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### **Stanislaus County Health Services Agency Receives Grants for Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Child Passenger Safety Education and Training Programs**

**Stanislaus County** – The Stanislaus County Health Services Agency, Public Health Division is pleased to announce that the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), has provided grant funding to the Injury Prevention Program for the eighth consecutive year. A \$216,600 grant from OTS will fund safety education and training programs aimed at helping parents and caretakers make sure their child is riding safely when in a vehicle. For the fifth year, the Agency has also received an additional \$179,190 grant from OTS to improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Both grant programs will run through September 2025.

Car crashes are the leading cause of death for children 13 and under, and car seats save lives by reducing the risk of injury or death. Unfortunately, a nationwide survey by the NHTSA found that half of all car seats are misused.

“The goal of this program is to significantly reduce death and injury to children riding in cars and trucks by ensuring they are in an appropriate and properly installed car seat,” said Heather Duvall, Public Health Director. “By removing the financial barrier and offering car seats at no cost to low-income families when needed, we help ensure every child in our community travels safely.”

Funding for child passenger safety will go toward a variety of activities to promote occupant safety and decrease injuries and deaths due to improper use of car seats, booster seats, or seat belts:

- Child seat safety check-ups/inspections;
- Child seat safety education classes;
- Child Passenger Safety (CPS) technician training and recertification training;
- Distribution of child safety seats to families in need; and,
- Promotion of the importance of discarding used and expired car seats.

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Additionally, bicycle and pedestrian-related collisions remain high. In 2022, Stanislaus County recorded eighteen pedestrian and five bicyclist deaths from collisions with vehicles, with another 170 pedestrians and 126 bicyclists being injured.

“Every bicyclist and pedestrian should feel safe on the road,” OTS Director Barbara Rooney said. “Education is one of many important tools that collectively work to ensure everyone reaches their destination safely, regardless of how they travel.”

Pedestrian and bicycle safety funding will be used to conduct youth and adult education, including:

- Bicycle safety classes and educational workshops;
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety for youth and adults;
- Public education on the importance of safety equipment like reflective armbands, leg bands, headlights, taillights, reflectors, and helmets; and,
- Participation in national education campaign events and programs such as National Walk to School Day, Bicycle Safety Month, Pedestrian Safety Month, and Safe Routes to Schools.

The listed activities are intended to teach and encourage skills that will help individuals maneuver safely throughout their communities, reduce preventable injuries and deaths, and encourage active modes of transportation like walking and biking.

Grants from the California OTS through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration fund these programs. For more information about these injury prevention programs, please call the Health Services Agency’s Health Equity Policy and Promotion Department at (209) 558-5657.



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