

## Realeyes involvement at Health Fairs and Community Events (staffed by non-Realeyes employees)

**Objective:** To educate attendees (both children and their caregivers) about eye safety and the importance of regular eye exams.

### Set-Up:

- You will need at least one 6-8ft table. This is often supplied by the event organizers.
- It is helpful to bring a table covering of some sort.
- If outdoors and you have access to a pop-up tent, this can provide shade.

### Handouts:

As students pick out their prize make sure to also give them an activity packet and give the caregivers the any other informative brochures included with your materials. Other brochures depending on event: AOA mini brochures, Info about Realeyes, IEP brochure, etc.

### Stations:

Remember, students must pass through all stations you have set up before receiving their prize. We want to make sure to educate them on **at least three points** before they leave our booth. Choose however many of the options below that you can staff and fit into your space.

### Game with Blurry Glasses:

**Objective:** To help students see what it would be like to have blurry vision and how that would make things more difficult. We also hope to help students and caregivers understand the importance of a full eye exam by an eye doctor

**Options:** Find the Cats Poster, Cornhole, Football toss, putt-putt, Identify the animal cup game, others

### **Instructions:**

Have the visitor play the game. Make sure they are wearing a pair of blurry glasses in order to play. After experiencing it with the glasses, they can try it without (if there is no line). While they are playing explain to the child and adult the **value of a full eye exam** by an optometrist. "If doing something as simple as cornhole is more difficult with blurry vision... then imagine how much harder learning could be. Kids won't often complain of vision problems because they don't know that the way they see isn't normal. A screening should not take the place of an eye exam." Asking them the last time the child had an eye exam is a good way to get them thinking. Also, asking the students to give examples of things in school that would be harder to do seeing that way is a good way to get them thinking about the impact it could have on their lives. Give out tattoos as

prizes for making it in the hole in either game (keep tattoos in your pocket). Make sure to have 25-50 blurry glasses available. Have a bag or small box to hold used blurry glasses. Wipe them off with cleaning wipes when you have a moment so that they have time to dry before needing them. A paper bag or shopping bag works well as a place for the glasses to dry because you can shake the bag to speed up the drying process. In place of blurry glasses, you can also use the prescription glasses that simulate actual disorders like strabismus, astigmatism, or nearsighted.

### **Eye Safety:**

**Objective:** To help students realize that they need to be protecting their eyes during everyday activities

**Options:** Eye Safety Wheel or Eye Safety Match Game

### **Instructions:**

Explain that there are lots of ways to **protect their eyes**. Have the child spin the wheel of eye safety fun. Whatever they land on, ask them how they would protect their eyes in that situation. (If you don't have the wheel use pictures of activities and the items you should wear for protection):

- Baseball: **helmet** with the face shield, eye injuries are very common in little league, make sure you wear a helmet that will protect your eyes
- Swimming: **goggles**, you never know what kind of chemicals or dirt that could be in the water and could irritate or hurt your eyes
- Building construction: **clear safety glasses**, if you see anyone working with power tools, make sure they have on eye protection
- Yard work: **tinted safety glasses**, make sure if you are mowing the lawn or using the weed eater that you are always wearing eye protection. These tinted glasses will help protect from the sun while working outside too.
- Playing sports: **rec specs**, if you wear glasses you can get prescription put in them because regular glasses can be dangerous to wear playing sports - or just wear them to protect your eyes
- Science class: **chemistry goggles**, follow the teachers instructions and never take off the goggles when working with chemicals. It's important to wear these specific kind that touch your cheeks, so that you are protected from something bubbling up or smoking up into your eyes.
- Playing outside: **sunglasses**, even though you can't feel it anytime you look at the sun it is damaging your eyes. The sun is one of the worst things for your eyes so even if you have sunglasses on, you still can't look at the sun.

End by telling every child that you only get 2 eyes your whole life, so you have to be real careful with them. No replacements.

Alternative activity: Show the sign with the pictures of eye injuries. Explain how each patient received their injury, and ask the student how they could have protected their eyes instead (injuries include lawn mowing scratched cornea, cleaning chemicals to the eye, finger poke while swimming, metal shaving to the eye while scraping paint)

### **Anatomy of the Eye:**

**Objective:** To help students and adults learn a few basic parts of the eye and to understand why a regular eye exam every year or two is important for kids.

**Options:** Guess the size of the eye, Eye model explanation

#### **Instructions:**

Guess the size of the eye:

There is a box of different sized eyeballs. Have the child and adult guess which one is the actual size of the eye. Show them the correct one and talk to them and their adult about how their eyes are still growing until they are about 18 years old. The shape of a child's eye can determine if they need vision correction. That's why it is important to go back to the optometrist every year or two as their vision can change as their eyes grow. Ask the caregiver when the child's most recent eye exam was. Explain that it is very common for adults to believe that a vision screening at school is enough. This is an important step, however, that typically just checks a child's distance vision, and that's it. Imagine all the visual skills needed for school that aren't checked during a screening. Encourage regular eye exams every year or two for kids in addition to the screenings that happen in schools.

