



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Public Health Department Receives Grant to Support Traffic Safety
*Children, Pedestrians, Bicyclists in Focus for Safety Efforts***

San Luis Obispo—The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department has been awarded two grants for a total of \$205,000 from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to continue their program aimed at preventing deaths and injuries on our roadways. The grants will aid in the County's ongoing effort to improve safety and quality of life.

"These funds will support our work to ensure that children, pedestrians, and cyclists are as safe as possible on our roads," said Dr. Penny Borenstein, San Luis Obispo County Health Officer. "The Office of Traffic Safety grants will provide coordination, collaboration, and education on the importance of child safety seats, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and the dangers of driving under the influence. The efforts will help achieve the County's vision of a healthy and safe community."

The grants will assist in efforts to address traffic safety problems and reduce the number of persons killed and injured in traffic collisions.

The grants will focus on three areas:

- **Child Passenger Safety.** According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), most parents are confident they have correctly installed their child's car seat, but in most cases (59%) the seat has not been installed correctly. With this grant, the Public Health Department will address this by continuing to offer free car seat inspections and education for all community members, as well as distributing free car seats to low-income residents. The Public Health Department will also give presentations on booster seat use in kindergarten classes and promote public awareness of consequences of leaving children unattended in or around vehicles.
- **Pedestrian Safety.** According to the 2015 OTS rankings, San Luis Obispo County ranked 31st in the state for pedestrians injured or killed in accidents. The Public Health Department's educational presentations will focus on reaching community members who have shown high rates of pedestrian motor vehicle collisions, such as elementary students and adults, as well as elderly adults who continue to be a vulnerable population. Additionally, staff members will lead students on Walking School Buses.
- **Bicycle Safety.** According to the 2015 OTS rankings, San Luis Obispo County ranked 6th in the state for bicyclists killed or injured in bicycle accidents. Local County Emergency Medical

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Services (EMS) data shows people across age groups are practicing unsafe bicycling behavior. Education and training will be offered to local college students as well as adults. Public Health Department staff will also offer bike rodeos and bike safety assemblies to elementary schools and will distribute helmets to low-income students.

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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