



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Santa Cruz County



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County Public Health Awarded Grants for Traffic Safety Education Programs

Santa Cruz County, Calif. –The Public Health Division of the County Health Services Agency received three grant awards, totaling \$398,000 in funding, from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to implement a year of programming. The grant period began in October 2019 and will end in September 2020. Efforts will be aimed at improving traffic safety and specifically focused on pedestrians, bicyclists, child passengers, and impaired drivers.

Each grant will be used for a variety of activities, including:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety (\$170,000):

- Delivering bicycle and pedestrian safety classroom presentations in schools.
- Distributing bicycle helmets and lights to low-income community members.
- Conducting walking field trips and bicycle rodeos in schools.
- Hosting community bike rides promoting safe cycling.
- Participating in community outreach events to increase awareness around traffic safety.

Impaired Driving (\$170,000):

- Establishing an Impaired Driving Resource Center.
- Collaborating with Cannabis Retailers to distribute impaired driving prevention information.
- Surveying about DUI Place of Last Drink to educate bars and restaurants.
- Conducting “Real DUI Sentencing in Schools” presentations at high schools.
- Distributing Responsible Merchant Awards to top vendors limiting youth access to alcohol;
- Collaborating with local event venues to offer safe ride home options for attendees.

Child Passenger Safety (\$58,000):

- Conducting car seat checkup events and one-on-one appointments to inspect car seats.
- Offering a Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) training.
- Distributing child safety seats to families in need.
- Surveying at schools for proper use of booster seats.

These grant activities will be implemented in collaboration with the Community Traffic Safety Coalition as part of a countywide Vision Zero initiative. Vision Zero considers any loss of life from traffic crashes unacceptable and preventable. More information can be found at www.sctrafficsafety.org/VisionZero

Car crashes remain the leading cause of death for children 13 and under. Bicycle and pedestrian-related collisions have been on the rise the past five years. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 46% of car seats are not used properly. Santa Cruz County was identified as the worst in California for victims killed and injured by drivers under the age of 21 who had been drinking, according to the OTS 2016 rankings.

“No matter which way you get around, you play a part in roadway safety,” OTS Director Barbara Rooney said. “These grant programs are intended to educate residents on ways they can make themselves and those around them safe when they walk, bike, drive or transport children.”

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



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