

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Issue 10 • September 2020



The Power of Hope

I recently bought a pair of rain boots. They are super heavy, well insulated and high on my calves. Perfect for puddles. The purchase made me happy, and I enjoyed my moment of satisfaction. It was an impulsive buy and I convinced myself they were necessary. It was a moment I needed. But then I stepped back and realized more about my motivation. It wasn't about rain; it was more about hope. Hope that it will rain one day, hope that I have things to look forward to. I marveled at the small change in my thinking even if for a moment; the hope that life will return to normal. This is the power of hope, and the importance of resilience. It is the impetus for feeling a sense of purpose, how simple it may be.

So much is happening daily now. Remote learning is underway in our schools. People are slowly going out more. Masks and social distancing are still the norm. We endured the heat and reality of the fires this month. Autumn is here and we look forward to the cool weather and settling into our new routines. We emphasize the importance of finding help, resources and connections in the community during times of change, especially during this "new normal." We are not seeing you at events in the community but

we continue to share campaigns, publications and our latest prevention efforts.

It is always okay to buy the boots, even though it isn't raining. There still may be a time.

— Janet Kaplan, Senior Program Administrator, Prevention Services

Featured Agency: Saving Lives Camarillo

Rx Safety at Home

Every issue we feature stories of individuals and agencies that are making a difference in their communities during this time of COVID-19.



Operating since 2009, the mission of Saving Lives Camarillo (SLC) is to reduce alcohol and drug use among Camarillo youth and promote Rx drug safety and disposal for Camarillo residents. The coalition educates seniors and parents about the misuse of prescription drugs, potential theft and security of medications, and Rx safe disposal. Since COVID-19, the coalition has continued to provide education for the community with a door hanger and medication lock box campaign.

A group of dedicated student volunteers will deliver 800 door hangers to senior housing facilities by end of September. SLC developed the Lock Box Campaign PSA in collaboration with [BRITE](#) to inform parents of the importance of locking up their prescription medications.

Learn more:

Saving Lives Camarillo

savinglivescamarillo.net/lock-box-campaign

Ventura County Responds

venturacountyresponds.org/en/medication-disposal



Saving Lives Camarillo, Lock Box PSA

**Unused or expired medicines?
Use this bag to drop them off.**

**¿Tiene medicinas vencidas o sin usar?
Use esta bolsa para venirlas a dejar.**



- ✓ Prescription medications
Medicamentos recetados
- ✓ Over-the counter medications
Medicamentos sin receta
- ✓ Pet medicines
Medicamentos para mascotas
- ✗ NO CONTAINERS –
empty into this bag
NO CONTENEDORES –
colóquelos en esta bolsa
- ✗ No liquids
No líquidos
- ✗ No syringes
No jeringas



FIND DISPOSAL BIN LOCATIONS:
www.VenturaCountyResponds.org

**UBIQUE LOS CONTENEDORES
DE ELIMINACIÓN:**
www.VenturaCountyResponds.org/es



**SAFE
SEGURO**



**EASY
FÁCIL**



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Rx Disposal Bags & Door Hanger Campaign

Message from Alma: It's Hot Outside!

Playing Inside

There is still so much going on around our communities, not only with COVID but the fires and the heat waves we've been getting.

The weather has impacted our daily routines as we cannot be outdoors because it's so hot outside. It also affects our moods, health and the way we deal with

things. With the extreme heat, our children cannot run outside to release their energy as much and we need to get creative with indoor activities. It is important to find healthy ways of coping and having fun with our families.

