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Loma Linda University Department of Ophthalmology receives grant for vision screening for underserved children

LOMA LINDA, CA – May 11, 2011 – Thousands of underprivileged children from throughout Riverside County are expected to get their vision screened, thanks to a \$750,000 grant awarded to Loma Linda University Department of Ophthalmology by the Riverside County Children and Families Commission.

The grant awarded by the commission, also known as First 5 Riverside, creates the Loma Linda University Vision Intervention Program, which aims to provide free comprehensive vision examinations, treatment, and corrective lenses to low-income and uninsured children up to age five in Riverside County.

First 5, a public entity created by the passage of Proposition 10, provides funding for services designed to create a strong foundation for children through 5 years old, so that they can be successful in school and throughout their lives.

“Discovering, and then assisting with vision problems at a young age is critical to a child’s development, and future success in school,” said Harry Freedman, Executive Director of First 5 Riverside. “The First 5 Commission values the partnership with Loma Linda, and the opportunity to provide funds for a critical service where other resources do not exist.”

Dr. Jennifer Dunbar, pediatric ophthalmologist at Loma Linda University Department of Ophthalmology will be the program director. The program will collaborate with El Sol Neighborhood Education Center to train bilingual Promotores that will conduct the screening at different sites throughout Riverside County.

“We are very excited to be able to provide free vision screening to children up to age five because this is a critical time for development of their vision,” said Andrea Scholte, program manager at Loma Linda University Department of Ophthalmology.

According to Ms. Scholte, certain eye conditions that affect many young children often remain undiagnosed and untreated until the children are in school because of lack of vision screening when they were younger. Based on screening results, parents of children who are screened will be given a recommendation whether their child will need a comprehensive eye examination.

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About [Loma Linda University Medical Center \(LLUMC\)](#)

Loma Linda University Medical Center's comprehensive health system includes the Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, LLUMC – East Campus, Behavioral Medicine Center, Heart and Surgical Hospital, and physician clinics. LLUMC is widely respected as a health care leader and is known for its pioneering and cutting-edge work in such areas as organ transplants, proton treatment for cancers, cardiac care, physical rehabilitation, acute pediatric and adult care, as well as treatments for chemical dependence and other behavioral disorders. LLUMC is the largest and only Level 1 trauma Center in the San Bernardino, Riverside, Inyo, and Mono counties, which covers over 40,000 square miles in Southern California. With a total of 974 beds, the Loma Linda University Health System includes the only children's hospital in the region. Loma Linda University Medical Center sees over 30,000 inpatients and about 750,000 outpatient visits a year.

About [First 5 Riverside](#)

First 5 Riverside, the Riverside County Children and Families Commission, is a division of the Riverside County Department of Public services. Funded by Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues and established by the County Board of Supervisors in 1999, it funds early education, health and child care services that help children through age 5 develop a strong foundation for success in school and throughout their lives. For more information about First 5 Riverside programs and funded services, call 951-248-0014 or Toll Free 800-266-3880 or visit www.rccfc.org

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