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## **Resources for Follow-Up Eye Treatment**

2024-2025 Edition

This resource guide has been developed to provide information to individuals, health departments, social workers, and school nurses regarding resources available to assist in securing eye care for those in financial need throughout our state.

Prevent Blindness North Carolina is a non-profit voluntary health agency dedicated to preventing blindness, preserving, and restoring sight and promoting good vision for all.

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## Who is PBNC and what do we do?

Prevent Blindness conducts direct service screening programs, public and professional awareness campaigns, and research. Our direct service programs include:

### Children's Vision Screening Training Program

During the 2022-23 school year, Prevent Blindness trained and certified **3,111** vision screeners bringing the total number of certified vision screeners in the state to **6,205**. Screeners conducted over **448,309** individual student screenings and more than **41,511** children were referred to an eye care professional for a full eye exam, diagnosis, and treatment.

### Preschool Screening Program

During the 2022-23 school year, Prevent Blindness offered photorefractive screenings to preschoolers and screened **35,600** preschoolers. Of the preschoolers screened, **4,053** were referred to eye care professionals for possible vision problems.

### Adult Vision Screening Program

Prevent Blindness conducts adult vision screenings at community health centers, free clinics, health fairs, senior centers, corporations, and the NC State Fair. During 2022-23 Prevent Blindness screened **5,468** adults and referred **954** to eye care professionals for possible vision problems or eye disease.

### Donor Docs Program

Donor Docs is an all-volunteer program of optometrists and ophthalmologists across the state of North Carolina. Vision exams and in some cases, glasses are provided for uninsured children/adults who are referred for a comprehensive eye exam. During the 2022-23 year, **21** doctors volunteered to donate **64** eye exams and **41** eyeglasses to help school children and adults in North Carolina. That is an estimated value of almost **\$15,750** worth of exam and glasses donations.

### OneSight Eyeglass Program

In January 2010, Prevent Blindness America and One Sight launched the Program, a new collaborative effort to provide eyeglasses for children and adults. During the 2022-23 school year, **13** children and **245** adults were served through this program at an estimated value of **\$38,700**.

# Prevent Blindness North Carolina Voucher Program

In collaboration with local and national partners. Prevent Blindness North Carolina administers four programs offering financial resources to applicants who qualify under the specific guidelines of each program.

To apply for youth resources an individual must register as a Referring Agent and then the applications can be filled out online. Program details can be accessed via the PBNC website:

<http://nc.preventblindness.org/financial-resources>

The application will be reviewed to determine eligibility. Prevent Blindness will select the most beneficial program available.

Further information regarding these programs is available by calling 919.755.5044 ext.112.

## Overviews of each PBNC voucher offering:

### Donor Docs

- Income:** Up to 250% of Federal Poverty Level with no vision insurance or vision coverage under Medicaid, Health Choice or Medicare
- Covers:** Exams and possibly glasses, depending on donor
- Eligibility:** No Social Security # required
- Ages:** Children and adults from PBNC partner organizations

### **Other Information:**

- Donor Docs is a voluntary group of NC optometrists and ophthalmologists who donate specific services.
- Access to services of a Donor Doc is dependent upon the local providers and may not be available in all communities.
- Financial eligibility is self-declared by parent or adult. Poverty level guidelines are available on the financial resources page.
- The match for services will be coordinated through the PBNC office.
- Approved school age children will get an approval via email to their school nurse.
- Adults will receive a notice of approval and doctor assignment via a letter from PBNC.

## One Sight

**Income:** Up to 200% of poverty level with no other eyeglass benefits accessible at the time

**Covers:** Glasses only - No eye exams

**Ages:** Children and adults from PBNC partner organizations

**Eligibility:**

- No SS# required
- Financial eligibility is self-declared.
- Prescription must be less than 1 year old.
- Youth are encouraged to get an annual eye exam and updated prescription before applying.
- Vouchers available once every two years unless there is a change in the prescription, or eyeglasses are damaged beyond repair.

**Other Information:**

- No upgrades in frames or lenses will be permitted.
- Children up to age 12 will receive polycarbonate lenses.
- Once the recipient has been approved and received a referral card, an appointment must be made at one of the following provider locations: Lens Crafters, Target Optical or Pearle Vision.
- It is the responsibility of the recipient to verify the provider is participating in the One Sight Program.

