

# Conway Area Lions Club offering free Vision Screening to Preschools



Lions Dr. Angelique Sawyer, Linda Rafferty, Bob Evans and Chris Sortwell (above) as well as Noreen Bisio, Deb Evans and Brittani Royer visited six local preschools last week screening children for potential vision issues.

Lions International is well known for its work in the area of vision dating back almost a hundred years when the then fledgling organization in search of a cause was challenged by Helen Keller. Today, Lions Clubs provide free vision screening primarily to children, collect and recycle used pairs of glasses and provide a program to assist underprivileged individuals with obtaining eye exams and eye glasses.

The Conway Area Lions Club has begun its Operation Kid Sight initiative made possible through a generous grant from the Lions Club International Foundation. "Our goal is to screen all preschool children from 6 months on up before they reach elementary school," says Bob Evans, CALC Vice President. "We work with area preschool directors to schedule screening sessions. We're

mobile so we go to any facility. Screening is done with a handheld device and takes about a minute. A detailed report is provided to the parents."

Optometrist and CALC member Dr. Angelique Sawyer explains further, "The software measures myopia, hyperopia, astigmatism and gaze development. These are some of the common factors that can cause visual issues in children. Any screening result falling outside of a normal range is flagged as abnormal findings. Our testing at the six preschools (about 95 children) identified 8% of those children as having abnormal findings which require follow up care. While vision screenings are great for catching at risk children and an important service being offered by the Lions Club, parents should remember that screenings do not replace comprehensive eye exams, which all children should have at least every two years."

Any preschools interested in utilizing the program should contact Linda Rafferty (781-820-4771) or Bob Evans (603-733-8579) for more information.