California Kids' Plates Program (Kids' Plates)

Annual Report Summary

June 2014

Kids' Plates Overview

The State and Local Injury Control Section, Safe and Active Communities Branch (SACB), California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is charged with overseeing and administering the portion of the Child Health and Safety Funds reserved for unintentional childhood injury prevention, garnered from the sale of specialized motor vehicle license plates. The Kids' Plates "Paving the Way for Safe Routes to School" projects awarded for 2013-15 focus on Safe Routes to School (SRTS) efforts, which include educational interventions to address pedestrian and bicycle safety in underserved and/rural communities. The projects include:

- WalkSacramento (Northern Region)–working with selected elementary schools in Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, and Yuba counties
- Safe Kids California (Northern Region)– working with selected elementary schools in Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, and Yuba counties
- Monterey County Department of Health (Central Region) – working with selected elementary schools in cities of Seaside and Marina
- Escondido Union School District (Southern Region) – working with selected elementary and middle schools in Escondido

Progress (August 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014)

Out of a cumulative total of 39 objectives across the four awardees, 79% (31) were completed by the end of the first year's contract period. Individually, 80%, 87%, 57% and 86% respectively, of each individual project's objectives, were met.

As part of the reporting process, awardees assessed the number of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and injuries reported from 2009-11 within a half-mile radius of the schools participating in the SRTS projects. The total numbers of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and injuries reported by the four awardees were two fatalities and 59 injuries. This information will be used as baseline data for outcome evaluation.

To improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and to reduce unintentional pedestrian and bicycle injury, all four awardees implemented educational activities. The total number of

participants in educational activities for the four awardees combined included 12,804 students (kindergarten-8th grade) and 1,083 adults (including, but not limited, to parents, teachers, school administrators, law enforcement and fire department officials, public health employees, community members, non-profit agency, parks and recreation department, private businesses and community service partners). All four awardees conducted a variety of events during the Year 1 reporting period, such as Walk to School Day events, Bike to School Day events, Bicycle Rodeos, etc. The number of student participants in these events totaled 9,404 and adult participants totaled 1,052. The distribution of educational materials, brochures, and flyers that addressed topics such as Walk to School Day, "Safe Routes to School Basics: the 5 E's," Pedestrian Safety, Bicycle Safety, and Driver Safety, totaled 53,651 (of which 14,463 were Spanish language). Additional materials that were disseminated included walk audit maps, preferred routes maps, walk audit training materials and helmet fitting guides.

In addition to completing the objectives outlined in their respective scopes of work (SOW), each awardee reported additional project work that was beneficial to SRTS efforts in the community. Some of these efforts included offering assistance and information on reducing school zone speed limits; assistance with providing driver safety training for parents; contributing information to those applying for active transportation projects; working with students on a Video Voice project; and working with community stakeholders on adopting SRTS policies by school boards.

Each awardee also reported partnering with a number of organizations and individuals that were not originally named in their SOW. These included, but were not limited to, neighborhood and community safety programs, parks and recreation departments, local bike shops, safety coalitions, AmeriCorps volunteers, and various other community and private organizations.

Common Challenges

Due to a delay in contract approvals, all four awardees began their activities later than originally scheduled. This delay created challenges that prevented some objectives from being completely met. Several additional, uncontrollable factors included school administrative decisions (e.g. not approving the hiring of school crossing guards as was originally planned) and changes in school leadership, cancellation of meetings, shortage of police officers and delays/cancellations due to the fires experienced in San Diego. Overall, awardees worked diligently to expedite the completion of planned objectives and to utilize allocated funds within the annual reporting period. CDPH Project Consultants were notified when challenges had occurred throughout the first year of

funding and advised awardees on a regular basis through phone conversations and e-mail correspondence.

Many awardees found successful solutions to challenges experienced throughout the first year of funding. These included finding alternatives to reaching parent volunteers due to missing recruitment opportunities at “back to school night” because of the delayed contract start date; changing an event, cancelled due to unsafe traffic and road conditions, into an opportunity to conduct a future walk audit and video project; and redirecting supportive safety educational opportunities at one school where an awardee experienced an unsupportive principal who discouraged students from walking and biking to school.

There were very few incidences with awardees that required corrective action by their respective CDPH Project Consultant. In one example, a review of one awardee’s report showed that they had purchased some items that were not allowable. The Project Consultant convened a meeting with the awardee’s Project Director and fiscal staff to review grant language, their approved budget, and receipts of the items in question. Ultimately the awardee was denied reimbursement of the disallowable items. CDPH staff communicated with all awardees to remind them that certain items are not allowed to be paid for with Kids’ Plates grant funding.

To support their SRTS efforts, awardees requested and received technical assistance on various programmatic and budget issues that arose during the year. This included requests for CDPH to provide additional SRTS-related resources and materials, review of in-house developed tools and materials, provide individual program recommendations and feedback, and ideas for gathering donations and incentives from the community or local businesses. Awardees were also invited to participate on several teleconferences offered by the Safe Routes to School Technical Assistance Resource Center that is housed in SACB and funded by Caltrans. CDPH staff continue to provide additional technical assistance that is requested or identified in order to remedy problems or challenges so awardees may be successful in meeting their objectives each year.

A Look Ahead

Awardees reported engaging in efforts to sustain their work beyond the length of the Kids’ Plates award period. Examples included increasing membership in SRTS-related coalitions, seeking opportunities to partner with local government entities, and the implementation of policies that support SRTS efforts. Awardees also reported engaging in activities to leverage their Kids’ Plates funding to bring in additional funds to support

their SRTS efforts by collaborating with others to apply for Caltrans' Active Transportation Program funding. Awardees also worked to increase opportunities to expand SRTS program activities to additional schools and districts above and beyond the funding they receive from Kids' Plates.