## Changing Life Through Lenses

- Prevent Blindness is partnering with Essilor Vision Foundation's Changing Life through Lenses® program.
- Changing Life through Lenses (CLTL) is an online platform that provides eye doctors and non-profits with no-cost glasses for qualified patients (children and adults- no documentation required), a free trial frame collection, and resources on how to start or expand charitable services in their community. Prevent Blindness affiliates can recruit local doctors to partner with them in serving patients in need.
- Qualified patients can be referred to the doctors from Prevent Blindness screening events, and the doctors can create and use their Changing Life through Lenses account to provide no-cost glasses for the patient.
- Go to [www.evfusa.org/preventblindness](http://www.evfusa.org/preventblindness) to learn more about Changing Life through Lenses, see a demo and sign up.

## Additional community vision resources that are not affiliated with Prevent Blindness North Carolina

### Medicaid

Routine Eye Exams and Glasses for Adults 21 years old and older, who have Medicaid, may get a routine eye exam and prescription glasses once every year. Co-payments apply for adults.

If you have Medicaid, you can get help finding an eye doctor by calling NC Medicaid at 1-888-245-0179, or Going to <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/medicaid>

1. Click on Find A Doctor
2. Click on Medicaid/Health Choice Specialist Providers
3. Look for your County in the left-hand column
4. Once you find your County, then look for your City in the right-hand column
5. Once you find your City, look for Ophthalmologists and Optometrists

When making an eye exam appointment, be sure to ask if they do Medicaid eye exams **AND** glasses in the same office. If they do, you can get everything done in one place. For additional information about replacement glasses and other vision services, please call NC Medicaid at 1-888-245-0179.

**NOTE:** Children **20 years old and younger**, who have Medicaid or Health Choice are eligible for a routine eye exam and prescription glasses once every year.

### Medicare

**Income:** All  
**Ages:** 65 and Older  
**Eligibility:**

- Medicare does not cover routine eye exams. Annual eye exams DO cover diabetic retinopathy.
- Individuals with diabetes, family history of glaucoma, African Americans over 50, Hispanics over 65, are eligible for annual glaucoma screening.
- Cataract surgery is covered at 80% of the Medicare-approved amount after yearly deductible. Patients who have had cataract surgery with intraocular lens may receive assistance in paying for cataract glasses, contact lenses or intraocular lenses based on medical necessity.

**Information:**

- Care Line 800.633.4227 <https://www.medicare.gov>

[NC Medicaid and Health Choice Routine Eye Exams and Glasses for Children](#)

Children 20 years old and younger, who have Medicaid or Health Choice, may get a routine eye exam and prescription glasses once a year.

If your child has Medicaid or Health Choice, you can get help finding an eye doctor by: calling NC Medicaid at 1-888-245-0179, **or** going to <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/medicaid>

1. Click on Find A Doctor
2. Click on Medicaid/Health Choice Specialist Providers
3. Look for your County in the left-hand column
4. Once you find your County, then look for your City in the right-hand column
5. Once you find your City, look for Ophthalmologists and Optometrists

When making an eye exam appointment, be sure to ask if they do Medicaid and Health Choice eye exams **AND** glasses in the same office. If they do, you can get everything done in one place.

For additional information about replacement glasses and other vision services, please call NC Medicaid at 1-888-245-0179.

**NOTE:** Adults **21 years old and older**, who have Medicaid are eligible for a routine eye exam and prescription glasses once every year. Co-payments apply for adults.

[North Carolina Foundation for Public School Children](#)

- Income:** No income requirements  
**Covers:** Eye exams OR Eyeglasses, **not** both once per calendar year  
**Ages:** All children enrolled in public school K-12, at least 30 days of the school year in order to receive services  
**Eligibility:** US citizenship is not required

**Information:**

- 800.662.7924 or 919.832.3000 ext. 205
- Contact: [derevana.leach@ncae.org](mailto:derevana.leach@ncae.org)
- School staff must request assistance on behalf of the child. Parents

are not to seek applications or contact the office.

- Applications can be accessed by school staff on the NCFPSC website at: <https://www.ncfpssc.org> Hover cursor over “Get Help” then click “Children’s Fund” to retrieve, complete and submit the application.