Using a larger eye model, choose a few parts of the eye to talk about (depending on the age of the participant)

- Optic Nerve: Cord from the back of the eye to the brain that sends images to the brain. About 3 mm in diameter.
- Cones: Located on the retina. Heavily concentrated in the central part of the retina. Allows us to see in color.
- Rods: See in the dark and to the sides, but only in black and white.
- Lens: Focuses what you are looking at.
- Pupil: Hole that lets light in.
- Iris: Muscle that controls how much light gets in.
- Cornea: Clear layer that protects the eyes.
- Macula: Small point in the center of the retina that provides crisp clear vision wherever you are looking.
- Retina: Back of the eye that collects light.

### **Food:**

**Objective:** To teach that no foods can improve your eyesight, but that there are foods that can help your eyes to be healthier.

**Options:** Plinko

**Instructions:**

No foods we eat can reverse the effects of an eye disease, or make you see better. They can help PREVENT eye diseases though. Have them play Food Plinko. There are eight options:

Strawberries / Broccoli: Vitamin C can help prevent glaucoma by reducing pressure in the eye and keeps the lens of the eye healthy, which reduces the risk of cataracts. Other examples: Cantaloupe, raspberries, oranges, grapefruit, green peppers, tomatoes, kale, broccoli, and mango.

Almonds / Avocado: Vitamin E can help prevent cataracts and macular degeneration. Other examples: Sunflower seeds, peanuts, peanut butter, mango, and eggs.

Spinach / Corn: Lutein can help prevent cataracts and macular degeneration and Zinc helps protect the eyes from the harmful effects of the sun (like built in sunglasses!). Other examples: kale, greens, broccoli, carrots, peas, zucchini, romaine lettuce.

Eggs / Yogurt: Omega-3 fatty acids reduce the risk of macular degeneration by keeping the retina, back of the eye, healthy. Other examples: salmon, tuna, walnuts, tofu, avocados.

-Optic Nerve: Sends info to the brain. Eating food with Vitamin C like broccoli and strawberries can help prevent glaucoma.

-Lens: Focuses what you are looking at. Eat foods with Vitamin E like almonds and avocados to help protect it from cataracts. And wear sunglasses/hats.

-Macula: Small point that actually sees in focus. Eat foods with Lutein and Zinc to help protect the macula from harmful effects of the sun, like spinach and corn.

-Retina: Back of the eye that collects light. Eat foods with Omega-3 fatty acids to keep the retina healthy like eggs and yogurt.

You might not like some of these - or you may love them all! - but there are probably at least some that you like eating. Here are other foods that are good for the eyes include: kiwi, grapes, oranges, mango, papaya, peaches, spinach, squash, sweet corn, kale, broccoli, green beans, brussels sprouts, orange peppers, peas, prunes, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, melon, and dark green lettuce...and egg yolks are good too!

**Eye Diseases:**

**Objective:** To show what it would be like to have common eye diseases and discuss the importance of consistent eye exams as preventive care.

**Options:** VR Goggles, Adult Vision Simulator Cards

**Instructions:**

This activity we are going to try to reserve for adults. Ideally, while the child is playing the other game. But if a child really wants to try, that's fine. The VR goggles simulate the 4 most common eye diseases, and it shows how they progress from mild to severe. Ask the adults if any eye diseases run in their family and show them that disease. Use this time to emphasize the importance of catching eye diseases early, as there is no cure. Macular Degeneration: explain that it can run in the family or can be caused by smoking and over exposure to the sun. Diabetic Retinopathy: shows why all diabetics need to get annual eye exams. Glaucoma: can affect anyone, but it seen more in people with darker skin. Cataracts: come with age but can happen younger if you smoke or don't wear sunglasses. Make sure to emphasize these diseases have NO CURE (other than cataracts obviously) and they must be caught early through a regular eye exam and often times can be stopped from getting worse.

**Prizes/Handouts:**

**Objectives:** To give students and caregiver a take-away. While doing that, emphasize protecting eyes from the sun.

**Options:** Hats, Sunglasses, Journey Packets, Bookmarks, any others included in materials

**Instructions:**

Once a child has participated in **each section**, they may choose a prize. Options are sunglasses or hats. One prize per person - either a hat or sunglasses (not both). As they are picking it out explain that the sun can permanently hurt your eyes if you don't protect them. Don't ever look at the sun. Wearing sunglasses or a hat when you're outside protects them. Tell the caregivers that 80% of your lifetime exposure to damaging UV light occurs by the time you are 18. So, it is very important for kids to wear sunglasses.

No one gets a prize until they have done an activity and heard about eye protection. End by reminding them about getting a regular eye exam and giving students a Journey packet and explaining that you can find a video on YouTube to find out more information about eye exams (point to the inside of the packet). All adults should receive some sort of informational handout.

**Other:**

**Adults:**

If possible, engage the adults along the way. If you don't have many staff, at least ask adults some of the same questions you ask students while they are going through activities. If you have enough staff to dedicate one person to engaging adults, here are some options for conversations:

- Ask each adult if being 20/20 is the standard that says your child's eyes are ok? How do they know if their child's eyes are ok? Explain that 20/20 is just a simple measure of a child's distance vision. It is not perfect vision, nor does it represent all the different aspects of vision that are needed, especially in school. There is no substitute for a comprehensive eye exam.
- Ask adults if their child has ever had an eye exam...
- Ask about their vision

**Eye Myths:**

Use these extras with adults or students along the way

- Best thing to eat for your eye health
- Flashlights in eyes
- Watching TV sitting closely
- Full eyeball transplant
- 20/20 Vision is perfect