



WYOMING INSTITUTE FOR DISABILITIES

A Coordinated Statewide System of Early Childhood Vision Screening and Eye Health: Lessons From the Field

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The mission of the Wyoming Vision Collaborative (WVC) is to establish and ensure a cohesive, statewide system of education, training, referral, and family support.

Project Goal

Increase and expand access to children's vision and eye health services in Wyoming.

- Improve training for screeners
- Increase the number of children screened
- Increase public awareness about recommended regular eye exams
- Support families
- Improve follow-up care

Importance of Vision Screening

Early childhood vision screening and treatment can prevent permanent vision loss, learning difficulties, and delayed sensory, motor, cognitive or social-emotional development.

WVC Stakeholders

Thirty-five (35) stakeholders with diverse representation:

- Wyoming Institute for Disabilities
- Wyoming Department of Health
- Wyoming Department of Family Services
- Wyoming Department of Education
- Wyoming Optometric Association and appointed Pediatric Taskforce (8 Optometrists)
- Various Community non-profit organizations
 - Lions of Wyoming Foundation
 - National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health, Prevent Blindness
- Wyoming Early Hearing Detection and Intervention

"The importance of statewide vision infrastructure is fundamental to providing consistent, accurate, and repeated results that will provide homogenous screening protocol across the state. Ensuring proper follow-up and care for those in the state that may have otherwise gone undetected."

Dr. Nathan Edwards, Optometrist,
Chair of Wyoming Pediatric Task Force

Essential Elements of a Statewide Vision System

- Uniform planning
- Surveillance
- Coordination and collaboration
- Screening infrastructure
- Training for professionals
- Technical advisory processes
- Laws and regulations
- Public and professional education and awareness
- Sustained funding

National Initiatives:

- Collaboration with National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health: Year of Children's Vision
 - Affordable Care Act coverage of vision examinations
 - National Panel recommendations for children's vision screening and eye health
 1. Vision Screening for Children 36 to <72 Months: Recommended Practices
 2. Vision and Eye Health in Children 36 to <72 Months: Proposed Data System
 3. Vision and Eye Health in Children 36 to <72 Months: Proposed Data Definitions
- <http://journals.lww.com/optvissci/pages/default.aspx>

State Partnerships

- Wyoming Optometric Association (WOA) Pediatric Task Force
- Wyoming Department of Health Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs
- Wyoming Department of Health Early Intervention and Education Program
- Wyoming Lions – focus on screening and community outreach

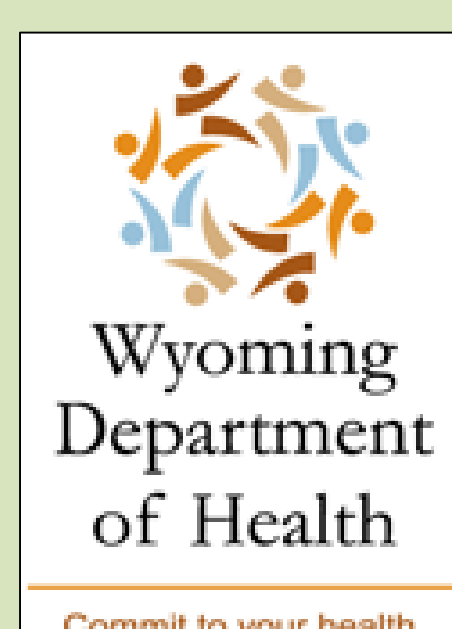
Core WVC Activities

- Coordinate and engage key stakeholders through an in-person vision summit to initiate program activities, followed up with monthly teleconferences.
- Develop and pilot vision screening protocol based on national recommendations and guidance from Wyoming Pediatric Task Force to be implemented in early childhood settings to include:
 - Child Development Centers
 - Lions community outreach with early care facilities
 - Child care facilities.
- Ensure active follow-up and surveillance for children not passing vision screening.
- Continuous evaluation of community need related to screening and program effectiveness.
- Host regular webinars to ensure community outreach and education related to essential elements of a statewide vision system.
- Create a formal training program and infrastructure for vision screener
- Create and disseminate community education messaging.
- Incentivize essential elements through early childhood education credits (STARS) and contact hours.

Lessons Learned

- Use the evidence to support best practice
- Align with national and state initiatives and priorities
- Leverage the experts
- Incorporate core elements of a statewide vision program
- Assess and respond to community need related to essential elements
- Engage families
- Mobilize key stakeholders
- Reflect and be flexible based on feedback
- Be persistent

Our partners



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