



PRESS RELEASE

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Conexus for Healthy Vision to Provide Screenings to Thousands of Richmond-Area Children Conexus Mobile Clinic Program to Provide Eye Exams to Children in Richmond, Petersburg, and Chesterfield

As we enter the Back to School season, Conexus for Healthy Vision is gearing up to provide vision screenings to thousands of children in and around the metro-Richmond region. For the 2019-2020 school year, Conexus will provide its VisioCheck screenings for state-mandated kindergarten, third, seventh, and tenth grade in Richmond City, Petersburg City, Hopewell City, Colonial Heights City Public Schools, as well as children in Chesterfield County Title 1 public schools; an estimated total of 12,000-plus children.

“We know that about 80% of what a child learns in a normal classroom setting is through their vision,” said Tim Gresham, Conexus CEO, “and we also know that the vast majority of children in our region will not visit an eye care professional before starting the year, so our vision screenings are a critical component to a child’s school year.”

In addition to VisioCheck, Conexus will provide its Mobile Vision Clinic Program to students in Richmond City Elementary, Petersburg City, and Chesterfield County Title 1 schools that receive referrals as a result of their vision screening. The Mobile Clinic is a free program that provides in-school non-dilated eye exams performed by state licensed optometrists. Upon completion of the exam, if prescribed, these students will be able to choose their very own pair of glasses and a Conexus optician will return a few weeks later to distribute the glasses.

During the 2018-2019 school year, Conexus screened over 54,000 children across the Commonwealth and 16,959 were referred for additional exams; a rate of 31.2%. The national average is 25%. Locally, 12,006 children were screened and the referral rate was an eye-opening 39%.

“It is apparent that in classrooms across our region, children are struggling not because they lack ability or desire, but simply because they lack all the tools they need to succeed,” explained Gresham. “These children cannot see the board, or their workbooks as well as they should, and their poor vision has become a barrier to their academic success and our Mobile Clinic program is changing their lives.”

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ABOUT CONEXUS

Conexus, based in Richmond, Virginia, is a private, non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization whose mission is to help every child reach their fullest potential by eliminating undetected and untreated vision problems as barriers to success in school and life. Originally established in 1957 as Prevent Blindness, becoming Conexus in 2014, the agency strives to support an unmet need within the vision community. 80% of what a child learns in school is through vision and 1 in 4 school children have a vision problem significant enough to impact learning. The Essilor Vision Foundation reports that children with uncorrected vision of less than 20/20 are 3 times more likely to fail a grade in school. Undetected and untreated vision problems impact incidences of juvenile delinquency, adult illiteracy, and unreachd potential.

Conexus views children's vision screening, when done appropriately, as a single task strategically incorporated as part of a comprehensive program to achieve the broader objective; changing the way the consumer thinks about and takes care of their vision. Conexus believes that a comprehensive program must contain the following well established and distinct components in order to be effective: a trusting and receptive partnership, education; quality best practice screening protocols; certified and credentialed delivery; informative and dynamic method to communicate results for both pass and refer; access to care; proper data collection analysis and follow-up. Visit www.conexusvision.org for more information.