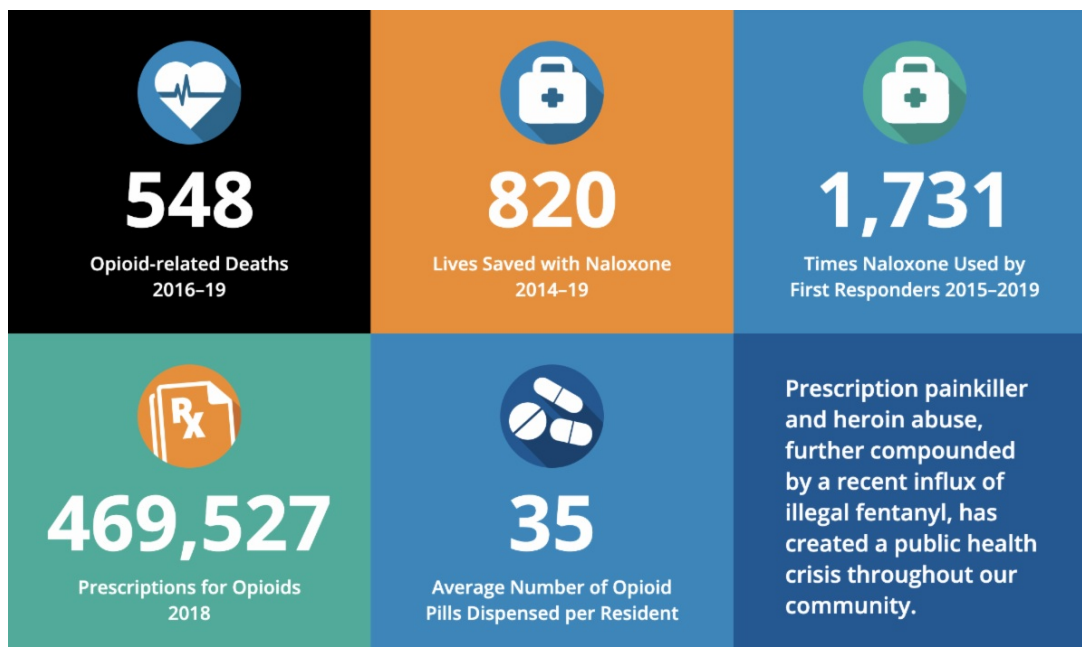
Related to this, it has been shown that alcohol use has increased since COVID began. Let's take this as a reminder about self-care and doing things that help us be well. Breathing exercises have helped me. It is important to remember that the heat and the fires are temporary, but our new ways of coping will stay with us and become healthy habits.



Photo: Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinators, pre-COVID-19.

Ventura County Launches Opioid Data Dashboard

Fewer Overdoses and Increased Access to Care Are Priorities



Ventura County agencies are working together to reduce illicit opioid supply, decrease opioid demand, and save lives. By sharing and comparing data, we can leverage information, analyze trends, and target resources to respond to this evolving public health

crisis.

On September 1st, The Ventura County Behavioral Health Department (VCBH) launched a public-facing data dashboard that provides the community with important statistics around opioid-involved drug use. The public can access this user-friendly dashboard by visiting www.coastventuracounty.org.

"Local trends and resources, including addiction treatment locations, prescription drug drop-off locations, and overdose prevention strategies are featured. This is a one-stop site."

— Dr. Loretta Denering, Chief, Substance Use Services Division

As a response to the opioid crisis, VCBH has prioritized increased access to care for opioid users. In October of 2018, VCBH was awarded a federal grant, that in collaboration with multiple agencies, including Public Health, Emergency Medical Services, Ambulatory Care, Sheriff's Office and the Medical Examiner's Office, has allowed for more innovative ways to address the crisis. One of the grant deliverables was to create this dashboard for the community, in addition to tracking the nature and extent of the crisis locally, as well as providing more services to the public, especially those with an opioid use disorder.

VCBH provides a continuum of care for substance use and addiction problems, with six locations and access to a range of treatment services for achieving and maintaining recovery.

"Getting help for addiction starts with taking fifteen minutes to call the Access Line, or visiting our dashboard. We want people to get to the help they need."