### North Carolina Lions Foundation, Inc.

**Covers:** Exams and glasses and other items deemed medically necessary  
**Ages:** 6 and up  
**Eligibility:** Must be a NC resident for two years

**Information:**

- 800.662.7401, 828.478.2135 or [www.nclf.org](http://www.nclf.org)
- North Carolina Lions Clubs have been active and generous with both their time and gifts throughout North Carolina.
- Contact your local Lions Club regarding funding for an eye exam or eyeglasses. Resources will vary from club to club.

### Vision USA – North Carolina Optometric Association

**Covers:** Basic eye exam, Eyewear may be provided at no or low cost depending on state  
**Ages:** All ages  
**Eligibility:**

- Must be US citizen or legal resident with a SS#
- Have no private or government Insurance (Medicare, or Medicaid)
- Have not had an exam in the past 24 months
- Have an income below established guidelines (chart on application)
- Maximum of 4 individuals per household per year
- <https://www.aoa.org/visionusa> (find out where to submit application)

### Lens Crafters

**Income:** Case by Case,  
**Covers:** See Program Descriptions  
**Ages:** Children and Adults

**Information:**

- Call your local Lens Crafters location or
- <https://www.onesight.org>
- 1.888.935.4589 (One Sight)



## Lens Crafters' Community Vision Care

- Once a month, participating Lens Crafters retail stores in partnership with optometrists and ophthalmologists provide free or discounted eye exams and new glasses to those in need within their local communities.
- Contact your local Lens Crafters to find out if the Community Vision Care program is available in your community

## Lens Crafters In-store Programs

- Please see the quick guide for the process to be used in accessing assistance from the Healthy Eyes (One Sight) Program at Lens Crafters through application to Prevent Blindness North Carolina.
- This Program is for free eyeglasses only.
- Contact a local Luxottica (Lens Crafters, Sears Optical, Target Optical, corporate Pearl Vision) store manager / One Sight Captain to build a local partnership

## Eye Care America

**Income:** <https://www.aao.org> to qualify  
**Covers:** Comprehensive Eye Exams with Dilation  
**Ages:** Adults—See Criteria Below  
**Eligibility:**

- Age 65 or older and have not seen an eye M.D. 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 co-payments and accept Medicare and/or other insurance reimbursement as payment in full. Patients without insurance receive this care at no charge.
- Those 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 uninsured. Those with insurance will be billed for the exam and are responsible for co-

payments. Initiation of treatment is provided, if deemed necessary by the doctor during the exam.

- Necessary services for care such as hospitals, surgical facilities, anesthesiologists and medications, are beyond the scope of Eyecare America services. The ophthalmologist is a volunteer who agrees to provide only services within these program guidelines.
- Some eye conditions may affect vision as though eyeglasses are needed, when actually, the medical care of an ophthalmologist is needed. Eyecare America provides this medical eye care, only. The program does not provide eyeglass prescriptions, eyeglass/refraction exams (the prescription part of exam) or cover the cost of glasses.

Please discuss cost and scope with the doctor BEFORE the examination.

**Information:**

- The qualification process can be accomplished online at <https://www.eyecareamerica.org>

# Third-Party Medication Assistance Programs & Services

## Benefits Check Up

- A comprehensive web-based service to screen for benefits/programs for seniors with limited income and resources.
- This program strives to find public/private programs to pay for prescription drugs, health care, rent, utilities and other needs.
- For additional information, visit the website at <https://www.benefitscheckup.org>

## NeedyMeds.com

- Provides a no-cost service to assist individuals in locating patient assistance programs by the name of the drug, program or company.
- Additional databases include information on disease-based assistance, discount drug cards, government programs and programs for children.
- For additional information, visit <https://www.NeedyMeds.org>

## NC MedAssist

- NC Med Assist is a statewide non-profit pharmacy that provides free prescription medicines to low-
- income, uninsured North Carolinians
- Must be an NC resident, Income must be at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and cannot have Medicare, Medicaid, VA benefits or any other prescription drug insurance.
- To apply visit <https://www.medassist.org>, or call toll free 1-866-331-1348 or 704-536-1790
- The required documents are an enrollment application, current income information, last Federal tax return, and written prescriptions from your doctor.

## RxAssist

- A comprehensive database of assistance programs and tools for healthcare professionals and patients.
- The website provides resources on the use and understanding of the programs and materials tailored to providers and consumers regarding medication access.
- For additional information visit the website <https://www.rxassist.org> or send an email to [info@rxassist.org](mailto:info@rxassist.org).

