



Tips for Establishing Partnerships with Schools

1. **Research the demographics of children in your community:** Before contacting potential partners, find statistics that would show the need of screening. Some statistics would include 3rd grade standardized test scores (which may indicate there was a vision related learning deficiency), socioeconomic status, insurance status, and etc.
2. **Seek connections in your club*:** It's not what you know, it's who you know. Utilize members of your club who may be connected to schools as parents, grandparents, teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, and other major roles.
3. **Communicate in various modes on several occasions*:** Consistency is key and persistence goes a long way. Once you have contact information for target schools and facilities, make initial contact. It doesn't matter if it is a phone call, an email, or snail mail just be sure to introduce yourself and the goal of the screening program. (See the KidSight Letter as a reference). Don't hesitate to follow up with contacts and keep lines of communication open.
4. **Sell the IMPACT:** Let the potential partners know why screening is important. Use some of the statistics from initial research to support your reasoning. Remember: Better Vision = Better Grades, Better Vision = Better Literacy, Better Vision = Better Behavior, Better Vision = Better Wellbeing.
5. **Schedule a meeting*:** Coordinate a time to meet with key staff, administrators, volunteers, and Lions who will be involved with the screening. Take this time to provide more information about KidSight, answer any questions the administrators or staff may have, provide a mock screening or demonstration of the SPOT screener.
6. **Cultivate the relationship:** Always think about the big picture. Partnerships with schools and child care centers are not only important short term screening, but for long term service opportunities. Ask school administrators if there are other ways Lions can provide services (referral for eye exams, beautification projects, etc.). Also consider inviting school officials to a Lions Club meeting to learn more about what you are doing in the community.

*These tips were successful with South Cobb and Richmond Hill Lions Clubs.