

## Davis Vision, United Concordia Free Clinic Promotes Children's Eye and Dental Health

*Buffalo, NY, Eye Care & Dental Professionals Kick off Year-Long Initiative*

For 40 children in Buffalo, NY, the world is brighter in 2008. That's the number of children whose vision problems were uncovered by volunteers recently at the first of Davis Vision's 2008 free vision screening clinics in February.

Co-sponsored by the Buffalo Bills, the event attracted 100 children ages 5 through 16 from all over Buffalo. Chaperones from the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Buffalo transported the children by bus to the clinic, held at the Club's south-side location. The children were welcomed by Bills mascot Billy Buffalo and vision screeners and representatives from Empire Vision and its parent company, Davis Vision. In



addition, United Concordia network dentists, as well as volunteer dental students from the University at Buffalo's dental school, gave students complete oral screenings and instruction on oral health care. Each parent will also receive a follow-up report and recommended follow-up treatment if necessary.

The clinic gave the children the opportunity to have a positive experience with a dentist in a non-threatening environment. "During this visit, we evaluated the children's oral health and taught them how to take care of their teeth," said James Shade, director, Professional Relations, for United Concordia. "Visiting them in a familiar location relieves some of the apprehension many children have about visiting the dentist."

Each of the 40 children who did not do well on the eye test was given a voucher for a free follow-up comprehensive examination and free eyeglasses at an Empire Vision location. Their resulting improved eyesight is expected to boost the children's school performance as well as their intellectual and social development.



"We would like to see every child reach his or her potential—in school and in life," said Joseph Carlomusto, Davis Vision's president and chief executive officer. "Many people are

unaware of how heavily a child's development depends on the quality of his or her vision. The fact is, 80 percent of childhood learning takes place visually. Impaired vision can limit not only a child's exposure to information, but also his or her range of experiences."

Millions of children whose parents cannot afford eye or dental care live with untreated and often undiagnosed vision and dental disorders. "Through our free screening clinics, Davis



Vision hopes to help those children who do not have vision insurance coverage," said Laura Dyer, Davis Vision's assistant vice president, Strategic Events and Community Relations.

Harlon L. Robinson, United Concordia's corporate vice president, Human Resources and Administration, added, "The pain of oral disease can restrict activities in school and can significantly



diminish the quality of life. By bringing the dentists to the children, we are giving every student the opportunity to get properly diagnosed and get the help he or she deserves."

"It was a huge success," said Tom Rosa, Davis Vision's senior vice president, Store Operations/Marketing. "Many of the kids were in need of glasses, and they were especially excited knowing they would get them." In addition to being screened for eye and dental problems, the children took home free sunglasses, autographs from Billy Buffalo and photos of

themselves with the mascot. "All the kids had a good time," Rosa added.

Building on the success of their 2007 screening program, Davis Vision and United Concordia have scheduled additional screening clinics for 2008, and expect to add more to the line-up in the months ahead. Another Buffalo-area screening clinic, to be co-sponsored by the Buffalo Sabres, is scheduled for March 11. Clinics are also planned for Pittsburgh, PA; Harrisburg, PA; Carlisle, PA; Lancaster, PA; Boston, MA and Houston, TX, as well as various YMCA locations.

Davis Vision and United Concordia each has a long history of involvement in local community outreach programs, helping to raise funds, food and clothing for Make-a-Wish Foundation, New York Children's Vision Coalition, United Way, MercyFirst and other charities. These free screening clinics reflect the companies' ongoing commitment to the communities they serve.

## **About Davis Vision**

Davis Vision, Inc. currently serves more than 55 million members nationally and was the first vision care preferred provider organization to receive accreditation from The Joint Commission (2001 through 2007, when The Joint Commission suspended its PPO program). Davis Vision's provider network-credentialing program has been certified by the NCQA.

The company administers vision services through an extensive network of nearly 45,000 participating providers, including ophthalmologists, optometrists, opticians and many of the nation's premier retail centers. Davis Vision is based in Plainview, NY.



## **About United Concordia**

United Concordia Companies, Inc., headquartered in Harrisburg, PA, is one of the nation's largest dental insurers, with nearly 7.5 million members worldwide. In 2007, United Concordia processed more than 12 million claims and attained revenues exceeding \$1.3 billion. For more information about United Concordia products, visit [www.unitedconcordia.com](http://www.unitedconcordia.com).