## Partnership for Prescription Assistance

- PhRMA's (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America) PPA Program assists qualifying patients who lack prescription coverage access to the medicines they need through appropriate public or private programs.
- To access, call 888.477.2669 or visit <https://www.pparx.org> for more information.

### RxHope (Allergan)

- A web portal for physicians/patients to submit applications for patient assistance.
- Applications must be submitted in cooperation with a physician.
- For additional information, visit <https://www.rxhope.com> or call 800.553.6783.

### The Medicine Program

- This web-based Patient Advocate Organization assists individuals as they enroll in one or more patient assistance programs providing prescription medicine free of charge to those in need.
- Patient must meet the sponsor's criteria; program is conducted in cooperation with the patient's doctor.
- For additional information, visit the website <https://www.themedicineprogram.com>

### Alcon US Patient Assistance

- 800.222.8103 or <https://www.alcon.com> (Alcon Cares, Inc.)

### Merck Helps Patient Assistance Programs

- 800.727.5400 or <https://www.merckhelps.com>

### Novartis Patient Assistance

- 800.245.5356 or <https://www.patientassistancenow.com>

### Pfizer Helpful Answers

- 866.706.2400 or <https://www.pfizerhelpfulanswers.com>

### Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

- Medicare prescription drug coverage provides protection for individuals who have very high drug costs.
- This insurance covers both brand-name and generic prescription drugs at participating pharmacies in your area.
- Medicare recipients are eligible for this coverage regardless of income and resources, health status, or current prescription expenses.
- Visit <https://www.medicare.gov> for more information about Medicare prescription drug plans.
- If you have limited income and resources, you may qualify for extra help and may not have to pay a premium or deductible. Costs will vary depending on which drug plan you choose.
- For more information, visit <https://www.socialsecurity.gov> or by calling 800.772.1213.



# Transportation

## PAN Foundation

Transportation Assistance program provides financial support to patients with life threatening, chronic, or rare conditions so they can access affordable and reliable transportation to and from their medical treatments and pharmacy.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Be currently enrolled in a co-pay or premium disease fund at the PAN Foundation and receiving treatment for that disease.
- Reside and receive treatment in the United States or US Territories (US citizenship is not required)
- Have Medicare insurance
- Have an income that falls at or below 400% of Federal Poverty Level
- Services Covered - Public Transportation, Tolls, Lodging, Non-Emergency Medical Transport, Taxis, Parking, Airfare
- \$500 per year assistance amount if you qualify
- To Apply Call – 1-866-316-7263 or online – <https://www.panfoundation.org/funds/transportation>
- 400% Federal Poverty Level

## Additional Resources

### NC Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

- 888.388.2460
- 919.733.4376
- <https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/lbph/index.html>

### NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- 800.689.9090
- 919.855.3600

### NC Division of Services for the Blind

- 866.222.1546
- 800.622.7030 (Spanish)
- <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/dsb>

### NC Council on Developmental Disabilities

- 800-357-6916
- 919.850.2901

### Mission Cataract USA

- 910-355-3937
- [www.missioncataractusa.org](http://www.missioncataractusa.org)

### Lighthouse Guild

- 800.829.0500, press 3

### National Eye Institute

- 301.496.5248
- <https://www.nei.nih.gov>

### Eye Buy Direct

- Sells generic frames and lenses online
- Must have current prescription (1 year or less)
- <https://www.eyebuydirect.com>

### 39 Dollar Glasses

- Eyeglasses and sunglasses most for \$39.00
- Must have current prescription (1 year or less)
- 1-800-672-6304

## Zenni Optical

- Order glasses online w/ current 12 month or less prescription
- [www.zennioptical.com](http://www.zennioptical.com)



## Success Stories

**Alamance County** - Lead nurse: Amy [amy\\_widderich@abss.12.nc.us](mailto:amy_widderich@abss.12.nc.us)

One of my 5th grade students broke his glasses. They were unable to be repaired. He was having bad headaches as a result and difficulty learning. PBNC provided a voucher and he got new glasses. Now he no longer has headaches.

We had a new student enroll from out of state and failed her vision screening 20/80 bilateral with glasses on. I was able to secure a voucher for this student and after exam and new glasses her vision is now corrected to 20/25. Both the student and her mother are very grateful that this program exists in NC and she is appreciative of the support she has been given.

