



Despite the challenges of COVID-19, Sight Savers America has never ceased operation.

Our case specialists have continued follow-up eye care, offering services to families who may not have the financial means for a fully dilated eye exam, eyeglasses, or other necessary treatments (e.g. surgery). When non-essential medical appointments were halted, we maintained communication with parents to inform them of their child's failed vision screening, educated them on the importance of recurrent eye care, and discussed future eye care appointments. We continued to handle urgent and medically necessary eye care on an as needed basis and began scheduling routine eye exams as soon as restrictions were lifted.

Our low vision program staff continued case management and follow-up surveys as well as working with low vision partners to ensure our multiple, upcoming low vision clinics are a success for those we serve. For the time being, these clinics will be performed remotely. In-person clinics and home deliveries will resume once social distancing restrictions have been lifted.

Our health and vision screening programs were pulled from the field as schools closed. Our staff's work shifted to screening data analysis, assisting with eye care follow-up, and designing new protocols to ensure the health and safety of our team and the children we serve once we return to the field.

Our development team and executive staff have continued pursuing grants, working on corporate and donor relations, preparing a new website and biennial report, and planning for long-term sustainability.

We have overcome the challenges faced, but realize difficult days remain. We continue to adjust in order to best serve the needs of those we serve. What drives us is thinking about the individuals whose eye care has been affected by COVID-19. Some children did not get the screenings they were scheduled to receive during the school year and go day to day with an untreated vision issue like amblyopia, which can cause long-term vision loss. Some children were in the midst of receiving continuing care, such as vision therapy, and their services have been interrupted. These are gains potentially lost. Other children and adults sit at home at a great disadvantage because they were unable to complete the process of receiving a low vision evaluation, a recommendation of vision aids, and ultimately life changing high-tech equipment from Sight Savers America. As our world opens up, helping these people and all others with unmet vision and health needs is the driving force behind Sight Savers America!