

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY AWARENESS

September 20-26



Public Health recognizes:

Child Passenger Safety Awareness Week: September 20 - 26

Public Health recognizes Child Passenger Safety Awareness Week through a proclamation and community outreach, raising awareness about the importance of properly installing and using car seats this week and every day.

In the U.S., car crashes are the leading cause of death for children. Using the right car seat correctly can reduce the risk of fatal injury by up to 71% for infants and 54% for toddlers.

Here are a few tips to help keep children safe:

- **Check your child's car seat.** Make sure it is appropriate for your child's age, weight, and height. Use the NHTSA The Right Seat tool at nhtsa.gov/TheRightSeat
- **Install it correctly.** Follow the car seat manufacturer's instructions and your vehicle owner's manual.
- **Get a free inspection.** Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) can help make sure your car seat is installed and being used correctly.
- **Keep children in the back seat.** Children should ride in the back seat until at least age 12.

Mendocino County Public Health has certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians and offers free, one-on-one car seat safety appointments for Mendocino County residents with children ages 0–12.

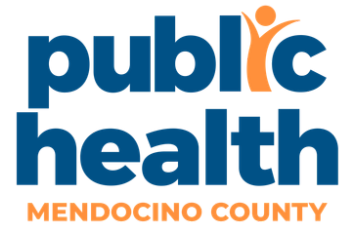
Call 707-472-2757 to schedule an appointment or email MCAH@mendocinocounty.gov

Learn more about car seat and booster seat safety from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Mendocino County Public Health at www.mendocinocounty.gov/departments/public-health/nursing/public-health



A Safe & Healthy County

September 2026



Public Health - Maternal, Child, Adolescent Health (MCAH)

This month, the Maternal Child Adolescent Health (MCAH) Program focused on developing strategic goals to guide program efforts over the next three years. These goals are intended to address identified community needs and strengthen services, partnerships, and health outcomes across five key domains: maternal health, child health, adolescent health, perinatal health, and Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN). While the program continues to operate with essential staffing, MCAH remains committed to identifying innovative and sustainable ways to support children, youth, and families throughout the county. This planning process reflects the program's ongoing dedication to ensuring resources are directed where they are needed most and to improving equitable access to quality public health services for the communities we serve.

Public Health - California Children's Services (CCS)

This month, the California Children's Services (CCS) Program placed a strong emphasis on strengthening program planning and ensuring the needs of Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) are accurately represented and communicated. The program is also focusing on expanding community outreach to increase awareness of CCS services and improve access for eligible children and families. As part of our commitment to providing family-centered care, CCS staff participated in community training focused on father engagement, gaining strategies to better support and engage fathers as active partners in their children's health and well-being. Through continued outreach, collaboration, and professional development, the CCS Program remains dedicated to improving health outcomes and ensuring families receive the services and resources they need.

Public Health - Immunizations

Public Health continues to strengthen community health and disease prevention by expanding access to immunization services. During the reporting period, staff participated in three sports physical events held in Willits, Fort Bragg, and Ukiah. In addition, Vaccines for Children (VFC) quality assurance visits were completed in Willits, Boonville, and Redwood Valley.

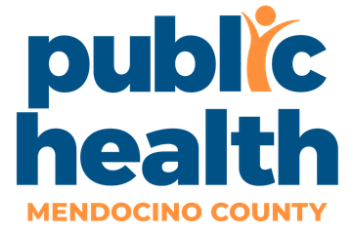
In preparation for the upcoming flu season, Public Health is recertifying local providers for the State-Granted Flu Program and scheduling eight employee flu vaccination clinics. A school-located vaccination event was also scheduled on August 13 to support students and families as they return to school.

The monthly TB clinic continues to experience high demand, serving an average of 25 patients per month. Additionally, staff attended the 2026 Immunization Summit in Sacramento and brought back current information, recommendations, and best practices to further support local immunization efforts.



A Safe & Healthy County

September 2026



Environmental Health - Land Use

During the month of July, the Land Use Program conducted 8 septic system installation inspections, 2 water well construction inspections, and 4 septic pumper inspections. The Land Use Program also received 12 site evaluation reports, 2 new water well applications, and 82 referrals from Planning and Building for review. The program continues to meet monthly with septic system stakeholders to discuss ongoing program needs and regulatory issues. The group is currently discussing the Bedroom Definition Policy. These stakeholder meetings are open to anyone in the public and provide an opportunity for community members, industry professionals, and other interested parties to participate in the discussion and provide feedback.

