



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 9/16/2025

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Department of Health Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Nolan Sullivan, 707-565-4774; Brittany Lobo, 707-565-6671

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Gold Resolution recognizing September 21-27 as Child Passenger Safety Week for 2025

Executive Summary:

Child Passenger Safety Week is a national campaign held annually during September to bring awareness to the importance of appropriate use of child safety seats, or car seats, in passenger vehicles. The Department of Health Services (DHS) has received funding from the Office of Traffic Safety to promote the appropriate use of car seats in the community, and to provide car seats at no cost to low-income families through clinical partnerships. Car seats are distributed to pregnant and parenting individuals receiving care at local Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), along with hands-on training on the proper installation of car seats, and education on the proper transition of children from a 5-point harness to a booster seat.

The Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Unit within DHS's Public Health division works to promote child safety and prevent childhood injuries as part of its scope of work funded through the California Department of Public Health. Additionally, the Healthy Eating Active Living Unit participates in a countywide Vision Zero effort, aiming to eliminate traffic fatalities in Sonoma County by 2030.

Discussion:

Child Passenger Safety Week will be observed nationwide from September 21-27, 2025 to promote the safe transportation of children in passenger vehicles and promote the appropriate use of child safety seats throughout the community.

A core responsibility of Public Health is to protect the community from preventable hazards and illness, including childhood injury prevention. From January 1, 2020 through September 30, 2024 there were a total of 238 crashes involving children under the age of 8, killing 2 and injuring 533 in Sonoma County according to the Transportation Injury Mapping System.

Access to car seats for low-income families continues to be a widespread problem. The Department of Health Services has secured funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety to purchase and distribute 900 car seats between October 1, 2023, and September 30, 2025. All seats distributed are accompanied by parent education on the proper use of a car seat, and hands-on training for appropriate placement of the seat in the vehicle.

According to the National Digital Car Seat Check Form database, nearly three-fourths (74%) of all car seats inspected by Child Passenger Safety Technicians in 2023 were improperly installed and used. Yet, a general consumer survey revealed only one in five parents and caregivers seek expert help installing a car seat or

securing a child in a car seat. There are three common misuses of car seats:

- 1) car seat installation is too loose,
- 2) not using the tether when installing a forward-facing car seat with lower anchors or seatbelt, and
- 3) the harness is too loose when securing a child in a car seat.

Additionally, children are often transitioned out of the appropriate car seats before it is safe to do so - nearly 94% of children transition to an adult seat belt too soon.

If you need help properly installing your child safety seat, you can schedule an appointment with a Sonoma County Sheriff Community Service Officer to assist you. To schedule an appointment, please call (707) 565-3940. <https://www.sonomasheriff.org/child-safety-seat-installation>.

Prior Board Actions:

N/A

FISCAL SUMMARY

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

N/A

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Resolution

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

N/A