— Dr. Sevet Johnson, Director, Ventura County Behavioral Health

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

Learn more:

www.CoastVenturaCounty.org

www.VenturaCountyResponds.org

Promotion Resources

www.coastventuracounty.org/media

Featured Campaign: Teens, Vaping & COVID-19

Now is the time to be
someone who NEVER VAPES



Vaping puts teens and young adults at *much* higher risk of COVID-19

- A Stanford University study found that young people who have ever vaped are at **5X higher risk** for being diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Youth believe their age protects them from COVID-19, but data show this is not true for those who vape.

Why teens and young adults?

- Sharing vapes with friends can increase infection rate
- COVID-19 can spread by hand-to-mouth touching during vaping
- Youth who vape in a group usually don't distance or wear masks
- Vaping or smoking weakens and scars lungs and may lower resistance
- Vape aerosol may have virus-containing droplets

Research also shows:

- Users of vapes and cigarettes are **7X more likely** to be diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Vapers are also at risk for EVALI and other harmful lung diseases

Now is the time to be someone who NEVER VAPES

How to Quit Vaping

- teen.smokefree.gov/quit-vaping/how-to-quit-vaping
- or download the app: teen.smokefree.gov/become-smokefree/quitstart-app

Davies, N.G., Klepac, P., Liu, Y. et al. Age-dependent effects in the transmission and control of COVID-19 epidemics. Nat Med 26, 1205-1211 (2020).

Gaiha, S. M., Cheng, J., & Halpern-Felsher, B. (2020). Association Between Youth Smoking, Electronic Cigarette Use, and Coronavirus Disease 2019. Journal of Adolescent Health.

Stay Connected - It's Easy

If you are looking for resources in the community, check out our websites. We continually add news, tips, latest research, blogs, publications and more.

Ventura County Responds
venturacountyresponds.org

Marijuana FactCheck
www.mjfactcheck.org

Vaping FactCheck
www.vapingfactcheckvc.org

Ventura County Limits
www.venturacountylimits.org

Social Determinants of Health
www.healthequityvc.org

Follow us on Social Media
www.facebook.com/venturacountylimits
twitter.com/vclimits

Finding Balance in the "New Normal"
www.wellnesseveryday.org/news

Coping During Coronavirus, Wellness Every Day
www.wellnesseveryday.org/coping-during-coronavirus

Need Help?

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

> Learn about Substance Use Treatment Services.

Upcoming Events - Join In

We will keep you posted on upcoming events in each newsletter. If your agency is planning any online meetings, please send to us so we can post this.

VC-ASH Meeting, Public Health

September 24, 2020

Contact: Vicky Gonzales, Vicky.Gonzales@ventura.org

Oxnard Police Department Community Outreach Coordinators Meeting, via Zoom

October 7, 2020, 10:30am-12pm

Contact: Teresa Telles, teresa.telles@oxnardpd.org

Circle of Care Meeting, via Zoom

October 7, 2020, 1:00-2:00pm

Contact: info@myonestep.org

Share your Photos

Send us photos of Ventura County scenes and we'll share in future newsletters. As the county continues to adapt, we want to capture the changing landscape of our communities. We will give you credit too!

Photos by Alma: Fillmore restaurant outdoor dining; park.





About

Supporting Health – Preventing Harm

Prevention Services works upstream to reduce alcohol and drug-related problems in our community. Initiatives are aimed at limiting harms related to impaired driving; underage and binge drinking; marijuana and vaping, especially as it relates to harms to youth; prescription drug abuse; and addressing health disparities among vulnerable populations. A primary goal is to delay the onset of first use of alcohol and or other drugs by youth. We collaborate with schools, parent groups, government agencies, medical partners, law enforcement, community-based organizations and more.

Contact Us

Alma Ixta Alma.Ixta@ventura.org

Erika Fernandez Erika.Fernandez@ventura.org

Erika is on leave through October.

Share your stories with us. Want us to feature you and your work in the community? Send an email to Alma!

STAY CONNECTED