Environmental Health - Consumer Protection

During the month of July, the Consumer Protection Program received 28 applications and issued permits for 8 community events. Environmental Health inspectors also attended Carnival by the Sea and the Northern Nights Music Festival to conduct inspections to ensure that food vendors were operating in compliance with applicable health and safety requirements. In addition, to event activities, staff conducted 68 routine inspections throughout the month continuing the program's efforts to protect public health and ensure regulated facilities are meeting applicable requirements.

Environmental Health, in coordination with the Water Board also continues testing and monitoring local algal blooms in several bodies of water and rivers throughout Mendocino County.

For more information, including locations and results visit: mywaterquality.ca.gov/habs/resources/reports-map/

Remember to look out for harmful algal blooms! *Learn more about harmful algal blooms and how to stay safe: www.mendocinocounty.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/72427/638871321460230000*

Public Health also recognizes: Food Safety Education Month: All of September



This month, Public Health recognizes **Food Safety Education Month** raising awareness about safe food handling, preparation, and storage practices to help prevent food borne illness and protect community health. Food safety impacts everyone. **1 in 6 Americans experiences food borne illness each year.**

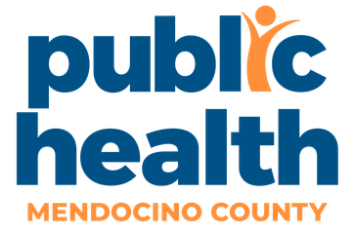
With back-to-school season, Public Health also reminds families to follow these important food safety tips to help keep lunches safe and healthy.

- **Wash your hands** thoroughly before preparing or eating food.
- **Prevent cross-contamination** by keeping raw foods separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- **Cook foods to safe temperatures** to help kill harmful bacteria.
- **Refrigerate perishable foods promptly** and use insulated lunch bags with ice packs when needed.
- **Stay informed about food recalls** and follow current food safety guidance.

For more food safety tips to help keep you and your family safe, visit at <https://www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/safe-food-handling>

A Prepared and Resilient County

September 2026



Public Health - Immunizations

The Immunization Team continues preparing for flu season, strengthening the County's readiness for seasonal influenza and other communicable diseases by expanding vaccination access, supporting local providers, maintaining TB services, and promoting ongoing staff education and preparedness.

Public Health - Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care (HCPCFC)

This month, the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care (HCPCFC) team continued to ensure the medical, dental, mental health, and overall wellness of 115 youth in Emergency Response and Permanent Placement, as well as the Supportive Transition foster youth served and Family Maintenance youth whose social workers assisted in obtaining medical and dental documentation for court reports.

This month, we were assigned a handful of new cases, which allowed the team to focus on the significant upcoming transition from CWS/CMS to CWS-CARES, scheduled for October. Staff have attended a number of statewide and regional HCPCFC meetings to discuss and troubleshoot some of the challenges associated with the new system. The team also dedicated many hours to becoming familiar with CWS-CARES and entering information into the new database. The team is looking forward to a smooth transition as the new system is implemented later this year.

Nurse Emily has continued to provide intensive case management for foster children ages 0–3, ensuring their examinations, immunizations, and dental care remain current. At this time, all youth in this particularly vulnerable population have up-to-date medical and dental care.

The HCPCFC team continues to collaborate with Family and Children's Services (FCS) Title IV-E Emergency Response Nurse, Laura Wingard during weekly team nursing meetings to ensure a seamless transition for children moving from the Emergency Response phase of detention into Family Reunification. Together, the team is working to obtain medical and dental records in a timely manner, promote continuity of care with existing providers whenever possible, and ensure that required medical and dental appointments are scheduled within the first 30 days of detainment.

