



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
8/19/20

Contact: [Susan Paradise](mailto:Susan.Paradise@santacruzcounty.us)
831-454-4204

Susan.Paradise@santacruzcounty.us

Santa Cruz County, Family Health Unit AWARDED \$172,074.60 ACEs Aware Grant

Santa Cruz County: The County of Santa Cruz, Health Services Agency is pleased to announce that the Public Health Division's, Family Health Unit has received \$172,074.60 in grant funds from the Office of the California Surgeon General (CA-OSG) and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to participate in the state's ACEs Aware initiative.

A total of \$14.3 million was awarded to 100 organizations throughout the state to extend the reach and impact of the ACEs Aware initiative. ACEs Aware seeks to change and save lives by helping Medi-Cal providers and organizations that serve Medi-Cal beneficiaries understand the importance of screening for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), training them to respond with trauma-informed care, and promoting coordination and collaboration to build networks of care.

Public Health will utilize this funding to partner with First 5 Santa Cruz County, the Health Improvement Partnership of Santa Cruz County (HIP), and the Human Services Department's Family and Children's Services Division in a project titled *Leveraging Partnerships and Building Resiliency through Collective Impact* to promote the ACEs Aware initiative, share best practices, and strengthen the coordination and collaboration among the Medi-Cal provider community and other key partners serving children and families in Santa Cruz County.

“In HIP’s role as the non-profit consortium of healthcare providers in the county, we are excited to work with our ACEs Aware grant partners to improve the healthcare experience for residents of Santa Cruz County, said Elisa Orona, HIP Executive Director. “We need a system of healthcare that can proactively address not only the physical, but also the social and emotional needs of patients.”

The grant funding, authorized in the 2019-20 budget using Proposition 56 funds, will provide critical support for increasing the capacity of Medi-Cal providers and other key partners to identify and respond proactively to ACEs as early in a child’s life as possible. The state’s support for capacity-building comes at a crucial time, as many children and families - and the community organizations that serve them - have been experiencing increased stress during the COVID-19 emergency. Grant activities will augment California’s efforts, underway since the summer of 2019, to develop provider training and engage providers, including the promotion of payments to Medi-Cal providers for screening their patients for ACEs.

“The Human Services Department’s Family and Children’s Services division is excited by this opportunity to strengthen our collaborative efforts to address the intersection of ACEs and child abuse prevention. We are looking forward to moving this work forward as a county,” said Najeeb Kamil- Sr. Human Services Analyst, Family & Children’s Services.

“First 5 Santa Cruz County is grateful to Public Health for leading the submission of our application and for the coordinating role they will play in this critical effort. We look forward to working with all partners to advance our collective awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences and our ability as a community to collectively prevent them, and support the children, families and individuals who have experienced them,” stated David Brody Executive Director of First 5 Santa Cruz County.

The full list of ACEs Aware grantees is available on the [ACEs Aware Website](#).

#