**Alleghany County** - Lead Nurse: LuAnn [luann.tucker@allehany.k12.nc.us](mailto:luann.tucker@allehany.k12.nc.us)

During a routine screening, K student had a 2-line difference. She was diagnosed with amblyopia and has glasses and a patch. "Sometimes just a 2-line difference even if it doesn't seem severe, if detected early, can make a huge difference." Parents were very appreciative.

**Alexander County** - Nurse: Michaela [mcostello@alexander.k12.nc.us](mailto:mcostello@alexander.k12.nc.us)

A student who received a voucher for a new pair of glasses came into the health office today. She looked beautiful, she looked happy. Thank you so much for making a difference in the life of a young lady. A young lady who is trying to settle into a new location as a teen in high school. Her glasses highlighted her eyes, helps her diagnosis and may mean more to her than we could even imagine. Thank you again for your support!

**Ashe County** - Lead Nurse: Tammy [tammy.craine@ashe.k12.nc.us](mailto:tammy.craine@ashe.k12.nc.us)

4<sup>th</sup> grade student was screened by the school nurse per teacher's request. Child received bifocals/glasses. Teacher and parents noted that student has less headaches and her reading scores have improved.

**Burke County** - Nurse: Joyce [jimboden@burke.k12.nc.us](mailto:jimboden@burke.k12.nc.us)

5<sup>th</sup> grader received glasses with voucher from PBNC. Grandmother was just awarded custody and had no financial resources (insurance) at the time to get him care. School Nurse applied for VSP voucher and grandmother took him to get glasses and was very excited and thankful for the assistance because he was having trouble in the classroom.

**Clay County:** Lead Nurse – Joanna [jatkisson@clayschool.org](mailto:jatkisson@clayschool.org)

During a mass screening, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student was wearing magnifying glasses in class and admits to not being able to see well. Glasses were obtained thru a VSP voucher. Student is now able to see the board in the classroom. There was collaboration between the teacher, nurse and school social worker to make this happen.

**Craven County – Lead Nurse – Amy [amy.heflin@cravenk12.org](mailto:amy.heflin@cravenk12.org)**

5<sup>th</sup> grader was referred by the teacher to the guidance counselor and then to me (since his nurse had just resigned). The student has a hx of vision problems and has worn glasses for several years. He did need his broken glasses to be replaced thru Healthy Eyes. The grandparent thanked me for helping and his teacher tells me he is doing a better job of paying attention in class and is now able to complete his assignments more independently. This child has a long hx of behavioral problems, so it is a success for him to sit in his seat, pay attention and complete assignments.

**Cumberland County – Lead Nurse – Janet [janetcolvin@ccs.k12.nc.us](mailto:janetcolvin@ccs.k12.nc.us)**

A first-grade student had limited muscle control in one eye due to a congenital condition. The student did not pass his initial screening and his teacher indicated that in the classroom he sometimes wore glasses. During rescreening the school nurse realized that the student was not wearing prescription glasses but "readers". The parent was unable to take her son to an ophthalmologist due to lack of insurance and transportation. The school nurse was able to make appointments at the health department for the student. With referrals and transportation assistance from community resources, the student and his mother were referred to Duke. During the Duke appointment, he received glasses and will be having surgery this summer to correct his congenital anomaly and improve his vision.

**Franklin County - Lead Nurse – Lisa [lisamorris@fcschools.net](mailto:lisamorris@fcschools.net)**

Success story from one of our high school nurses: "The senior I screened was an EC referral. The child's story is 18-year-old who emancipated from her adoptive family due to abuse. She transferred to my school on her own (living with a friend) to be able to finish school. When I performed her vision screen, she technically passed with 20/32. I knew she would soon age out with little/no resources for eye care. I reached out to PBNC for a voucher so the student could get an updated eye exam and new glasses if needed. She received her voucher and is going for an eye exam. Thank you!"

A success story from one of our middle school nurses: " A teacher referred a student due to broken glasses. Child had gone several days without (and she REALLY needed them) and had come back to school with both sides of the frames taped together. She passed her screening with her very broken glasses. I called her mom and asked if she needed assistance with getting new glasses for the student and the mother said she did. I reached out to PBNC and explained the situation and was given a voucher for an exam and glasses. As soon as I received the voucher the family picked it up and took the student straight to the eye doctor the same day! She received her new glasses a few days later. The family and I are very appreciative. Thank you!"

