Seeing Smart – Make Your Child’s First Test an Eye Exam was the theme of the October 2010, Eye Health Month (EHM) campaign. The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) enlisted Fleishman-Hillard to conduct a PR campaign with the objective of making as many parents as possible, aware of how critical early eye exams are for their children. Recent research found that Canadian parents rank their children’s nutrition and socialization as higher priorities than their vision and eye health. EHM focused on eye health issues including amblyopia and farsightedness, as well as the potential impact that undetected vision strain can have on academic performance, specifically learning and reading.

Matte stories, audio and video news releases, including interviews with Dr. Joseph Chan and a young patient diagnosed with retinoblastoma, were distributed nationally to traditional media outlets, as well as to popular websites, resulting in 137 different pieces of coverage. Dr. Carol Doman was interviewed for an article in the November edition of Canadian Living. While the results from the campaign did not provide the incredible media pick up that the Canadians & Screen Time theme did last year, it did increase almost three-fold, from 15 million media impressions in 2008 to over 40 million.

During October, a partnership with Urbanmoms.ca was established. “It hasn’t occurred to me to take the girls yet... now I will. Thanks” and, “I should make appointments for myself and for my first-grader. It’s so silly how this kind of care can get off track. Thanks for the reminder!” were examples of feedback from mothers, to the Jen Maier’s story, Mom’s the Word, about her daughter’s amblyopia, on the Urbanmoms site. This site has over 100,000 readers monthly, and engaged a key audience.

CAO members and provincial associations played a crucial role in generating tremendous awareness and response across the country.

Thank you to the media spokespeople
The following CAO members volunteered as spokespeople during EHM.

**Alberta**
Dr. Diana Monea
Dr. Riaz Ahmed
Dr. Neepun Sharma
Dr. Kim Bugera
Dr. Tanya Sitter

**British Columbia**
Dr. Antoinette Dumalo
Dr. Michael Kellam
Dr. Manbir Randhawa

**Manitoba**
Dr. Scott Mundle
Dr. Don Williamson

**New Brunswick**
Dr. Lillian Linton

**Nova Scotia**
Dr. Carol Doman
Dr. Allison Scott

**Ontario**
Dr. Mira Acs
Dr. Joseph Chan

**PEI**
Dr. Susan Judson
Dr. Bonnie Gallant

**Quebec**
Dr. Langis Michaud

**Saskatchewan**
Dr. Leland Kolbenson
Dr. Mike York

Eye Health Month advertisement featured on urbanmoms.ca homepage for the entire month of October

EYE DARE YOU 2010 WINNERS

Congratulations to this year’s winner, Dr. Sue Burbine, from New Brunswick. She won an iPad.

NBAO won for the second year in a row, for promoting more activity in conjunction with Eye Health Month than any other province. Dr. Rachelle Savoie spearheaded a project whereby 34 members donated 10% of office revenue on October 14th to help two children with congenital blindness.