

Understanding and Activating the 2024 NASEM Myopia Report

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**Prevent
Blindness**

Our Vision Is Vision.



Prevent Blindness

Established in 1908

Our mission is to prevent blindness and preserve sight.

The National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health

Established by Prevent Blindness in 2009

Purpose is to improve children's vision through strong partnerships, sound science, and targeted public policy.

- Public and professional education
- Advocacy
- Certified vision screening training
- Community and patient engagement programs



Importance of the NASEM Report: Myopia: Causes, Prevention, and Treatment of an Increasingly Common Disease

Created a call to action- highlighting the importance of rising Myopia in the U.S. beyond a refractive error to calling for a “disease” designation. Created urgency and awareness

Need for more research in diagnostics and assessment; uniformity in disease definitions and methodologies; call to engage primary healthcare providers

Continued understanding of the causal issues and preventive strategies - with a drive for new clinical trials and treatment options along with environmental interventions

Call for assured early identification of myopia (screenings/exams) and promoted integrated data systems to track prevalence; outcomes; and care utilization

Considerations for Equitable Implementation



Public and
Systemic
Education
Strategies



Broad
Stakeholder
Engagement



Advocacy to
Improve Access
and Systems
Change



Promoting Equity in Myopia Identification and Intervention: What Do We Need to Do?

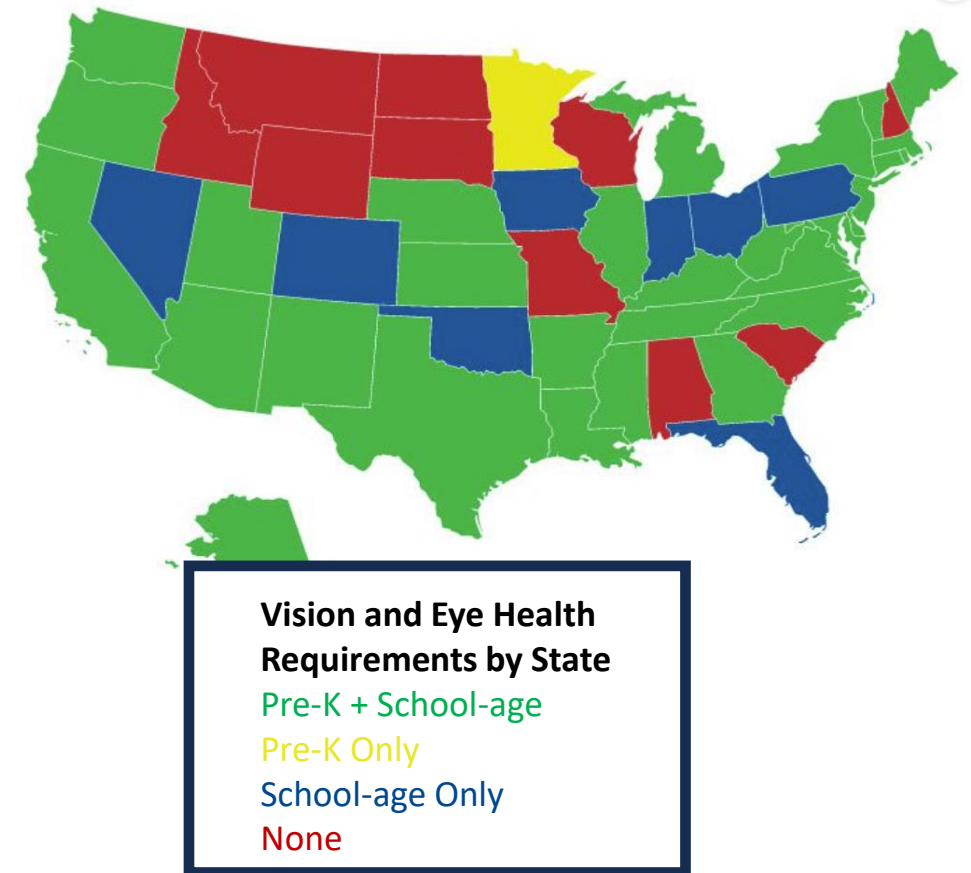
Ensure those most at risk of myopia have access to a strong system of care (vision screening, eye examinations, and treatment) to reduce the incidence of unnecessary eye disease and improve learning opportunities, improved vision health, and future success.