**Graham County – Lead Nurse – Amanda [amandaa@graham.k12.nc.us](mailto:amandaa@graham.k12.nc.us)**

We had a kindergarten student fail his eye exam during a mass screening. We rescreened him and he still failed. His dad took him to the eye doctor, and he received glasses. His kindergarten teacher reported to me since her student has received glasses, he has improved so much in his classwork. He went from a retention grade to a passing grade. He is so proud of having his glasses.

**Guilford County** – Lead Nurse - Susan [shawks@guilfordcountync.gov](mailto:shawks@guilfordcountync.gov)

A student had difficulty “seeing far” was screened, failed and was evaluated by an eye doctor. Child diagnosed with a congenital eye issue, is now followed closely by a specialist.

Prevent Blindness provided a voucher for a student who had broken his glasses. He was able to obtain another pair and has been taking good care of the new pair.

A 9<sup>th</sup> grade student moved to the school from out of state. A vision screening was done for IST. Student had glasses but they were broken and taped in the middle. Student was very self-conscious being a new student and having broken glasses. Parent had no insurance; school nurse was able to get the student an eye exam and new glasses were prescribed. Every time school nurse passes student, he is smiling.

**Halifax County** – Lead Nurse – Teresa [boydt@se.halifax.k12.nc.us](mailto:boydt@se.halifax.k12.nc.us)

1<sup>st</sup> grade student was referred to the nurse due to daily complaints of headaches and not being able to see the board. Visual exam performed and student had a 2-line difference. Yes, the student received glasses. Student reported headaches declined after receiving glasses.

**Iredell County** - School Nurse – Tammy [tcloud@iss.k12.nc.us](mailto:tcloud@iss.k12.nc.us)

Junior in High School - Received beautiful glasses with a voucher. She is ecstatic with her glasses and being able to see. She struggled most of the year but did not tell anyone until a counselor mentioned it to the nurse. After vision screen, referral, and the voucher process, now she can see. Her response "I Love them, and it is so nice being able to really see. Thank you!"

**Macon County** – School Nurse – Mary [mtyson@maconnc.org](mailto:mtyson@maconnc.org)

I have a self-contained student that we have been working with family for several years and the team has successfully secured glasses for this student. He was not interested in completing work with teacher before glasses and had difficulty counting. He could only count to 13. After receiving glasses, he is more interested in learning, is fascinated to look and follow visual schedule, has counted to 59 now with only having glasses for a couple of weeks. He comes to school happy to be in class now with his glasses. Teacher was surprised at the improvement and had to adjust the IEP goals as a result. Parent commented "I didn't know he needed glasses this bad!"

**McDowell County – Lead Nurse – Gail [gail.ellis@mcdowell.k12.nc.us](mailto:gail.ellis@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)**

On the midyear report, I discussed a sweet little girl who was so excited to receive glasses and be able to see with them! I shared what a wonderful experience that was for both she and I. Shortly after she received that pair of glasses, her baby brother broke them. Her family had no means to obtain a new pair (No Medicaid, very little income, transportation issues, etc.) I emailed the Prevent Blindness people and explained this situation to them. They advised they too couldn't pay for another pair of glasses so soon, BUT they led me to another program, Children's Fund Request. I filled out that application, they issued the student a voucher for \$50 to get her current pair of glasses fixed. I then took the voucher and the broken glasses to the eye doctor, where they were able to fix her glasses! Student, staff, and family all in agreement for child to leave glasses at school daily. I was so grateful it all worked out for her!

As a first-time school nurse, it has been such a joy to screen a child that struggles to see, refer them to the eye doctor, and they return to school with glasses and the ability to see! There are 2 students here at North Cove that this has happened for so far. They have come back to me so proud! I never realized this was a role of a school nurse or that the Prevent Blindness Program is available, and I consider it an honor to provide a step in helping these children.

**Mitchell County – School Nurse – Elizabeth [esparks@mcsnc.org](mailto:esparks@mcsnc.org)**

A 6<sup>th</sup> grader came in with broken glasses. She could not afford a new pair. Her prescription from a prior mass screening was within a year. The parent was very appreciative, and the student was as well because she could not see without the glasses. The student came up and hugged me and said, "Thank you, Thank you!"

