

# Sharing the News About VT: COVD 2013 Public Awareness Campaign's Year in Review

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This has been a very exciting year for spreading the word about vision therapy. We are definitely making headway, thanks to everyone who is actively working on getting the word out. It is truly a group effort and could not be done without each and every one of you!

Following is a compilation of some of the highlights from the COVD PR campaign for 2013:

## **COVD PSAs Airing on TV Stations Throughout the US**

Insider Exclusive produces TV shows that are aired on the Discovery Channel, ABC, NBC, Bloomberg Television, MSNBC, A&E, and National Geographic Channel, along with a variety of other stations across the US. Their researchers found the Video PSA for head injuries on the internet and approached COVD to run ALL the PSAs throughout the year. We have 200 PSAs airing on TV throughout the US per week for a period of 52 weeks. Their website is: [insiderexclusive.com](http://insiderexclusive.com). A link to our PSAs is on the bottom of their home page on the left hand side.

All of the 30 second PSAs have been upgraded to HD format so they can be run on wide screen TVs, and a different PSA airs each month. COVD has its own

page where all the PSAs are available; click [here](http://bit.ly/COVDpubaware) to see all the PSAs that are airing on TV:

## **USA Today Insert Features Larry Fitzgerald and Vision Therapy**

In March, USA Today had a special magazine insert (published by Media Planet) devoted to vision. The front page of the issue featured a photo of Larry Fitzgerald, and the headline is:

### **Eye on the Prize: NFL Superstar Larry Fitzgerald Gains Extra Yards on the Competition with Vision Training**

Most articles that talk about Larry's experience with vision therapy tend to focus very heavily on sports, so we were delighted to see that this article did mention the connection to school. Here is a short excerpt:

*While his grandfather later utilized exercises to help him athletically, the work began as a way to strengthen Fitzgerald's abilities in school.*

*"It helped me to stay more focused and helped me academically," he said.*

The article and magazine are available on line at: [http://doc.mediaplanet.com/all\\_projects/11938.pdf](http://doc.mediaplanet.com/all_projects/11938.pdf)



In celebration of this article, we have been able to get some more personally autographed [plaques featuring Larry Fitzgerald](#). Be sure to get a plaque for your office. Dads take notice when they see Larry's photo and read what he has to say:

*Vision Therapy made a big difference in my life and my career. I was fortunate that my vision problems were caught early in life. Learning-related vision problems can have a serious impact on a child's education. Don't wait, take action today!*

### COVD PSA Aired in Movie Theater

COVD was contacted by vision therapist, Robyn Rinberger, who works for FCOVD, Dr. Walesby, requesting that the Vision and Learning PSA be converted for use in a movie theater. She coordinated with several other COVD Members in the Tampa area of Florida, and they ran the "Vision and Learning" PSA in the most popular movie theater in town during the month of July.

This PSA was fully reformatted for use in a movie theater and is available for others to use. If you want more information, contact the COVD international office: [info@covd.org](mailto:info@covd.org).

### COVD Issues Press Releases for Autism Awareness Month and Learning Disabilities Awareness Month:

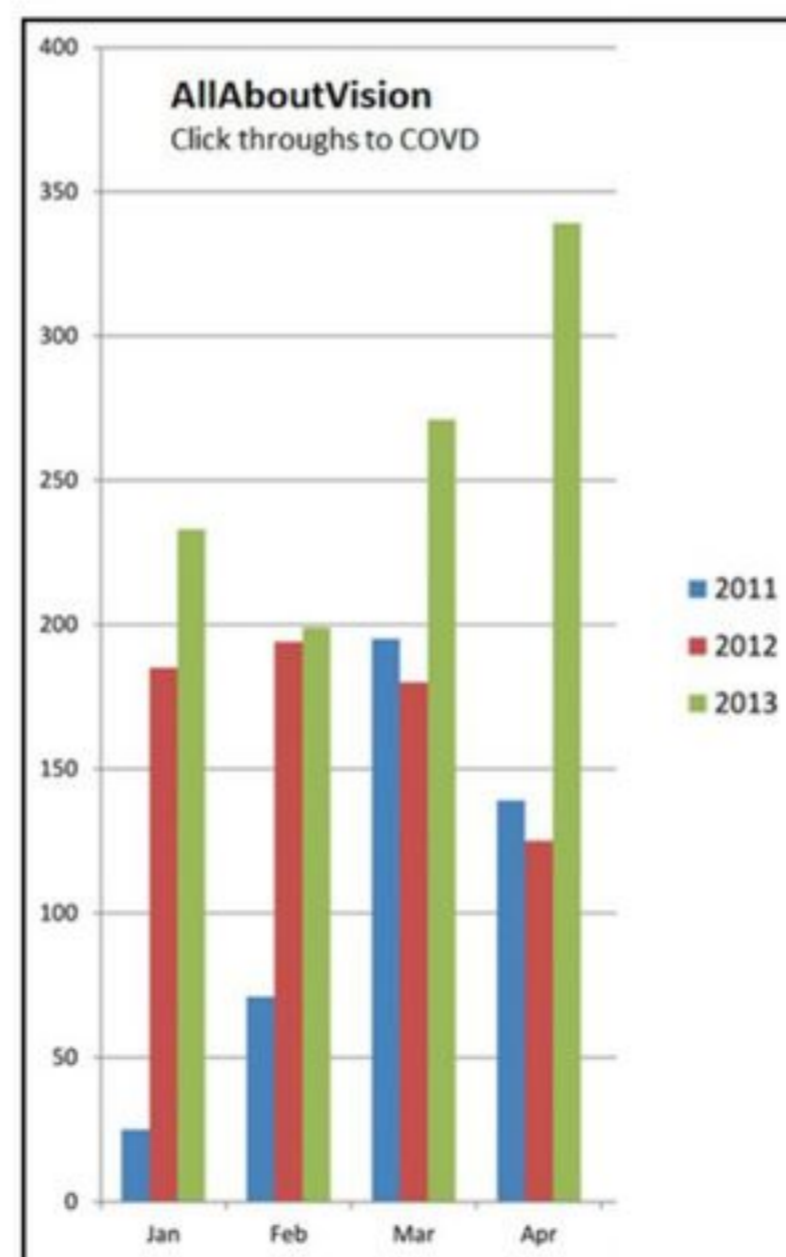
Typically the COVD press releases have been issued around [August as Children's Vision and Learning Month](#). This year we expanded the releases to include [Autism Awareness Month in April](#) and [Learning Disabilities Awareness Month in October](#).