- Strong policies
- Parent and provider education (including myopia prevention strategies)
- Vision screening
- Accountable referral systems to eye care
- Eye care & treatment
- Coordination between providers and screening programs
- Coordination between health and education sectors
- Data collection & surveillance
- Continuous quality improvement and program evaluation

Our Current Reality

Barriers to reducing myopia prevalence:

- Proposed treatments for myopia are not covered by Medicaid or traditional vision insurance benefits (considered “cosmetic”)
- Variations in SDoH and state-level policies can lead to reduced opportunities for early identification and intervention
- Variation in opinions among eye care professionals of the point at which myopia should be designated as a “disease”- in all cases, or when certain thresholds are met?
- More research is needed to find consensus on care approaches and clinical standards of care



Map Source:

NCCVEH (2023) [Children's Vision Screening Requirements by State - National Center \(preventblindness.org\)](https://www.preventblindness.org/childrens-vision-screening-requirements-by-state)

Wahl, MD, Fishman, D, Block, SS, et al. 2021.

Improving Screening Surveillance and Research: Recommendations

- Address gaps in data collection
- Unbundle vision from EPSDT for separate reimbursement and data collection and require uniform data reporting
- Collect comprehensive information in screening programs and unify vision screening data from disparate sources
- Research on vision screening efficacy, social determinants of health impacting vision screening, and gaps in data
- Research on effective interventions to improve rates of eye care after screening

Advocating for Change- the Early Detection of Vision Impairments for Children Act (EDVI)

advocacy.preventblindness.org/edvi-act-of-2024/

Advocating for Change- The EDVI Act

The **goal of the EDVI Act** is to ensure that every child with a possible vision problem is identified and connected to appropriate eye care.

- The EDVI Act would support schools, early childhood professionals, health care providers, public health professionals, and families with updated and evidence-based vision screening methods, improve referrals to eye care, and advance follow-up protocols to ensure that children who need eye care treatment receive it before a vision problem leads to potential vision loss.



Early Detection of Vision Impairments for Children Act

The EDVI Act will:

1. Award grants and cooperative agreements from HRSA to states and local communities to improve vision systems.
2. Make resources available through the CDC to establish a national level technical assistance center to provide guidance to any state or community implementing, updating, or improving children's vision programs, to promote surveillance, and to advance population health research priorities in children's vision.
3. Encourage collaboration across various agencies under HHS and with the U.S. Department of Education

What will the EDVI Act Do?

Under the EDVI Act, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, will award grants (~10 states) to states and local communities to:

- **Implement approaches (such as vision screenings) for the early detection of vision concerns in children, referrals for eye exams, and follow-up mechanisms;**
- **Identify barriers in access to eye care and strategies to improve eye health outcomes;**
- **Raise awareness about the importance of early interventions and screenings;**
- **Establish a coordinated public health system for vision health and eye care diagnosis and treatment;**
- **Develop state-based data collection, quality monitoring, and performance improvement systems; and**
- **Provide referrals to wrap-around vision services, as necessary, for a future of independent living.**

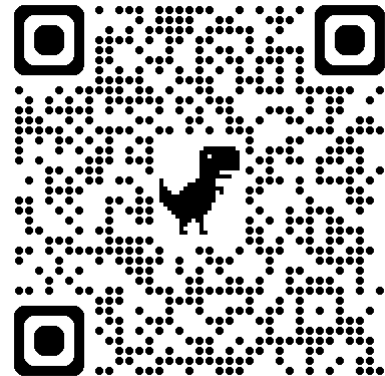
The EDVI Act also makes resources available through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to establish a national level technical assistance center to provide guidance to any state or community implementing, updating, or improving children's vision programs, to promote surveillance, and to advance population health research priorities in children's vision.



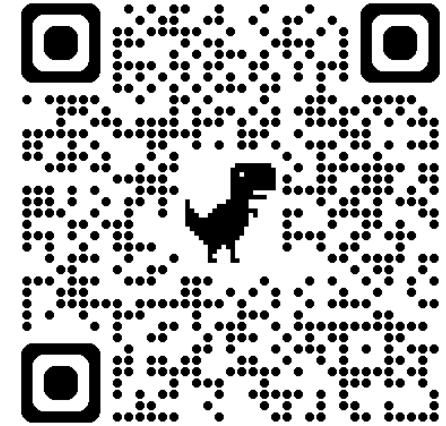
Early Detection of Vision Impairments for Children Act

More than 100 organizations endorse the goals of the EDVI legislation

- A range of diverse vision and health professionals; community organizations; patient advocacy organizations; associations; disease groups; educational initiatives; public health organizations; and more!
- Join them here:



Be the first to know- Sign up for Legislative Advocacy Alerts today:



Beyond EDVI- Recommended Policy Changes to Improve Vision and Eye Health for Children

- Address the Social Determinants of Health that impede equitable access to care through Medicaid and other funding programs.
- Establish accountability and performance measures for vision health in health insurance programs, children's developmental screening, well-child checks, school screening.
- Integrate evidence-based vision screening and eye care into Community Health Centers/FQHCs and School-Based Health Centers.



Thank you!

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