**Montgomery County – Lead Nurse – Brenda [brenda.deberry@montgomery.k12.nc.us](mailto:brenda.deberry@montgomery.k12.nc.us)**

A 4<sup>th</sup> grader was screened and needed glasses. He just cannot see without them. He is so much more focused on his work and does so much better when he has his glasses. Mom says he stays up after everyone goes to bed so he can read.

Very bright 11th grade student that was squinting and having a very difficult time using the computer. Student was referred by a teacher who noticed he was having a lot of problems focusing. He failed eye exam and was referred to optometrist. He was diagnosed with 4 types of astigmatism. He received his glasses right before exams and was ecstatic that he could see so well.

**New Hanover – Lead Nurse – Maria [mturnley@nhcgov.com](mailto:mturnley@nhcgov.com)**

2 students who were born in US but to undocumented parents both had glasses in the past, no insurance and family had no means to secure exam or replace glasses (large family only 1 adult working part time). Able to get Voucher for glasses and exam for both students and glasses were replaced. Both students showed significant increase in

grades after glasses were replaced. One even reduced the multiple nurse visits for odd complaints assuming mostly due to difficulty in classroom.

One child had a new glasses prescription filled just prior to the mass screening. He failed the preliminary exam by the student nurse and went on to fail the re-screening done by the nurse. He was referred to an eye doctor, and it was discovered that the focal point in one of his lenses wasn't centered correctly when the new glasses were made. The clinic was able to correct this, and the student's vision re-screening showed improved. The student's mother was very thankful that the mass vision screening was done and caught this mistake early. Teacher reports that the student wearing his glasses has had a very positive impact on his performance in the classroom.

11th grade student with newly diagnosed diabetes had expressed to me after her diagnosis that she needed to see an eye doctor as part of her new diagnosis. After some discussion, and becoming more familiar with the student, she told me that she had a very difficult time seeing. This student is very smart and articulate, she advocates well for herself. She is also an immigrant but does very well with English. After a vision screening, I discovered deficits in distant and near vision. Her distance vision was worse. The last week of regular classes she updated me that she has 2 new pair of glasses. She said that when she put the glasses on for the first time, she cried. She had no idea that leaves on a tree were all separate. All she was seeing was a large area of color. I am especially happy for this student because of her own determination and perseverance!

There was a boy in 1st grade who failed the screen and was referred. His mother kept putting off the appt. (she didn't perceive any vision problems). I was persistent with her. When her son finally got glasses, he said, "Mom, I can see the birds in the trees" At that point, she realized that he really needed glasses and she felt ashamed for waiting so long.

A student failed a screening and a vision referral letter was sent home with the student that same day. A follow-up phone call to the student's mother was made and resulted with mother stating student had been vision tested by an eye professional two years ago when he had failed the mass vision screening in first grade. The mother stated the eye professional felt that the student was "faking" his inability to see based on the testing method she used and did not prescribe the student corrective lenses at that time. Mother feels the student might be seeking attention and might be purposefully stating he can't read the letters on the vision chart. Mother requested nurse to screen student again while she was present. Student vision screened again with mother present. Student again could not read any letters correctly below the 20/80 line in either eye. Mother took student to the eye doctor and was informed student needed glasses. The part that truly makes this a success story is when the student put his new eyeglasses on for the first time and went outside, he exclaimed to his mother, "WOW I can see all the leaves

on the tress!!! Everything looks so clear!!” When the mother told me this, tears welled up in my eyes. I felt his awe and joy, because I too wear eyeglasses and know what it’s like when everything appears blurred.

**Pasquotank County – Lead Nurse – Ashley [apugh@ecpps.k12.nc.us](mailto:apugh@ecpps.k12.nc.us)**

A 10<sup>th</sup> grader was screened per an EC referral, glasses were obtained. This came at the perfect time as the student is ready to start driving and would not be able to get their license due to vision. If this wasn't caught already, student may have not known about VSP resources, and been unable to continue with driving licensure.

**Rockingham County – Lead Nurse – Tammy [tbarker@rock.k12.nc.us](mailto:tbarker@rock.k12.nc.us)**

7<sup>th</sup> grade student was referred for a screening and had an exam and glasses prescribed. Student was found to have an eye disease when he went for the professional eye exam.

