



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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**Kids, Parents Invited to Build Pedestrian Safety Skills on Farmers Market Obstacle Course  
"Safety Town" Event Kicks Off California Pedestrian Safety Month in San Luis Obispo County**

San Luis Obispo, CA —Kids and parents are invited to take on a special "Safety Town" obstacle course at the Downtown SLO Farmers' Market to practice simple—and potentially life-saving—safety skills this September. The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department and the California Office of Traffic Safety are presenting the course as part of California Pedestrian Safety Month in an effort to reduce the number of people killed while walking or running.

"Pedestrian safety starts with an important reminder that those on foot and those behind the wheel share an equal responsibility when it comes to looking out for one another," said Rhonda Craft, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety. "Our goal is to encourage safe behaviors throughout the entire year, but California Pedestrian Safety Month gives us a timely opportunity to really drive the message home."

While the issue is serious, the obstacle course is fun: it's designed to teach kids (and remind parents) the basics of modern pedestrian safety skills in a playful setting. Kids who complete the course will earn a certificate.

- **WHEN:** Thursday, September 7, 6-9 p.m.
- **WHERE:** Downtown SLO Farmers' Market, near the corner of Higuera and Nipomo
- **WHO:** School-age children, parents, and community members are invited to take on the Safety Town obstacle course. The course is presented by the County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department and the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) with support from community partners.
- **WHY:** In 2015, more than 13,000 people were injured and 813 people were killed while walking or running on California roads. Modern pedestrian safety skills can help prevent more injuries and deaths.

"As adults, we sometimes forget that kids need to learn and practice the basics of staying safe on the street," said Dr. Penny Borenstein, Health Officer of the County of San Luis Obispo. "We also know that adults sometimes need a refresher on skills we learned years ago or didn't learn as kids—like staying safe while texting. Safety Town is a fun way for families to practice and refresh these skills together."

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The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department and the California Office of Traffic Safety remind residents to practice safe behaviors when walking or driving:

**Pedestrians: Be predictable. Follow the rules of the road and obey signs and signals.**

- Always use sidewalks when they are available.
- If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic and as far from traffic as possible.
- Keep alert at all times; don't be distracted by electronic devices that take your eyes (and ears) off the road.
- Cross streets at crosswalks or intersections when possible. This is where drivers expect pedestrians. Look for cars in all directions—including those turning left or right.
- If a crosswalk or intersection is not available, wait for a gap in traffic that allows you enough time to cross safely, and continue to watch for traffic as you cross.
- Never assume a driver sees you. Make eye contact with drivers as they approach you to make sure you are seen.
- Be visible at all times. Wear bright clothing during the day, and wear reflective materials or use a flashlight at night.
- Watch for cars entering or exiting driveways, or backing up in parking lots.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs when walking; they impair your abilities and judgment too.

**Drivers: Look out for pedestrians everywhere, at all times.**

- Use extra caution when driving in hard-to-see conditions, at nighttime or in bad weather.
- Slow down and be prepared to stop when turning or otherwise entering a crosswalk.
- Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks; slow well back from the crosswalk to give other vehicles an opportunity to see the crossing pedestrians so they can stop too.
- Never pass vehicles stopped at a crosswalk. There may be people crossing that you can't see.
- Follow slower speed limits in school zones and in neighborhoods where children are present.
- Be extra cautious when backing up—pedestrians can move into your path.

**At-a-Glance: Pedestrian Deaths in California**

- 2015: 813 pedestrians were killed on California roadways.
- 2015: Over 13,000 pedestrians were injured on California roadways
- 2015: Pedestrian fatalities account for nearly 25 percent of all roadway deaths in California.
- California's pedestrian fatality rate is almost 70 percent higher than the national average.
- No state has more pedestrian deaths on its roadways than California.

*Funding for this pedestrian safety campaign is provided to the County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.*