



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Mark Johnson, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

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DATE: August 28, 2019

TO: Directors, Exceptional Children Programs
Preschool Coordinators, Exceptional Children Programs
Directors, Children's Developmental Services Agencies
State School Health Consultant, Department of Health and Human Services

FROM: Sherry Thomas, Exceptional Children Division *SH7*
Dan Tetreault, Office of Early Learning (Pre-K – Grade 3) *D7*

RE: **Professional Development Opportunity- Conducting Early Childhood Vision Screening & Children's Vision Screening Improvement Certification**

Prevent Blindness North Carolina's (PBNC) Children's Vision Screening trainings can assist LEA staff in fulfilling the health screening requirements of the special education evaluation process for preschool and school aged children. Vision screening is a required step in evaluating a child's initial eligibility and reevaluation (NC 1503-2 through NC 1503-3). Conducting appropriate vision screening is often a barrier to meeting special education evaluation deadlines. Though professionals who conduct eligibility evaluations have great expertise in child development, their proficiency in vision screening and available follow-up resources may be limited. Some schools have access to school nurses who are trained in vision screening while others do not. PBNC offers two trainings that may be of interest. Both are scheduled for the same day, with training #1 in the morning and #2 in the afternoon. Participants are not required to attend both but may if they choose. We ask that participants register for each training separately with the links provided below.

1. **Guiding Practices for Early Childhood Vision Screening Training** – 9 am to 12 pm
In 2014 the Department released the *Guiding Practices in Early Childhood Vision Screening* (<http://nceln.fpg.unc.edu/sites/nceln.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/GuidingPracticesEarlyChildhoodVisionScreening.pdf>).

Workshop participants will receive guidance in early childhood screening with focus on choosing appropriate screening methods and referral processes in the context of developmental evaluations. Screening instruction will cover methods for screening children under age 5 and older children that are difficult to screen with traditional vision screening charts. The training will review the guidelines outlined in the *NC Guiding Practices for Early Childhood Vision Screening*. The topics include impact of vision on childhood development; common vision problems; critical screening program components; distinguishing between and selecting recommended age-appropriate screening methods; conducting vision screening (observation, acuity, SureSight, Fix and Follow Test; and SPOT); interpreting vision screening results; and utilizing consistent criteria for follow-up decisions.

The targeted audience includes appropriate preschool assessment team members, early intervention diagnosticians, Teachers of the Visually Impaired who serve preschool students and school nurses that conduct vision screenings on preschool students. Space is limited to 50 participants per site. Each participant should bring the vision screening equipment they currently use.

Participants should follow the link to register below or access the links on the "Upcoming Events" page on the Early Learning Network website home page (<http://nceln.fpg.unc.edu/>).

OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

For further information, please contact Dr. Vivian James at 919-218-8384, or email her at vivian.james@dpi.nc.gov.

Register here: https://unc.azure.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7P1e07gST4yobcx

2. **Children’s Vision Screening Improvement Certification** – 1 pm to 4 pm

Workshop participants are trained in the fundamentals of typical vision screening techniques for school-aged children. Many school-aged children going through special education evaluation have the cognitive skills necessary to participate in chart-based acuity screening. Upon completion of this three hour training participants will be able to recognize signs of vision difficulties and potential eye problems; describe the components of a children’s vision screening; conduct observation and acuity based screening; interpret acuity and results; and understand follow-up procedures.

The targeted audience includes any team members conducting vision screenings including Teachers of the Visually Impaired. Space is limited to 30 participants per site. Each participant will be given recommended eye charts to use for screenings as well as Functional Vision Assessments.

Register here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090c45afad2da64-childrens>

Participants may register for one or both trainings, as they deem necessary to their duties.

Regions	Date	Venue Location
Northeast	10/16/19	Martin County Telecenter, 415 East Blvd, Williamston, NC 27892
Southeast	10/7/19	Craven County Board of Education, 3600 Trent Rd, New Bern, NC 28562
Northcentral	10/18/19	Johnston County Schools, Glenn Building, 501 S. 2nd St, Smithfield, NC 27577
Sandhills	10/3/19	Lee County Board of Education, 106 Gordon St, Sanford, NC 27330
Piedmont-Triad	10/11/19	Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Preschool Services-Training Center, 950 Mock St, Winston-Salem, NC 27127
Southwest	10/7/19	Smith Family Center, 1600 Tyvola Rd., Charlotte, NC 28202
Northwest	10/30/19	Newton-Conover City Schools, 605 North Ashe Avenue, Newton, NC 28568
Western	10/3/19	Buncombe County Schools, 175 Bingham Road, Asheville, NC 28806

DT/ST/VKJ/mh