

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Issue 7 • August 2020



Back to School

Back to School for parents and children is a time of anticipation and excitement. A big question parents have right now is how students can go back to school safely during COVID-19, and the transition to distance learning challenges. Following the release of new state guidelines announced on July 17, all Ventura County school districts will begin the new school year using distance learning without bringing students back to their campuses. This creates the added stress for parents and children alike.

Our Community Outreach team used to attend Back to School nights in August, but now these are not happening. Without our engagement with teachers and parents, we lose the one on one contact and opportunities to share our campaigns and publications related to substance use prevention.

We will include “Parent Tips: What You Need to Know” in our newsletters, to help talk to your children about alcohol and drugs.

Our prevention campaigns and websites are featured for sharing with family and friends. Spending more time at home with our families gives us an opportunity to have these conversations and promote healthy habits.

Our Community Services Coordinators are well connected in the community, so take advantage of their expertise and willingness to help. They can help to access substance use treatment services or provide you with prevention tips. If you need more information, feel free to contact us.

Featured Agency: Ventura County Department of Child Support Services

August is Child Support Awareness Month

Every month we feature an agency that is helping the community. We are featuring agencies that are adapting and continuing to reach out during this time of COVID-19.

Child Support Awareness Month is a nationally celebrated campaign aimed to spread awareness about Child Support Services.

This month the Ventura County Department of Child Support services celebrates parents who support their children and the children who benefit from the support of both of their parents. Parents who pay support and parents who receive child support are building healthy foundations to help ensure their children thrive. The Ventura County Department of Child Support Services has programs to help ALL parents.

Learn more:

Ventura County Department of Child Support Services

www.ventura.org/child-support-services

See the August is Child Support Awareness Month 2020 PSA



Ventura County Department of Child Support Services
5171 Verdugo Way, Camarillo CA 93012
(866) 901-3212

WWW.VENTURA.ORG/CHILD-SUPPORT-SERVICES



Message from Alma: Staying Connected

As we start the process of going back to school I remember looking forward to every school year as we prepared our supplies and presentations for our Back to School nights. When Erika Fernandez, our CSC, came on board with our Prevention Services team, I was very happy because we attended more schools in our county. I will miss the face-to-face interaction with parents, students and staff, and connecting with partner agency colleagues.



Our outreach efforts are now through technology, Zoom, phone calls and emails. I know that this is for everyone's well-being and to help keep our community safe. I am hopeful that soon there will be something that will help us be safe from COVID-19. Then we'll all be very happy and grateful for the experiences we went through to get where we are. We will be able to appreciate everything and everyone around us. As we now miss all our colleagues, community and the happiness of staying connected, no matter the medium we use.

I can remember the excitement of my own children growing up and getting ready to start a new school year. Imagine how children got ready in previous years; shopping for their first day of school outfit, hoping to impress a boy or girl they liked. How that brought them happiness because they could socialize and be around friends. Although they knew they would be going to school to learn I think the excitement of being with their peers was a much stronger reason than the academics.

Now more than ever students and their families will need support as they learn to cope with this new norm of distance learning. Remember, stress and anxiety can be triggers for students who may try and experiment with marijuana, vaping or alcohol. Some students have shared in the past that they self-medicate to cope.

Now is the time to talk to our children about alcohol and drugs. Prevention is key. Children do listen to parents. You can see our websites below for more information about our prevention efforts. We are here to help.

Photo: Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinators at work.

Featured Campaign: Let's Talk About Opioids - Grandma Video



Keeping Children Safe

Child-resistant doesn't mean child-proof. Secure your prescription and over-the-counter medications, including medical cannabis, out-of-reach from young children as well as teens. Child-resistant packaging helps but is no guarantee of safety.

Remember:

- Properly dispose of expired and unused medications
- Use special care with medications that look like candy
- Call your local Police Department for safe, confidential drop-off bins

Learn more:

Ventura County Responds, Safety at Home

venturacountyresponds.org/en/safety-at-home

Overdose Prevention

If a loved one or someone you know may be at risk of an overdose, call about getting an Overdose Rescue Kit. If you are eligible for a kit, you can be trained online on how to use naloxone. You will then be instructed on how to pick up a kit by appointment at one of the VCBH locations.

