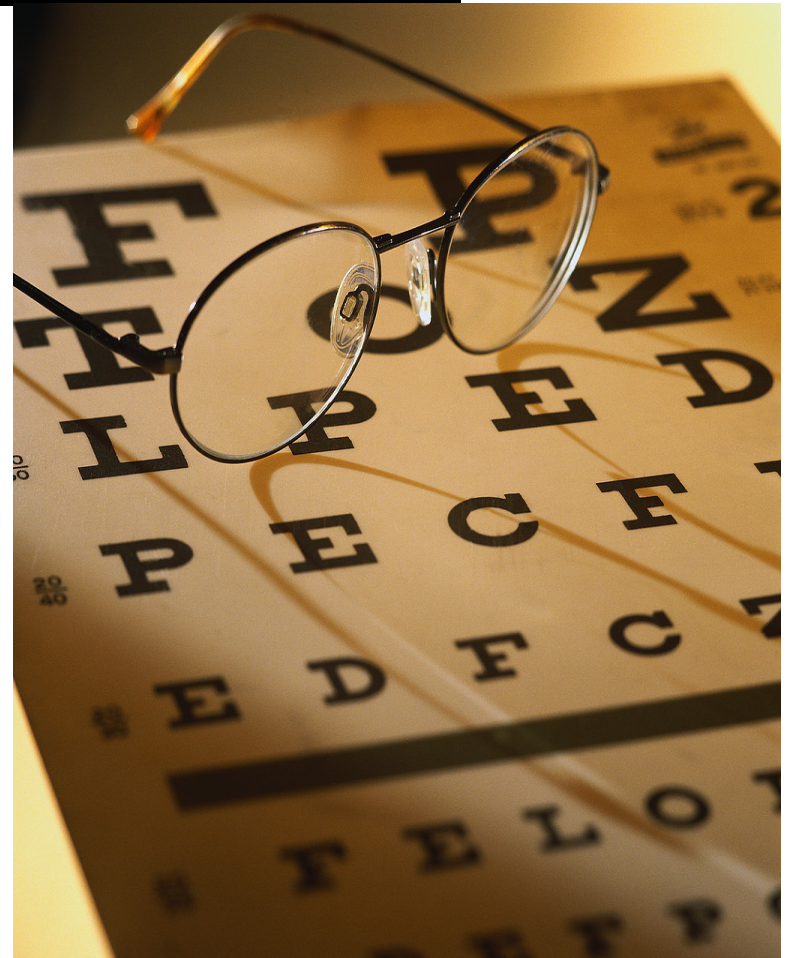
- Overall Framework – Participatory Evaluation Model
- Captures richness of program design
- Involves key stakeholders
  - Program development to implementation
  - Data collection and analysis
  - Dissemination of findings (Program effectiveness and impact)
- Assess performance on a continuous basis
- Allows for adjustments in progressing toward goals

# Guiding Principles of the Participatory Evaluation Model

- Participant focus and Ownership
- Negotiation
- Learning
- Flexibility

# Vision Screening Outcomes

- 2928 children participated in comprehensive eye exams through September 30, 2006;
- 75% of the participants needed eye glasses;
- Follow-up interviews (children and parents) indicated significant improvements in academic performance;
- Increase in program's growth since its inception in 1998; and
- Self-reported improvement in grades and conduct.



# Program Challenges

- Number of participants responding to the survey;
- Accuracy of telephone numbers and addresses between pre and post tests;
- Access to school performance records to assess the impact of the vision program academically (baseline data);
- Inconsistent follow-up encountered by children identified by the screening; and
- Reliability and validity of data collected (self-reported).



# Recommendations

- Continue to conduct follow-up surveys within 30 days of a student's enrollment in the program.
- Use focus groups of parents, a qualitative approach, as a complement to quantitative data analysis in determining program effectiveness.
- Have students that can reflect the success of the program tell their story.



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# Updates Since 2004

- NOVA Award
- Established Database
- Location Expansion



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# Questions/Comments



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