

# PATHWAYS TO PROGRESS NEWSLETTER

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## Spotlight Celebrating FSS Success

Sandra Lopez Martinez- Teo's Daycare

Teo's Daycare is an in-home, licensed daycare center that has been proudly serving the Santa Barbara community since 2021. Open 7:30am to 5:00pm, they provide high quality childcare to children from 3 months to 12 years of age. Located near parks and beaches, Teo's daycare emphasizes outdoor play and exploration, giving children frequent opportunities to engage in physical activity and connect with nature in a safe, supervised environment.

In addition to outdoor learning, Teo's Daycare incorporates music, such as guitar play and other musical instruments, allowing children to explore rhythm, creativity, and self-expression through music. The daycare also prioritizes health nutrition by preparing fresh, home-cooked meals for the children each day.

Families may be eligible for financial assistance through the Santa Barbara County Education Office to help subsidize childcare costs, and students attending Santa Barbara City College may also qualify for additional support. Teo's daycare is a wonderful example of an FSS participant building a thriving business that supports both children and families in the community.



## Small Steps, Intentional Progress

As we step into the new year, progress doesn't have to mean giant leaps- it starts with small, intentional and consistent steps. This first issue of Pathways to Progress is all about building momentum through practical choices that add up over time. Inside, you'll find resources to support your goals- from strengthening finances and growing your career, to nurturing mind-body balance, simplifying home life, and connecting with community support. Each page is designed to meet you where you are and help you move forward with purpose. Remember: steady steps, taken with intention, create meaningful change.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### \* Emotional Intelligence Series

Thursday January 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> from 6pm-7pm

### \* Employment Workshop Series-

Thursday February 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm

### \* Vehicle Purchase Education Workshop

Wednesday February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026 5:30pm



Call Dulce for more information and to RSVP!!



## We want to hear from you!

We value your input! Help us decide:

- what goes in next quarters newsletter?
- What kind of workshops would you like to participate in?
- What resources are needed?



## COMMUNITY CORNER- What's happening around you



### Food Resources:

#### CenCal Member?



**Bento Box**- Receive home delivery of dietitian-curated groceries from nearby grocery stores at no cost.

Enroll by [calling CenCal](#).



#### Student at SBCC?



**Basic Needs Center**- Find essential resources such as food, housing, transportation, financial support and community referrals. [Click here to learn more](#)

### Cal-Fresh EBT: Market Match



Did you know you can use your EBT card at all farmers markets in town? Here's how-

Look for the green Santa Barbara Farmer's Market tent where you can use your EBT card to purchase tokens to use to purchase fruits and vegetables. Up to \$10 of every purchase using EBT per market day gets you up to an additional \$10 in FREE Market Match tokens to spend on fruits and vegetables. [Click here to learn more](#).

### Other Resources:



#### Alternative Payment Program-

The Alternative Payment Program (APP) assists low-to-moderate-income families with childcare costs on their path to becoming economically self-sufficient. **If you need support paying for childcare you can call their Santa Barbara Office at 805-964-4711 X 4450 or APP administrative Assistant at 805-352-0274**



### SB Parks & Rec- Summer Camp Registration: February 4<sup>th</sup> at 9am!!!

Spend your summer with Santa Barbara Parks and Rec! With plenty of summer camp experiences to choose from, kids ages 5-17 can explore topics including art, business, engineering, sports, theater, and water safety. We also offer scholarships and inclusion services. Some camps fill up on registration day, so mark your calendars!!

**Complete the items on the checklist at the link below BEFORE registration day!**

[Click Here](#)



### Financial Resources:

#### Jewish Free Loan Association

Offering interest free loans to individuals facing hardships. Must have co-signer in most cases. Must have income to ensure repayment of loan.

**Speak to Dulce for more information!**

#### Fr. Virgil Cordano Center

The Father Virgil Cordano Center can in some cases help with past due bills or emergency financial assistance. **You can reach them at 805-563-1051**.



