



## PRESS RELEASE July 13, 2021

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### COUNTY EMS AGENCY PARTNERS WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE HELMETS AND CAR SEATS TO FAMILIES IN NEED

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** - The Santa Barbara County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency, a branch of the County Public Health Department, was awarded the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Kids' Plates grant which provided 105 helmets and 32 convertible car seats at no-cost to Santa Barbara County families in need.

The Kids' Plates grant is funded through a bill passed by the California legislature in 1992 for the sale of Kids' Plates specialized vehicle license plates and the creation of the Child Health and Safety Fund. Revenue from the sale of Kids' Plates, goes into the Fund and is used to support significant child health and safety issues in California, including unintentional childhood injuries.

Annually, there is an estimated 240,000 emergency room visits for children and teens 19 and under due to bicycle-related injuries, 11% of which result in traumatic brain injuries ([Safe Kids™](#)). According to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, an estimated [59% of car seats](#) are misused in a way that could reduce their effectiveness. The Santa Barbara County EMS Agency is committed to supporting injury prevention and ensuring the community has access to life saving skills and equipment.

Car seats and installation will be available at no cost to qualifying families throughout the county. Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians will complete the installation and provide parents with education on proper car seat use and adjustment. This is made possible by a partnership with Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital Safe Kids™, Montecito Fire Department, Lompoc Fire Department, and the County Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health Program.

Helmets are being distributed through various bike camps conducted by SBBIKE + COAST. This partnership will allow more children to attend the camps, as the organization will have more helmets to share with the children. All helmets are properly sized and fitted for each child by trained personnel.

“Public access and education are integral strategies in our continued commitment to our community’s safety,” shared Nick Clay, Director for the County EMS Agency. “We are excited to team up with state and local partners to bring this commitment to reality.”

For more information on this project and other ways to keep children safe and active, visit [the EMS Agency website](#).

