

**Prevent Blindness Indiana**  
**2003 Indiana Achievement Awards Award**  
**Category: Impact/Small Organization**  
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**Award Sponsor: The Indianapolis Foundation**

**Organizational Mission**

The mission of Prevent Blindness Indiana (PBI) is to advance vision health and wellness through comprehensive education, screening, safety, and sight preservation research. **PBI** believes that everyone has the right to see clearly with good vision, regardless of his or her culture, background, or economic situation.

**Organizational Overview**

**PBI** has been saving sight in Indiana since 1950. Currently, training of volunteers takes place in all 92 counties in Indiana to do free vision screenings, refer to professional treatment those with vision problems, and find solutions for those who can't afford professional eye care. The goal of **PBI** is to reach everyone needing services so that no individual will lose his/her sight needlessly.

**Program Description**

Historically, working-poor American adults and their children have suffered from grossly inadequate access to good health care, especially preventative care and access to vision protection and eye health programs. The *2002 Vision Problems in the U.S.* report is the most comprehensive ever compiled on the prevalence of age related eye diseases in Americans and it outlines the need for preventative vision screenings focusing on refractive errors (myopia & hyperopia) and four main eye diseases and conditions: diabetic retinopathy, age-related macular degeneration, cataract and glaucoma.

**PBI** works to save sight by offering free preventative vision screenings daily to thousands of adults in Indiana each year. They accomplish this by staffing and equipping vision screening events and by training volunteers to provide early detection vision screenings and eye health education in their communities. The purpose of these screenings is to identify those who have potential vision problems, to refer those identified for professional treatment, and to insure that even those who cannot afford treatment have an opportunity to get a professional eye exam, eyeglasses, and/or other needed treatment. Furthermore, **PBI** provides help to Indiana's children in seeing clearly and learning without visual impediment; one in twenty preschoolers and one in four school age children have a vision problem.

**Program Results**

**PBI** accomplishes its work with impressive efficiency. Program year 2001-2002 was completed with an annual budget of \$569,515. Screenings cost under \$2 per person overall. Of 17 Prevent Blindness America affiliates, they rank first in the nation for number of people screened per dollar raised. In total number of people screened, they are second only to an affiliate that receives \$1.09 million more than **PBI** does in donated revenue.

In 1998, Prevent Blindness Indiana's Medical Advisory Committee (now the Professional Advisory Committee), decided to set a 20% annual increase in vision screenings as a target benchmark. This prompted **PBI** to consolidate training efforts to make the training more effective. This in turn

enabled PBI to reach more of its target recipients with fewer hours spent training over the course of the next three years. In total number of people screened, there was a 60% increase from program year 99/00 to 00/01 and a 96% increase from program year 00/01 to 01/02. More specifically, last program year, PBI screened 286,690 children and 8,893 adults. Additionally, PBI facilitated 5,971 donated eye exams and 5,603 donated eyeglasses, up 75% from last year. All this was done with a small staff and by leveraging resources through utilization of volunteers and collaboration with other agencies.

Program Year	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002
Children's Vision Screening	92,521	146,319	286,690
Adult Vision Screening	1,821	4,344	8,893
Screening Totals	94,342	150,663	295,583
Children referred to an eye care professional	4,917	11,095	26,731
Adults referred to an eye care professional	463	1,339	4,206
Referral Totals	5,380	12,434	30,937

#### Program Impact

PBI measures its success by insuring that everything they do is geared toward their mission - that all individuals deserve to see the world clearly with good vision, regardless of culture, background, or economic situation. The recent expansion and immense community impact of their comprehensive vision screening efforts across Indiana indicate that they are focused on the guidepost their mission represents.

#### Potential as a Model

PBI's potential as a model is in its training techniques, program evaluation and collaboration with other organizations. PBI uses continuous assessment and evaluation of their program in order to make improvements on a regular basis. They continually train individuals all over Indiana (currently over 12,000) to do vision screenings and eye health education. Furthermore, they offer retraining to individuals periodically to insure that their skills, data collection techniques, and materials are current and accurate. PBI has built a tremendous infrastructure of partners across Indiana. Because of ongoing feedback from the locations they serve, they are able to expand their programs and better achieve their mission.