#### HEAP- Utility Assistance

The Heat Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) can help those in financial need prevent service interruption or restore disconnected utility services. LIHEAP can also help families that just want to get ahead with their bills, through a utility credit to free up funds for other living needs. Clients must be responsible for paying both Gas and Electric bills. For more information and to apply call:

**Hector Avila- 805-897-1044**  
**Aline Ortiz- 805-897-1045**

You can also come in to the main office during **walk in hours Monday - Thursday from 10am-12pm**.

## Employment- Tools and Opportunity for Career Growth



### Employment Search Resources:

Santa Barbara Public Library Works! Workforce Development Program

Services:

- Basic Résumé and Cover Letter Creation
- Job Search Assistance
- Computer Assistance
- Interview Practice

[Click Here](#) to make an appointment (bilingüe)

### Library Card Access- Did you know?



 LinkedIn Learning- offers online courses, classes, training, and tutorials to learn software, creative, and business skills to help patrons achieve personal and professional goals. Login with your library card and PIN from anywhere and start learning.

 Chromebooks and Hotspots- Library patrons can check out chromebooks and hotspots for off-site use for 1 week.



### SBCC Career Skills Institute (CSI)- Boost your career

These courses are designed to help you land a job, get promoted, or build your business. Earn a certificate and digital badge to prove your skills and stand out to employers.

[Spring Schedule Here](#)

[Enroll using this link](#)

### Who's Hiring?!



Honor Bar- Greeter  
\$30-\$45/hour  
[For more info click here](#)

The Spine and Ortho Center- Facilities Runner/Support Assistant  
\$26-\$27/ hour  
[For more info click here](#)

Home Instead- Full time skilled caregiver  
\$20-\$23/ hour  
[For more info click here](#)

Accounting Clerk- Full time  
\$19-\$25/hour [For more info click here](#)

BCycle Santa Barbara- Field Technician \$29.44/hour [For more info Click here](#)

County of SB- Health Education Assistant \$53,888.64 - \$64,124.32 Annually [For more info Click here](#)

### Job Search Platforms:



**'GLASSDOOR'**

[Click Here](#)



[Click Here](#)



[Click Here](#)

## Money Matters: Building Financial Confidence



# Take the First Step



Budgeting can feel overwhelming, and for many families the hardest part is simply getting started. It's easy to wait for the "perfect" moment- more time, more money, fewer expenses- but that moment rarely comes. Real progress begins with one small, manageable step. This quarter, we encourage you to focus on awareness by tracking your spending. By writing down where your money is actually going, you gain clear, honest information that allows you to build a budget based on facts, not guesses.



### Tips for tracking:

**Start small and keep it simple:** Use what you have- a notebook, phone notes, spreadsheet. The tool matters less than consistency. (Ask Dulce if you need a tracking sheet)

**Track everything, even small purchases:** Coffee, snacks, or dollar-store items add up and give you a clearer picture of your habits.

**Write it down right away:** Recording expenses as soon as they happen helps prevent forgetting and keeps the process quick.

**Save receipts or take photos:** This can help you remember purchases and review spending at the end of the week.

**Check in daily or weekly:** Short, regular check-ins are easier than trying to remember everything at once.

**Be honest, not perfect:** Tracking is about awareness, not judgement- every entry helps you learn.



### Tracking Challenge:

#### Money-Wise March

Track your expenses for the whole month of March and be entered to win one of three \$50 gift cards!!! Send Dulce your tracking sheets by the 5<sup>th</sup> of April to participate.



### Do you know how the FSS escrow account works?

It's free money! When your income from work goes up, you pay more for rent, and we pay less. But wait, there's more! We take the money that we were paying to your landlord and put it into an account for you, on a monthly basis! The higher your income, the more we deposit! How big will your check be at the end of your participation in FSS?!



