

News Brief

LifeSight Renews Commitment to KidsFIRST Free Vision Screenings for RCAS Elementary Students

RAPID CITY, SD August 7, 2026 – LifeSight is renewing its partnership with Rapid City Area Schools (RCAS) and continuing its longstanding commitment to provide KidsFIRST Free Vision Screenings for students in pre-K through fifth grade to help identify vision concerns and ensure children have the visual tools they need to succeed in the classroom.

Because many children do not realize they have vision problems, conditions can go unnoticed by parents and teachers. The partnership aims to identify vision concerns early, giving families an opportunity to address issues that could otherwise impact learning and overall academic performance.

Approximately 80% of classroom learning comes through visual pathways. Undetected vision problems can disrupt learning, delay motor skill development, and cause physical discomfort like eye strain and headaches that can lead to behavioral challenges and frustration in the classroom.

"Good vision is essential for student success," said LifeSight representatives. "When children can see their teacher, comfortably read the board, textbooks, and computer screens, and participate fully in classroom activities, they are better positioned to learn and grow."

As many vision problems are easier to treat and correct when identified early – before they become barriers to learning – KidsFIRST screenings provide critical early detection that gives children the best start possible.

By using advanced technology called the SPOT™ Vision Screener that can identify nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism, and other risk factors associated with amblyopia, the leading cause of vision loss in U.S. children, KidsFIRST screenings take only seconds and require no physical contact or response from the child.

To date, LifeSight has conducted more than 75,000 free vision screenings to ensure early detection of vision problems and connect families to the care they need to protect young eyes from long-term vision loss. Over 10,600 – nearly 15% – of these children have been referred to an eye doctor for follow-up care.

While vision screenings do not diagnose eye conditions, parents or guardians are notified if a potential concern is identified and encouraged to schedule a comprehensive eye exam with an eye care professional for further evaluation and timely treatment of the eye condition.

Most children referred for follow-up care are simply prescribed eyeglasses. A number require medical intervention like vision therapy to strengthen the visual system. And in some cases, pediatric cataracts have been diagnosed that, if left untreated, cause permanent vision loss or blindness.

The KidsFIRST Free Vision Screening program reflects LifeSight's commitment to supporting student health, strengthening academic success, and ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive academically and beyond.

To learn more about KidsFIRST Free Vision Screenings or becoming a partner to support LifeSight's free vision screening program, contact Ronda Gusinsky at (605) 716-6733 or email rgusinsky@lifesightsd.org.

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For information, contact Ronda Gusinsky, Executive Director, (605) 716-6733 or rgusinsky@lifesightsd.org.

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