



# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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### COUNTY SECURES GRANT FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION PLAN “BUILDING HOPE AND SAFETY”

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY:** The County of Santa Cruz, Health Services Agency is pleased to announce that the Behavioral Health Division has received \$800,000 in grant funds to launch the “Building Hope & Safety-Santa Cruz” project to address suicide prevention in Santa Cruz County. The project is funded through the U.S. Health and Human Services Administration’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) COVID-19 Emergency Suicide Prevention Grants.

The sixteen-month grant will enable “Building Hope & Safety-Santa Cruz” to provide services to those experiencing domestic violence and are at-risk of suicide, especially due to increased strains related to COVID-19. The project will be supported by Behavioral Health Division in conjunction with Monarch Services and Applied Crisis Training and Consulting.

“The implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for community behavioral health are far reaching,” said Erik G. Riera, Director of Behavioral Health. “The risk of suicide and potential for negative mental health outcomes has been escalated by trends such as economic instability, high unemployment rates, increased social isolation from shelter in place orders, decreased access to community and religious supports, and a projected increase in child abuse and domestic violence due to the pandemic. We are grateful for this opportunity to receive funding to implement the [Santa Cruz County Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan](#).”

The project provides direct services including emergency housing assistance, training in suicide prevention and safety planning, crisis services, counseling, outreach, newly created behavioral health resource pocket guides, and a public education campaign all intended to support those at risk of suicide and domestic violence.

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, please call either the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-8255, the County of Santa Cruz -Behavioral Health 24-hour Access Line at 1-800-952-2335, or 911 if it is a life threatening emergency. We are here to help.

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