The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) began in Santa Barbara County in 1986 as an initiative between the Public Health Department, District Attorney, County Executive Office, Law Enforcement, County Counsel, and the Department of Social Services. SART has now grown to include a coalition of twenty public and private agencies that serve sexual assault survivors/victims. The team is dedicated to providing timely, comprehensive services to meet the medical and emotional needs of survivors and their families as well as meet the forensic needs of the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Some of the key features of the SART program are:

- Coordinated team notification and assembly for response
- Prompt medical exams for acute cases
- Highly trained medical examiners
- Dedicated exam space and equipment in 3 areas of the county
- Coordinated medical/law enforcement interviews
- Immediate survivor/victim support and advocacy
- Offer Restricted Forensic Medical Examinations (RFME)

The team provides:

- Forensic interviews
- Medical-legal exams
- Medical treatment including prophylaxis for sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy
- Advocacy and counseling
- Follow-up referrals and emotional support
- Accompaniment and other services for adults and children who have experienced sexual assault/abuse and for their family members and significant others

If a medical professional suspects or knows of sexual abuse of a child, they must report this to the local law enforcement agency or child welfare agency immediately. In the event of an adolescent or adult sexual assault, a referral should be made immediately to the local Rape Crisis Center (RCC) or the local law enforcement agency. It is important to contact the local RCC to ensure individuals receive information about Restricted Forensic Medical Exams. These exams are offered to adults (18 years or older) and are in accordance with Violence Against Women Act of 2005, which requires victims of sexual assault to be provided with a forensic medical exam even when they do not choose to cooperate with law enforcement. Timely action is important and an explanation of options for survivors and the collection of medical evidence are provided by individuals who are specially trained in this work. The SART team has individuals poised to act and there is no cost to the individual.
The Public Health Department collaborated with nearly 60 organizations including Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics, SEE International, and Cottage Hospital to provide free health screenings for Santa Barbara’s Westside community on Saturday, September 22nd at the newly upgraded Bohnett Park. Over 450 people of all ages participated in the event. The findings from that day reflect the health issues that required follow-up.

- **Oral Health** – 199 were screened and 25% were found to have unaddressed decay.
- **Glucose** – 271 received initial screening, 21 needed follow-up, and 10 individuals had blood sugar results between 200 and 450.
- **Hearing** – 105 were screened and 10% failed the screening.
- **Asthma** – 185 were screened and 23% required follow-up.
- **Body Mass Index (BMI)** – 116 children were screened and 47% were overweight or obese; 103 adults were screened and 71% were overweight or obese.
- **Vision** – 130 were screened and 13% failed the screening.
- **Social/Emotional** – 168 adults and children were screened and 26% are recommended for follow-up.

Westside Family Day and Health Fair

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