

# UCLA, First 5 LA partner to provide vision services for county's most vulnerable preschoolers

Susan Thomas | December 13, 2012

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Young children in Los Angeles County who are in need of vision services will soon be seeing things a lot clearer, thanks to a new collaboration between [the Jules Stein Eye Institute at UCLA](#) and [First 5 LA, the child advocacy and grant-making organization](#).

The [UCLA Mobile Eye Clinic](#), an outreach program of the Jules Stein Institute, has received an allocation of \$4.1 million from the First 5 LA commission that will be used to screen more than 90,000 children between the ages of 3 and 5 from underserved populations in the county over the next five years.

Under the collaboration, the UCLA Mobile Eye Clinic will provide services to preschoolers, including initial vision screenings at preschool locations; full-eye exams conducted by ophthalmologists and optometrists for children who fail the initial exam; referrals to partner specialists for visually impaired children who need special medical or surgical treatment; and free eyeglasses for those with refractive errors.

Additionally, the mobile clinic has an automated scheduling, coordination and data-registration program that makes it easy for parents to schedule appointments, and the clinic's staff will work hand-in-hand with preschool teachers and parents to ensure follow-up care and compliance.

"Much of children's health and learning abilities is greatly dependent on their sight," said Dr. Anne L. Coleman, who directs the Mobile Eye Clinic and the Jules Stein Eye Institute Center for Community Outreach and is vice chair of academic affairs for the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology. "It is estimated that one in five preschool children has a vision problem that

affects their learning ability. Improving vision in these children not only helps improve their academic performance, but it also protects them from environmental hazards and enhances the quality of their social and personal lives."

"The Jules Stein Institute is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of vision worldwide," said Dr. Bartly J. Mondino, the institute's director and chair of the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology since 1994. "The First 5 collaboration supports the Jules Stein Eye Institute's mission, part of which is to address the needs of some of the most vulnerable in Los Angeles County who are at risk of losing their sight unnecessarily."

[The Jules Stein Eye Institute](#) at UCLA is a vision science campus dedicated to the preservation and restoration of vision through its global programs in innovative research, quality patient care, and multidisciplinary and integrative education. The institute's community outreach efforts range from its Mobile Eye Clinic, which travels to schools, shelters, health fairs and other organizations that assist homeless and low-income families, to programs like Vision IN-School, for vision education; Shared Vision, for the collection and donation of used eyeglasses; the Preschool Vision Screening program; and the Indigent Children and Families program. For more information or to make an appointment, call 310-825-5000 or visit [www.jsei.org](http://www.jsei.org).