Call about a Rescue Kit at (805) 667-6663.

Naloxone is administered when someone is showing signs of opioid overdose. Naloxone can very quickly restore normal respiration to a person whose breathing has slowed or stopped due to abusing heroin or prescription opioids, or accidentally ingesting too much pain medication.

If we can act early when a person shows signs of an overdose, we can work quickly to help save a life.

See our Naloxone Saves Lives campaign, which aims to reduce the stigma of substance use and the importance of knowing the risks of an overdose.

Learn more:

venturacountyresponds.org/how-to-get-naloxone

To download the NoOD High Risk Card:

venturacountyresponds.org/en/naloxone-faq

Naloxone Saves Lives Campaign

venturacountyresponds.org/en/naloxone-saves-lives



**Could someone
you care about
overdose?**

**Call about a
Rescue Kit:**

1-805-667-6663

Confidential • Free



This week,
naloxone
saved
someone's
wife.

OPIOIDS CAN KILL. NALOXONE SAVES.

PARENT TIPS

Marijuana and the Teen Brain

This is our section on Parent Tips and we will feature a new topic every month.

How does cannabis affect the teenage brain?

- Worse problem solving
- Attention span reduced
- Lower verbal comprehension
- Poorer memory
- Less control of emotions



What You Can Do

- Know the risks. Learn about marijuana and vaping.
- Normalize conversations drugs and alcohol. Try using media examples to provoke a conversation. Finding a way to interact openly is important.
- Talk often and early about the harmful effects of marijuana and the serious impact on learning and success.

Learn more:
Marijuana FactCheck
www.mjfactcheck.org

See Tips for Talking With Your Kids Campaign
habits.vcbh.org

Stay Connected

Prevention Resources Supporting Health - Preventing Harm

If you are looking for resources in the community, check out our websites. We continually add news updates, campaigns, publications and more on our websites.

- **Ventura County Responds**

Prescription painkiller and heroin abuse has created a public health crisis. This website tracks what is being done in Ventura County to address the opioid crisis and provides the latest information for prescribers and community members. Find resources for preventing overdose, getting help, and medication safety at home.

venturacountyresponds.org

- **Marijuana FactCheck**

Stay up to date with cannabis and our kids' health and safety. Here you will find a compilation of the latest findings and research. We encourage you to visit this site to explore, to share and to have the facts - allowing you to best make the decisions possible for you and your family.

www.mjfactcheck.org

- **Vaping FactCheck**

What you need to know about teens & vaping. Latest news & updates regarding the vaping health alert and local policy. Includes information and resources for parents, as well as contact information for vaping cessation programs.

www.vapingfactcheckvc.org

- **Ventura County Limits**

We are involved in outreach in our communities, educating and increasing awareness about the risks and realities of alcohol and drug misuse and abuse. Read about our Prevention Services initiatives and our work in Ventura County.

www.venturacountylimits.org

- **Social Determinants of Health**

Resources for promoting healthy communities, where everyone has the opportunity to live a healthier life, no matter who we are, where we live, or how much money we make.

www.healthequityvc.org

- **Follow us on Social Media**

www.facebook.com/venturacountylimits

twitter.com/vclimits

- **Coping During Coronavirus, Wellness Every Day**

www.wellnesseveryday.org/coping-during-coronavirus

If You Need Help:

If you believe you or a family member may be struggling with addiction, talk to your healthcare provider or call the confidential Access Line 24/7: 1-844-385-9200.

> [Learn about Substance Use Treatment Services.](#)

Share your Photos

Send us photos of Ventura County scenes and we'll share in future newsletters. As the county continues to open, we want to capture the changing landscape of our communities.

Photos by Alma Ixta: Sespe Elementary School, Fillmore Middle School, Fillmore; Juan Lagunas Soria School, Oxnard





Contact Us

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Erika Fernandez Erika.Fernandez@ventura.org

It's a boy!! Erika is on maternity leave and will be back in October.

We will be interviewing a guest for future issues. Let me know if you want be interviewed about your work.

STAY CONNECTED

