

## Infant, Toddler, School-Age Population

### **Goal 3:**

The community of Sonoma County engages in behaviors that promote the health and happiness of the maternal, child and adolescent population.

### **2010 Objective:**

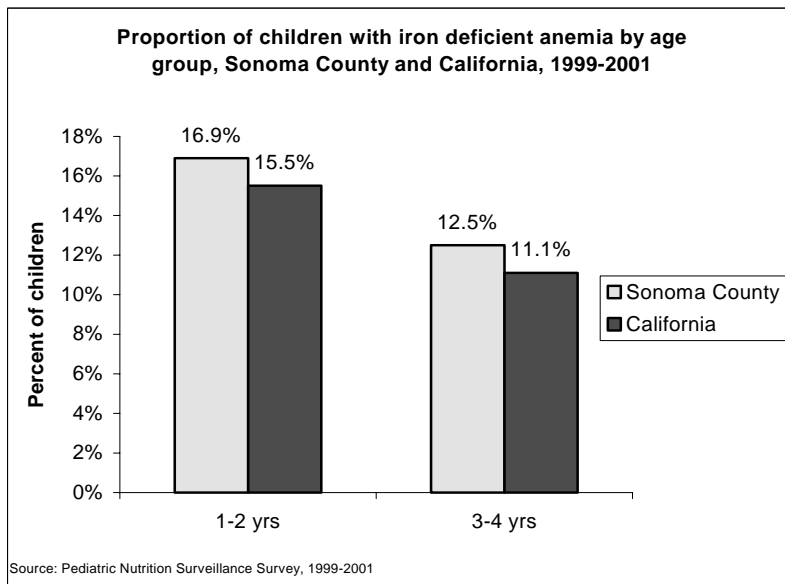
Reduce the proportion of iron deficiency anemia among young children aged 1-2 to no more than 5% and children aged 3-4 to no more than 1%.

### **Description of the Issue:**

Anemia is a condition in which the hemoglobin in red blood cells falls below normal. Anemia most often results from iron deficiency. Iron deficiency anemia can cause delays in infant and child development. Potential results of chronic iron deficiency include: decreased ability to learn, impaired attention span and memory, and a higher risk for lead poisoning.

Inadequate intake of foods with good sources of iron and over consumption of dairy products especially during the time a child should be weaned from a bottle contributes to the incidence of anemia. Nutrition is essential for growth and development, health and well-being. Behaviors to promote health should start early in life and continue through life with the development of healthful eating habits.

### **Prevalence:**



- 17.1 % of children less than 5 years of age in Sonoma County had iron deficiency anemia in 2002. The prevalence of anemia in children less than five years in California was 13.1%.
- Sonoma County is one of the top ten jurisdictions in California in 2002 with the highest prevalence of anemia for children aged 0-5 years. <sup>2</sup>

### **Risk Factors:**

Iron deficiency is highest among toddlers and among certain racial, ethnic and low-income children.<sup>1</sup> Parent's most likely are unaware and lack knowledge regarding adequate nutrition for young children.

### **Existing Resources:**

There are three local WIC programs who serve over 8,000 low-income mothers infant and children up to age five and provide food vouchers which including cereals high in iron. Nutritional classes and counseling are provided as part of the program.

WIC requires annual laboratory tests, which identify low-income individual children with iron deficiency anemia.

The Sonoma County Family Activity and Nutrition Task Force is a group of committed professionals that gather local data to assess nutrition status and trends in Sonoma County. They work to identify resources to promote healthy nutrition in Sonoma County.

Center for Well-Being is a local non-profit agency that provides health promotion classes and medical nutrition therapy.

**Gaps in Services, Resources, or Data:**

- There are few health education programs that offer parents information and education about child nutrition.
- Children whose families do not qualify or participate in WIC or have CHDP exams may not be tested routinely for iron deficiency anemia.
- The PDNSS data provides a picture of iron deficiency anemia for the low-income children but data on the whole youth population are lacking.

**Sources:**

<sup>1</sup> Healthy People 2010

<sup>2</sup> California 2002 Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance

**Person(s) Responsible:**

Genny Byrne