

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: 12/21/01
Department Name: Social Services
Department No.: 044
Agenda Date: 01/15/02
Placement: Administrative
Estimate Time: n/a
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:
Document File Name: SCCD BD LTR.DOC

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Charlene Chase, Director
Dept. of Social Services

STAFF CONTACT: Hedy Damery
KIDS Network, 614-1990

SUBJECT: 2001 Children's Scorecard for Santa Barbara County

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

Accept the 2001 Children's Scorecard for Santa Barbara County as produced by the KIDS Network in collaboration with the UCSB Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, the Children and Families Commission and various county departments and community-based agencies.

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 2001 edition is the eighth annual Children's Scorecard for Santa Barbara County. The Scorecard was developed as a tool to help track and measure our county's progress toward the goal of improving outcomes for children, youth and families. The data are derived from a variety of sources, including state agencies, county departments and community-based organizations. The information is collected, analyzed and prepared by KIDS Network for entry into a centralized database maintained and updated by Drs. Mike Furlong and Manny Casas and their staff at the UCSB Gevirtz Graduate School of Education. Our UCSB partners also design and prepare the layout for the Scorecard, a valuable in-kind contribution to each year's production. This edition of the Scorecard includes several new indicators and a special section featuring Santa Barbara County's Children and Families Commission.

Highlights from the 2001 Children's Scorecard:

We are pleased to report that trends on most indicators provide encouraging signs that we are moving in the right direction and improving outcomes for children, youth and families in Santa Barbara County:

- **welfare caseloads** have declined steadily over the past seven years and dramatically in the past five years,
- our county-wide high school **graduation rate** continues to be higher than the state average and our high school **drop out rate** remains lower than the state average,
- the incidence of **TB** has decreased markedly during the past five years,
- the per capita rate of **sustained violent crimes committed by youth** is nearly half what it was six years ago.
- Santa Barbara County's per capita rate of **foster and group home placements** remains significantly lower than the State's rate, and
- **child abuse** referrals, although increasing slightly remained well below the high reached in 1996-97.

At the same time, we must acknowledge some of the challenges that remain, and that will require long-term commitment from the entire community to solve:

- After staying level for the past four years, the percentage of children enrolled in the **free and reduced lunch** programs rose again to a new high of 42%.
- both the number and rate of **births to teens** age 17 and younger increased slightly in 2000, after a seven year decline.
- requests for **child care** continue to exceed capacity while the cost of care continues to rise.

The Scorecard 2001 is available on the Web at <http://www.education.ucsb.edu/school-psychology/>

Mandates and Service Levels: No change.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts: Costs to produce the Scorecard are included in the Dept. of Social Services adopted budget for fiscal year 2001-2002.

Special Instructions: After passage by the Board of Supervisors, please send one (1) certified copy of the Minute Order to the KIDS Network, c/o DSS-SM (Carmen Lane #208), Attn. Hedy Damery.

Concurrence: None

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA:

ATTEST:
MICHAEL F. BROWN
Clerk of the Board

By: _____
GAIL MARSHALL, Chair
Board of Supervisors

By: _____
Deputy

Date: _____