OUR CHILDREN'S VISION LAUNCHES TO COMBAT HEALTH CRISIS WE SEE COMING; MYOPIA GROWING AT ALARMING RATE, AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

New York, NY, USA, 12 April 2016: A group of vision industry leaders has announced a new global campaign to bring better vision and eye health to millions of children in need. Our Children’s Vision is a movement bringing together governments, development agencies, the private sector, eye health practitioners and communities with the goal of screening 50 million children worldwide for vision impairments by 2020.

Our Children’s Vision has been initiated by the Brien Holden Vision Institute and the Vision for Life™ fund, created by Essilor. Both organizations share the mission of improving the lives of everyone everywhere through better sight and creating sustainable solutions to reach that goal.

Uncorrected vision can have a big impact on young people’s lives. “They can’t play outside safely, so they struggle to make friends. They can’t see the blackboard, so they struggle to learn. They are hindered in every aspect of their life and it doesn’t stop at childhood,” said Jayanth Bhuvaraman, Chairman of the Vision For Life™ fund and Chief Corporate Mission Officer at Essilor International.

If a child’s vision is not corrected while they are in school, they may find it hard to break free from the poverty cycle as adults. An eye exam and a pair of glasses can set off a chain reaction that dramatically improves their lives. And yet millions of children around the world do not have access to this simple solution.

Providing children with access to eye care is now more important than ever. Recent research from the Brien Holden Vision Institute indicates that by 2050 half of the world’s population – 4.76 billion people – will suffer from myopia and most of them will need eyeglasses.

“We are potentially facing the biggest public health challenge of our generation,” said Professor Kovin Naidoo, CEO, Brien Holden Vision Institute and Campaign Director for Our Children’s Vision. “This trend can be slowed down through preventative or corrective care, but only if a child is reached while their eyes are still developing. An effective eye health program in schools would have an unprecedented impact. Our Children’s Vision is a global campaign designed to make this impact a reality.”

“We need to act now to help correct this global problem,” Professor Naidoo added, “Our Children’s Vision is a call to action – to come together to ensure that effective, inclusive, sustainable eye health solutions are available to every child everywhere.”

Optometry Giving Sight is a global funding partner, along with leading sunglasses brand Revo, through the ‘Buy Vision Give Sight’ initiative. The campaign is endorsed by the World Council of Optometry and the International Council of Ophthalmology. To date, 34 international and national organisations have joined Our Children’s Vision.
Our Children’s Vision is an initiative of the Brien Holden Vision Institute and Vision For Life™ - Essilor – aiming for every child, everywhere to have access to eye care. More information can be found at: www.ourchildrensvision.org

Brien Holden Vision Institute is a non-profit global scientific, research, innovation, education, licensing and public health organisation. The Institute’s mission includes developing new solutions for vision care, especially refractive error and early disease detection, and to eliminate vision impairment and avoidable blindness, thereby reducing disability and poverty. Brien Holden Vision Institute is a social enterprise, investing the revenues from its work into creating scientific solutions and developing and delivering eye care and education programs.

Vision for Life™ was created by Essilor, the world leader in ophthalmic optics, in January 2015 and is managed by two non-profit entities: Essilor Social Impact Fund, a non-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation in the USA and Vision For Life™ (Essilor Social Impact), an endowment fund in France. Vision For Life aims to accelerate initiatives that combat the global challenge of poor vision by improving access to vision screening, correction and protection.