

Dr. Kale volunteered for vision screenings with the local Lions Club. “Each year, we would go to local elementary schools and give the third-grade class a vision screening,” he says. “This is a worthy effort but we are catching only a small percentage of our keiki with visual problems.”

Dr. Kale says Na Maka Apau’s goal is to send a basic vision screening kit to every school on the more isolated outer islands of the Big Island, Lanai, and Molokai. The screening kits include two 10-foot distance charts (one with letters and the other with figures for the very young and non-English speaking children), two near cards (one with letters and the other with figures), color blindness screening, stereopsis screening, an occluder and basic instructions on how to use each item.



“We are asking our professional vendors for contributions of funds and/or products, but we have had limited success so far,” Dr. Kale explains. He’s received free frames and lenses, as most children in Hawaii are covered by Medicaid, but the bigger challenge is the screening itself. Because Lanai and Molokai have no optometric service providers, Dr. Kale, who is also a pilot, is flying to those islands to deliver kits to the few schools there.

“We estimated that it will take just under \$50,000 in cash or product to reach our goal of having a vision kit in every school,” Dr. Kale says. If the Na Maka Apau succeeds, “I am



really hoping that our state government will see that if this can be done by a nonprofit, then they can surely make it happen for the rest of the keiki in the state,” he says.

At this point, Dr. Kale is the only eye care professional working for the nonprofit. He says that as kits are distributed to different areas of the Big Island, optometrists will be informed to conduct follow-up visits. If a child is found to have vision problems during a school screening, the parents are informed and referred to local optometrists for treatment.

“We have a small community of health care providers, and these school screening kits will be very much embraced because we all see the same problem,” Dr. Kale says.



Na Maka Apau continues to seek donations for vision screening kits. If your office or organization would like to help it meet its goal of 125 kits, visit <https://namakaapau.org/>