Autism is one of the top words searched on Google, averaging over 4 million searches per month just for the word Autism. We updated the Autism PSA for airing on Insider Exclusive in April, and also issued a press release which can be seen by clicking this link: [Signs of Autism: PSA Provides Parents with a New Look](#)

To get an idea of how much of an impact this had on traffic to the COVD website, we turned to [AllAboutVision.com](#). Three years ago, **AllAboutVision** created several links on their website on which visitors can click, which send them directly to COVD's website. They send us a monthly report so we can monitor the traffic.

You can see by this chart that this April we saw a tremendous increase in click throughs, more than double the traffic we have seen in previous years.

The traffic information for the month of October was not available at the time this *VP Today* article was written.





## New COVD Website Released

The [COVD website](#) has been revamped to make it more user-friendly. In addition, the “[Locate a Doctor](#)” feature has been updated and is fully functional, providing a variety of methods to search for a doctor. Please be sure to visit the new website and let COVD know how you like it.

Within the first 6 months of the new website being active online, the website traffic ranking is the best it has ever been. In fact, we have seen a 40% increase in our traffic ranking from February 2013 to October 2013. (Note: The websites with the highest traffic ranking are *Google*, *Facebook* and *YouTube*.)

In June, we issued a [press release](#) announcing the new website and starting the August Campaign.

### PR Campaign Goes Global

This year we issued a special press release which focused on international stories as well as stories from the U.S. A special thank you to the doctors from Malaysia (Stanley Tien, OD, FCOVD) and Greece (Andreas Lizardos, OD) for sharing their patient stories with COVD for this release:

### [Struggling Students: a Global Problem with a Universal Solution According to the College of Optometrists in Vision Development](#)

It would be great to issue another global release or two in the 2014 campaign, but we need success stories that we can feature from around the world. Please share your stories with us by emailing the COVD International office at [info@covd.org](mailto:info@covd.org).

### Author, Educator, and Expert in Learning Success Joins August Campaign

The third release for the August campaign featured an educator who is very well known in the educational community. Dr. Sornson is a nationally known speaker, educator, and author who was kind enough to lend his name to our campaign:

### [COVD Joins with Author, Educator, and Expert in Early Learning Success, Dr. Bob Sornson in Saying “It’s time to Stop Arguing and Help Our Children!!”](#)

### Vision Screenings Are Not Sufficient

The fourth release for the August Campaign was designed to address the topic of vision screenings by schools and pediatricians by sharing the story of a woman who didn’t learn to read until she was in her 50’s:

### [Grandmother Finally Learns How to Read and Joins the College of Optometrists in Vision Development with a Special Message to Parents to “Never Give Up”](#)

### National Center for Learning Disabilities

A special webpage was put up on the website for the National Center for Learning



Disabilities. Back in April the NCLD had published a negative report on alternative therapies for treating LD which they circulated through the web/social media, and this report was on their website. Unfortunately, it included vision therapy at the top of the list.

Pediatrician Dr. Deborah Walhof was featured in our August Campaign in 2011 and she is a Parent Advocate for the NCLD. With Dr. Walhof's help, the NCLD was kind enough to put up two new pages on their site, one featuring [Dr. Walhof interviewing Dr. Leonard Press](#), and another with the [CITT Symptom Checklist](#).

NCLD has sent out several email newsletters to their followers sharing links to the interview, and during August they featured a direct link to the interview on their homepage.

## Proclamations

Every year proclamations are issued by governors and mayors in honor of August being Children's Vision and Learning Month; 2013 was no different. To see all the proclamations that have been issued over the past few years, visit [the COVD website](#).

## You are an Integral Part of the Campaign

This campaign cannot happen without your support. Whether you share your success stories with COVD, [donate to the campaign](#), share the press releases and PSAs through social media, write blogs, publish research, or just share this information with your patients, our success is a combined effort. The [press releases](#) and [PSAs](#) are available on COVD's website in the Media section on the blue menu bar.

Thank you for what you have done, and thank you for your continued support. May the 2014 campaign be even more exciting than 2013!