**Scotland County – School Nurse – D [bmills@scotland.k12.nc.us](mailto:bmills@scotland.k12.nc.us)**

School nurse screened a child. Student had bilateral cataract surgery, was prescribed glasses, vision improved.

**Stanly County – School Nurse – Leigh [leighann.johnson@stanlycountyschools.org](mailto:leighann.johnson@stanlycountyschools.org)**

A 7<sup>th</sup> grader had a screening by nurse per teacher referral for difficulty seeing in classroom. Glasses were broken on the school bus. Yes - other NCAE. Student had previous received VSP voucher within the year, but glasses were broken. Was able to get one pair of glasses to keep at school and one pair for home. The teachers report the student is "more focused", "smiles more often", improvement seen in grades. Student is "very proud to wear his glasses and takes good care of them."

**Transylvania County – School nurse – Amy [aparker@tcsnc.org](mailto:aparker@tcsnc.org)**

1<sup>st</sup> grader was mass screened. The child received an exam and glasses. The eye doctor was very surprised the student had been doing as well as she had been in school based on how bad her vision in that R eye was. It was determined at her eye doctor's appointment that she had very little vision in her R eye and could only see light and motion but was unable to identify letters or numbers. Her vision problems were causing daily headaches and after she received her glasses her teacher reported much less complaints of headaches.

**Union County – Lead Nurse – Wendy [wendy.nielsen@ucps.k12.nc.us](mailto:wendy.nielsen@ucps.k12.nc.us)**

I have a first-grade student who was referred. The family sent in a video of the student putting on their glasses for the first time and crying happy tears because it "wasn't blurry anymore".

I requested vision services for a student who was having trouble in class and was barely making passing grades. After screening her and getting a voucher she is a straight “A” student!

Child had been referred by nurse in another county. My screening showed 20/100 both eyes. With support from DSS, student obtained glasses and his vision was 20/80. His vision is so poor he had to gradually transition into vision correction with two sets of glasses.

**Union County** – Nurse Cheryl [Cheryl.herberg@ucps.k12.nc.us](mailto:Cheryl.herberg@ucps.k12.nc.us)

One of my students needed an exam. The first place she went for an exam the mother was told they could not perform the exam on her. She was issued a Donor Doc with Dr. Cureton in Union County. The doctor told the mother the child has significant vision issues. She must always wear her glasses while awake. The nurse and mother were so thankful. This will make a world of difference for this child and success at school.

**Wake County** – Lead Nurse – Lynn [lynn.townsend@wakegov.com](mailto:lynn.townsend@wakegov.com)

I assisted a family with securing care. A month or so after I noticed the student was not wearing the glasses, he said the glasses make it worse. When I called mom, she said the student can see better without the glasses. Student would not wear them. I screened the student with and without glasses. His good vision was WORSE with glasses. I assisted mom (Spanish speaking) with an interpreter to call the office. He was seen without a charge and sure enough he was issued the wrong prescription. He has the correct pair of glasses now.

**Washington County** – Lead Nurse Kathryn [kwiborg@wcsnc.org](mailto:kwiborg@wcsnc.org)

A fourth-grade student who enrolled in our school from a foreign country stated that she could not see but parent did not have the financial means to have vision professionally tested. When screened student’s visual acuity was 20/63 and 20/80. Was having difficulty with class work. Mother given a VSP voucher, but child did not have a social security number d/t coming from an island nation that did not use social security numbers. Nurse called VSP and was told that mother could use her SS#. Child was seen and prescribed glasses. She came to nurse to show off her new look and was very proud of the fact that she could now see. Students grades improved enough that she could move on to the next grade level.

**Wayne County** - Lead Nurse – Holly [hollydaly@wcps.org](mailto:hollydaly@wcps.org)

Parent shared that she was so thankful that her child's vision issue was picked up during mass vision screening. Child was referred and received vision care. She was diagnosed with amblyopia and early intervention is essential.

**Wilkes County** – Lead Nurse – Kimberly [sluderk@wilkes.k12.nc.us](mailto:sluderk@wilkes.k12.nc.us)

After a screening and glasses, a student’s phonics levels went up dramatically along with his reading level. He was more enthusiastic about learning and was able to show a

lot of improvement from the time he got his glasses to the end of the year. He ended the year one reading level above where we predicted he would be. His writing was much clearer and so were his drawings that went with his writing.