Early diagnosis and treatment of refractive errors in children can greatly improve their quality of life, their academic achievements, and can reduce the prevalence of refractive amblyopia in the population. Vision screening has been recommended by the USPSTF for all children at least once between the ages of 3 and 5 years, to detect the presence of amblyopia or its risk factors.

Methods:
- The University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) preschool vision program (UPVP) screened low income children aged 3-5 years with the Retinomax autorefractor.
- Children who failed screening were fully examined on the UCLA Mobile Eye Clinic by an ophthalmologist.
- Amblyopia was defined as unilateral if there was a ≥2 line difference in visual acuity (BCVA) between eyes with an amblyogenic risk factor, and bilateral if BCVA in both eyes was <20/50 for children <4 years old, and <20/40 for children ≥4 years old with an amblyogenic risk factor.

Results:
- Between August 2012 and May 2013, 11,260 children were screened by the UPVP.
- Of 1823 who failed, 1007 were examined by an ophthalmologist.
- 89.4% were Hispanic, mean age was 3.25 years, and 50.5% were female in the examined population.
- Screens were prescribed for 73.5% of the examined population.
- Refractive amblyopia was found in 9% of those examined, or 0.8% of the original population.
- 76% of amblyopia pts were unilateral.
- The earlier we diagnose these children, the earlier we allow them to enjoy the benefits of treatment.

Discussion:
- By treating children early, amblyopia can be prevented.
- As expected, there was more amblyopia with higher refractive errors and in the 5 year old children.

Conclusions:
- The effectiveness of screening is not only in finding amblyopia but in finding refractive errors that when treated can change the quality of life, behavior, and academic achievements of the child.
- The earlier we diagnose these children, the earlier we allow them to enjoy the benefits of treatment.

Preschool vision screening should become an important part of child care and preventive health.