

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Agenda Number:**  
**Prepared on:** 7/7/05  
**Department Name:**  
**Department No.:**  
**Agenda Date:** 8/9/05  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimate Time:** 20 minutes  
**Continued Item:** NO  
**If Yes, date from:**

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Fifth District Supervisor Joseph Centeno  
**STAFF CONTACT:** Gil Armijo  
346-8402  
**SUBJECT:** Welcome Every Baby Program (WEB)

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**Recommendation(s):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive a presentation and status report of The Welcome Every Baby Program. (2:00 p.m. Time Certain);
- b) Approve and execute a letter to state Senator Abel Maldonado in support of Baby Bill of Rights legislation.

**Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:**

The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with Goal No. 7. A Community that Fosters the Safety and Well-Being of Families and Children.

**Executive Summary and Discussion:**

The Welcome Every Baby Program (WEB) is a free, voluntary, universal home visiting program offered to families of every baby nine months old or younger in Santa Barbara County. New mothers are offered the WEB program following the birth of their baby in Cottage, Marian and Lompoc Hospitals by a WEB hospital liaison. An initial home visit is conducted by a registered nurse within the first week after the baby is released home. An experienced and degreed child development specialist either accompanies the nurse on this initial visit or provides a "follow-up" visit to the family shortly after the nurse's visit. A follow-up phone call is made by the nurse when the baby is 2 weeks of age and by the child development specialist when the baby is 2 months of age. The child development specialist conducts two more home visits at 4 and 9 months of age, with an intermittent phone call. Babies graduate from WEB at nine months of age, and may be linked to other community services if appropriate. Babies under 9 months of age may be referred to WEB for services if they were not born in one of the above mentioned hospitals.

WEB's roots began in March of 2000 when the Children and Families Commission of Santa Barbara County (First Five) awarded a planning grant for the community to develop a single Newborn Home Visiting Initiative. Numerous agencies met on an ongoing basis to design a comprehensive system to deliver countywide home visitation for families of all babies born in Santa Barbara County. The outcome of the collaborative planning process was Welcome Every Baby, Newborn Home Visiting Initiative with three funded partners, Sojourn Services Inc., Santa Barbara County Public Health Department and CALM.

In July of 2002, two lead agencies were awarded two-year funding contracts by First 5 to conduct WEB services. Then, in August of 2003, WEB was able to fulfill its vision of expanding services to every baby in the county. Several fiscal strategies allowed for this expansion; including the elimination of duplication of administrative costs by amending the First 5 contract to one lead agency (Sojourn Services, Inc.). Additionally, First 5 funds were supplemented with Targeted Case Management leveraging through the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department.

WEB has served 8515 infants to date and provided over 3500 referrals to appropriate agencies. This not only links the families with much needed services but also empowers and educates them to seek and obtain future information and assistance for the needs of their growing baby. As WEB continues to grow as a model and entry point for comprehensive and coordinated service delivery in the community, community support for families with young children is seen as a desired result.

**Mandates and Service Levels:**

None.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

None.

**Special Instructions:**

**Concurrence:**

## **A Preamble For the Baby Bill of Rights**

There is a need to establish a powerful statement of the rights for all babies. Only after we have done so can we begin to address what adults need to do to ensure that they and society live up to their responsibilities. For many years we were unaware of the impact of the brain development of babies and the importance of the years from birth to three. We have learned that the first years in a baby's life can literally determine his or her future; now we must endorse what we know. Far too often, we have focused on problems and deficits, reciting statistics that talk about issues such as child abuse, health problems, and developmental disabilities, but failed to talk about strengthening all families.

We hope that the Baby Bill of Rights will help to inspire discussions, create solutions, and establish programs to work on the many issues that face our youngest citizens. Even more, we want to state unequivocally that these are rights for all of our children, and that they will live in a society where every child is well-nurtured, emotionally healthy, and capable of reaching his or her full potential.

The people of California have spoken in support of all children birth to five with their support of Proposition 10; the California Legislature agreed in the California Education Master Plan. The Baby Bill of Rights is the next step in the fulfillment of adults' commitment on behalf of our children.

# Baby Bill of Rights

Fulfillment of these rights requires a commitment of adults on behalf of children.

It is established that babies' brains grow most rapidly and are the most vulnerable during the first months and years of life, and that babies are fully dependent on their caregivers for all aspects of nourishment and security: their rights arise from this inherent dependency. As adults, we believe that to secure these rights is the responsibility of parents, family, community, business, and elected representatives of our youngest citizens.

As persons charged with and dedicated to upholding these Rights of All Babies, we hereby pledge:

1. To make sense of our own lives so that we can recognize, understand, and respond to our babies' signals and help them form secure attachments;
2. To protect their health and well-being by providing nutritious food, consistent and safe shelter, and protective clothing;
3. To protect them from exposure to harmful diseases and substances, potential injury, and all violence;
4. To create and maintain nurturing environments and experiences that promote physical, cognitive, social, and emotional stability and growth;
5. To teach and model for them, as they grow, how to discern right from wrong, how to make meaningful choices and to obey the law;
6. To teach them of their duty to their co-inhabitants of the earth and their responsibility to protect the earth for future generations;
7. To make it the first priority of the parent(s) to establish and maintain a healthy and stable family to ensure the baby's development for today, tomorrow, and the future;
8. To establish daily family rituals of time together for meals, play, conversation, and reflection;
9. To hold them close and tell them they are loved;
10. To walk with them, show them, and tell them about the world beyond;
11. To read or engage in pre-literacy activities to model and prepare them for life-long learning;
12. To expect that community services for children are individualized, coordinated, relationship-based, culturally responsive, and family-centered;
13. To expect and maintain the highest standards for all professionals and paraprofessionals whose occupations are child-related;
14. To expect local, state, and federal officials to instill models of public generosity and to acknowledge excellence in group efforts to uphold this Baby Bill of Rights.

August 9, 2005

Honorable Abel Maldonado  
Member, California State Senate  
Capitol Building, Room 4082  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: BABY BILL OF RIGHTS

Dear Senator Maldonado:

At our weekly Board of Supervisors hearing on August 9, 2005, we unanimously approved our support for the Baby Bill of Rights legislation you are sponsoring.

As you know, and as our Board indicated, there are few issues in life as important as providing for our young children in every manner that is possible. Indeed, there is no goal as noble as the one that ensures our children have a high quality of life. Your Baby Bill of Rights legislation is certainly one large step in that direction.

Our Board is also proud that Santa Barbara County is the first County in California to endorse the Baby Bill of Rights.

Your leadership in making this legislation a reality is critical and we are all appreciative of your commitment to the children and families of Santa Barbara County and the State of California.

Respectfully yours,

Susan Rose, Chair  
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors