

County of Santa Clara
Social Services Agency
Governmental Relations and Planning



CSFC SSA01 092006

Prepared by: Greta Helm
Director, Governmental
Relations & Planning

DATE: September 20, 2006

TO: Supervisor James T. Beall, Jr., Chairperson
Supervisor Don Gage, Vice-Chairperson
Children, Seniors & Families Committee

FROM: 
Will Lightbourne
Agency Director, Social Services Agency

SUBJECT: Update on Safe Surrendered Baby Public Education Campaign.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Accept report from Social Services Agency on efforts to educate the public regarding the Safe Surrendered Baby alternative to child abandonment.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

CONTRACT HISTORY

Not applicable.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

On March 14, 2006, the Social Services Agency provided the Board of Supervisors with an update on the Safe Surrendered Baby Public Education Campaign. At that time, Supervisor Beall requested that the Agency continue to provide periodic updates to the Children, Seniors and Families Committee on the progress of this outreach effort.

BACKGROUND

Since the convening of the 2004 County Safely Surrendered Baby Task Force, the Social Services Agency and other county departments and community partners have engaged in providing educational and outreach materials on the Safely Surrendered Baby Law (SSB). The efforts have resulted in 5 safely surrendered babies at designated sites over the last 2 years, with 4 being from the start of this calendar year. This report highlights the Agency's on going efforts to track significant changes in State legislative policy regarding the law and other activities undertaken to sustain community outreach and education.

I. Legislation:

From the last update, Assembly member Torrico introduced AB 1873 earlier this year to increase the age of children that can be safely surrendered, from the current limit of 72 hours old, to one year old or younger. In addition, it would designate all fire stations in the state as safe surrender sites, and appropriate \$5,000,000 to conduct a statewide awareness campaign and establish a toll-free, 1-800 number to provide education and assistance with safe surrenders throughout the state. AB 1873 was subsequently amended to permit the surrender of infants that are 30 days old or younger, and no longer includes a provision for funding an awareness campaign or toll-free information number. As amended, AB 1873 has been enrolled and is now pending consideration by the Governor.

II. Fundraising:

Since the last update to the Board, First Five has awarded the Agency \$50,000 to support the outreach efforts. Specifically, funding will be use to purchase advertisements in ethnic media markets, produce training materials, compensate extra-help trainers, and purchase bus signage.

The Agency also applied for funding from the Child Abuse Council following the last update to the Board. Although the Council was not in a position to grant the request at the time the application was made, the Agency was encouraged to resubmit a grant proposal when funds become available next year.

III. Outreach Materials:

In partnership with San Mateo County and SamTrans, the Agency has placed SSB advertisements on CalTrain cars beginning in August 2006. SamTrans provided the space on their train cars free of charge. These public education cards

will be displayed on board cars for an indefinite period of time. Printing of these advertisements was made possible by funding that the Agency received from the Lucile Packard Foundation.

A similar advertisement will be displayed on Santa Clara County VTA buses beginning in October 2006, and will appear both inside the bus as well as on bus tails. These advertisements will be paid for by funding from First Five and will run for a 8 week period.

The Agency has recently completed production of a teen training video and curriculum. This video and curriculum is being piloted with youth groups and their feedback will be incorporated in the final materials which the Agency plans to roll out to junior and senior high schools beginning in late fall 2006.

Agency staff have been in discussions with the Peninsula Clergy Network to strategize on ways to partner more closely with the faith community in our public education efforts. The PCN will be mailing SSB information to network participants this fall and a focus group of clergy will be convened to obtain additional feedback about the materials and opportunities to increase public awareness in the community.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Negative action will result in the Children, Seniors, and Families Committee of the Board of Supervisors not accepting this report from the Social Services Agency.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

The Clerk of the Board will follow the usual steps for this type of informational report.

ATTACHMENTS

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