### Do you know what your monthly credit is? Ask Dulce!

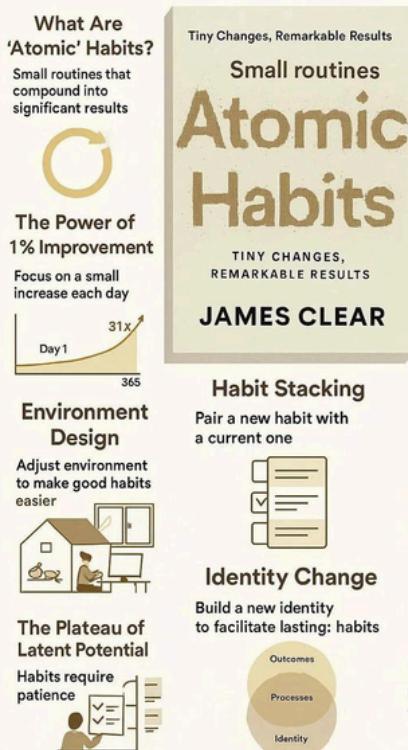
## Mind, Body and Balance- Supporting Overall Well-Being

# Do you have a routine?

Creating a daily routine can be a powerful tool for supporting mind-body balance, especially for families working toward self-sufficiency. Routines provide structure and predictability, which can reduce stress and help both adults and children feel more grounded and in control. When we know what to expect each day, it becomes easier to manage responsibilities, make healthy choices, and build positive habits over time. Even small, consistent routines- like regular meal times, bedtime rituals, or moments for self-care- can make a big difference in promoting success, stability, and overall well-being.

## Atomic Habits

James Clear



Have an EBT Card? Here are some perks-



### Free or Low Cost Entry to:

SB Zoo- Daytime admission \$3 per person up to 4 people

The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden- \$3 per person or \$20 for annual pass

Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History- \$5 per person up to 4 people

Santa Barbara Sea Center- \$5 per person up to 4 people

MOXI- \$3 per person up to 4 people

Ganna Walska Lotusland- \$5 per person up to 4 people

Santa Barbara Maritime Museum- \$2 per person (age 6+), Youth (5 and under) Free. An annual pass can also be purchased for \$20 which includes admission for 2 adults and all children or grandchildren under 18 and 2 guest passes.

Casa del Herrero- Free

Santa Barbara Museum of Art- Free

El Presidio State Historic Park- Free

Museum of Contemporary Art- Free



## Bcycle Annual Pass

Looking for alternative transportation to help you- save money, get some exercise, or just for fun?

Bcycle offers a discounted annual pass for EBT card holders. Just \$27.18 a year- that gives you access to unlimited number of 60min rides. To qualify- email them proof of your SNAP Card to [santabarbara@bcycle.com](mailto:santabarbara@bcycle.com)



Interested in reading  
this book?  
Contact Dulce!

## Home Front Highlights- Making Home Life Easier



**KEEP IT SIMPLE. KEEP IT  
CONSISTENT.**

### Daily Room Reset

- Make Bed**  
Smooth sheets, fluff pillows.
- Put Clothes Away**  
Hamper dirty, hang/fold clean.
- Clear Surfaces**  
Desk, dresser, nightstand
- Empty Trash**  
Wrappers, receipts, bottles
- Return Items**  
Books, chargers, bags
- Pick Up Floor**  
Shoes, socks, bags; sweep/vacuum
- Wipe Surfaces**  
Dust or clean spills
- Fresh Air**  
Open window 5 minutes
- Tidy Cables**  
Organize tech & cords



### Meal Prep VS Ingredient Prep- Find what works for you!



**Meal Prep:** You complete meals ahead of time.

**Examples:**



5 Containers of chicken, rice, and veggies



Washed / chopped veggies



Breakfast burritos wrapped and frozen



Cooked grains (rice, quinoa)



Past dishes portioned for the week



Roasted proteins (chicken, turkey, sausage)



Sauces pre-made

**Best if you:**



Have a packed week



Want strict portions/ macros



Don't enjoy cooking on weekdays



Get bored easily



Like flexibility



Cook for more than one person with different taste

### The Hybrid (what most people end up loving!)



**Breakfast and Lunch:** Meal Prep ( makes mornings less chaotic and stops you from spending money on lunch!)



**Dinner:** Ingredient Prep (less work to do after a busy day but still gives you choices so you don't get bored of the same meal everyday.)

**Check this out: Breakfast sandwich recipe  
for busy mornings!**



[Click Here](#)