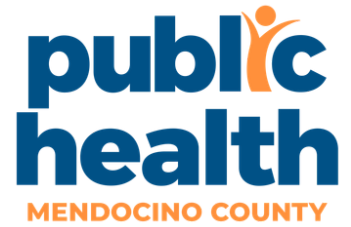
This month, HCPCFC teams also continued in-person collaboration with the Anchor Health team during monthly meetings to discuss upcoming JV-220 submissions and to assist in obtaining critical health information for foster youth with complex mental health needs who receive services from both programs. HCPCFC nursing staff processed more than a dozen JV-220 requests last month.

In addition, ongoing weekly Interagency Placement Committee (IPC) collaboration meetings with Family and Children's Services continue to foster creative solutions for youth experiencing placement challenges. These strong partnerships between Foster Care Nursing and FCS have strengthened communication, improved care coordination, and enhanced our ability to support the complex needs of the children and youth we serve.



An Effective Government

September 2026



Public Health - Environmental Health

The Land Use program hosted a virtual stakeholder meeting on September 3, 2026, from 3:30 to 5:00pm via Zoom. The meeting included local engineering firms, septic designers, and contractors. Additional information is available on the Environmental Health website at www.mendocinocounty.gov/departments/public-health/environmental-health/land-use/stakeholders.

Environmental Health has welcomed a new Office Services Supervisor and a new Staff Assistant to support the front counter, phones, and overall customer service operations. The Board of Supervisors has authorized two additional field inspector positions, which are currently being recruited. Environmental Health is additionally recruiting for Hazardous Materials Operations Specialist and Environmental Health Manager.

Environmental Health continues monitoring the national botulism outbreak linked to powdered infant formula. Additional information can be found at www.cdc.gov/botulism/outbreaks-investigations/infant-formula-june-2026/index.html.

Public Health - Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)

In August, WIC recognized National Breastfeeding Month and will continue promoting breastfeeding awareness and support throughout September. September 1–7, Workplace Lactation Week is recognized to remind breastfeeding mothers of their rights and the importance of receiving support from their employers. Mothers should be aware of their right to have reasonable time and a designated space to pump breast milk during the workday. September 8–14, Latinx Breastfeeding Week is recognized to provide an opportunity to celebrate breastfeeding and promote awareness and support within the Latinx community and across diverse cultures.

Mendocino County WIC continues to strengthen its Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program, which provides mothers with one-on-one support and guidance throughout their breastfeeding journey.

In August, WIC welcomed a bilingual International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) to the team. This is the first time Mendocino County WIC has had a bilingual IBCLC, making this a valuable addition to the breastfeeding support available to local families.

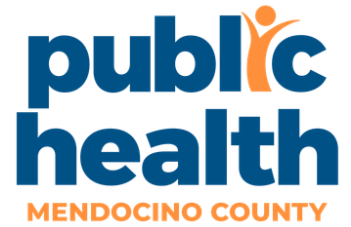
Mendocino County WIC invites participating families to visit their local Farmers Market and take advantage of their daily Farmers Market benefit. Families can receive a \$15 daily benefit match to help purchase fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables.

Mendocino County WIC is proud to continue supporting healthy families, breastfeeding parents, and access to nutritious foods throughout Mendocino County.

Families Grow Healthier with WIC

A Safe and Healthy County

September 2026



Public Health - Administration

Communications

Public Health is airing public service announcements in both English and Spanish throughout the month of September to raise awareness for Wildfire Preparedness, Food Safety Awareness Month and Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.



- **Wildfire Preparedness**

Wildfire season is here. Be safe and be prepared. When a wildfire is threatening your area, monitor local radio or television stations. Be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice. Prepare a 3-day emergency kit. Have N95 masks on hand to help avoid smoke intake. Plan, prepare, and be aware.

Go to mendoready.org for more information.

- **Food Safety Awareness Month**

September is Food Safety Awareness Month. Every year about 1 in 6 Americans will get sick from food poisoning. Food poisoning can lead to hospitalization and long-term health problems. Help keep your family safe from food poisoning at home by following these four simple steps: keep utensils and surfaces clean, keep foods separate, cook to the right temperature, and keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot.

Learn more at foodsafety.gov



- **Suicide Prevention Awareness Month**

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. If you or someone you know is struggling, in emotional distress, or thinking about suicide, help is available.

Call or text 988, chat 988lifeline.org or contact.

Mendocino County 24/7 Toll Free Crisis line at 1-855-838-0404.



It's ok to be not ok. You're not alone.