

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Issue 37 • Summer 2023



**Community Conversations:
New Podcast Series**

New Podcast Series



Community Conversations

Nueva Serie de Podcast



Acompáñame Plática con Café

Our community is facing ever-shifting drug trends that may harm those we care about. We sit down to review commonly asked questions and how best we can respond as a community. Alma and Erika discuss the risks and harms of fentanyl and fake pills in our community. Topics include: recognizing an overdose; how to respond to an overdose, including the use of naloxone; and how to stay safe from fentanyl and fake pills. See the conversations below and stay informed! Our next podcast series in the fall will focus on marijuana and vaping risks to

youth. Stay tuned!

Click below to view featured clips or for the full version.

English

- [Community Conversations - Fentanyl and Fake Pills](#)
- [Short clip: Overdose - It can happen to anyone](#)



Spanish

- [Plática con café - Fentanilo y Opioides](#)
- [Video corto: ¿Qué es una sobredosis?](#)





Out & About

Community Outreach Happenings







By Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinators

Community outreach involves being in the community and educating people about the negative effects of alcohol and drug use. Informing families about the risks of marijuana, vaping, opioids, fentanyl, meth, and alcohol helps to prevent and reduce alcohol and drug-related issues across Ventura County. We strive to develop relationships with partner organizations and members in the community for collaboration and support regarding substance use prevention.

During the past few months, we attended and participated in many outreach events, meetings and offered presentations. We gave presentations on opioids and vaping at **Oceanview School District**, **Oxnard Unified School District**, **Mexican Consulate**, **De Anza Middle School**, **Santa Paula Senior Center**, **Mar Vista Elementary School**, **Migrant Head Start Program**, **Kamala School**, **Fillmore Unified School District**, for just a few. Here are some of the spring highlights:

From Alma Ixta:

In April we had several school and college event invitations. I attended **Ventura College's Take It Slow Substance Use Safety Fair**, where we were able to provide information, education, and overdose rescue kits to many students in attendance through our overdose prevention program. The **Diversity in Culture Resource Fair** was very well attended and there were a lot more vendors and people interested in the event as Dolores Huerta was the special guest of this event. We also attended a few of the open house events for schools from **Ocean View School District** where parent participation was great. Parents were glad to see different agencies present and grateful that we were

there with our prevention information. Parents are scared about what they're hearing in the news about fentanyl and overdose risks in the community. We participated in two events at the **Mexican Consulate**, and they are always pleased to have us there.

In May, we started the month with a parent presentation to **Oceanview School District**. The staff from the district have been very active in bringing awareness to their families about drug and alcohol prevention. I also attended the remainder of open house events for **Ocean View School District**. I attended two **resource fairs for Moorpark High School**, one was for students and staff and the evening one was for parents and the community. I also presented for **Lemonwood Elementary School's ELAC** parents on fentanyl and vaping. I attended outreach events at the Mexican Consulate, the city of Fillmore, **Oxnard College Swapmeet Justice** monthly event, **Senior Wellness Resource Fair**, **School Wellness fairs at De Anza Middle School**, **Fillmore Middle School** and the **Mental Health Women's Conference & Resource Fair in Santa Paula**, with great success with over 180 participants.

June started to slow down with events, but I was still requested to present for **Mar Vista Elementary and Migrant Head Start Program** parents. I attended the **Farmworkers Resource Fair in Oxnard** and the **Annual Juneteenth PRIDE event in Santa Paula** as well as monthly outreach participation at the **Mexican Consulate**.

It's been great being out in the community and presenting to parents at the different schools in our county and seeing parents face to face. I enjoy seeing their eyes light up when they learn something new, different ways to help their kids and be able to answer so many questions regarding substance use concerns. I'm looking forward to the next quarter of Prevention work!

From Erika Fernandez:

On April 21st, I participated in the **Rio Del Valle Middle School College & Career Fair**. This is an annual event for students during their lunch time where they can interact with colleges, careers, and community resources that might spark their interest and add to their knowledge. Our attendance at this event was important because substance use prevention and education during middle school is crucial. The outdoor event was a success, we had a lot of students come up to the table and I had the opportunity to share with them our resources and talk to them about the dangers of vaping, fentanyl, and fake pills. Many students had questions about marijuana and vaping. I also had the opportunity to share our educational materials, prevention and treatment resources with teachers and staff. It was great to be able to make new connections and possible future collaborations in the community.

On May 4th, I participated in the **Empower Up 2023** event that took place in Thousand Oaks at **California Lutheran University**. This event is focused on empowering the mental health of young people in our community through a day consisting of youth keynote speakers, artistic performances, and connections with each other. The attendees were

mostly high school youth accompanied by a few school staff, teachers, and/or administrators. We had a table with our substance use prevention and treatment resources with an emphasis on marijuana, vaping, fentanyl, and fake pills. It was a great event to be able to meet other organizations that are also working towards helping and keeping youth safe and healthy.

Learn more:

www.venturacountylimits.org



Campaign Spotlight: Speak Up on Fentanyl



Alza la voz sobre el fentanilo



People are dying every day. Enough is enough!

Learn more:

[Fentanyl is Forever](#)

[El Fentanilo es para Siempre](#)



Industry Partners: News & Resources

Truth Initiative - New Study

[“Tobacco-free nicotine” labels for e-cigarettes increase purchase intentions among teen e-cigarette users](#)

Truth Initiative, June 15, 2023

Truth Initiative is America's largest nonprofit public health organization committed to making tobacco. Many e-cigarettes are now advertised as containing “tobacco-free nicotine” because they contain synthetic nicotine rather than nicotine derived from tobacco, a claim that is causing confusion and can imply lower risk. Nicotine, regardless of its source, has addictive properties.

A new study published in Tobacco Control finds that labeling e-cigarettes with “tobacco-free nicotine” increases teenage e-cigarette users’ intentions to purchase e-cigarettes. The study finds that most U.S. teens don’t know where the nicotine in e-cigarettes comes from.

Findings underscore the need for tighter regulation on synthetic nicotine marketing claims.

Many e-cigarette manufacturers switched to synthetic nicotine to avoid FDA regulation, until Congress gave it authority to regulate all nicotine products regardless of their nicotine source in 2022. To date, the FDA has not authorized the marketing of any synthetic nicotine e-cigarettes, making any products on the market today that contain synthetic nicotine illegal.

“Tobacco-free nicotine” labels increase intentions to purchase e-cigarettes. The language that tobacco companies use to promote their products can impact youth nicotine use.

Learn more:
[Truth Initiative](#)

Industry Partners: News & Resources

SAMHSA New Publications



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Alcohol Use Among Girls and Young Women: A WORRYING TREND

In the past boys were thought to be more likely to drink alcohol than girls, but the reality is that, in recent years, this thinking is no longer true.¹ Additionally, data shows that 21 percent of girls ages 12 to 20 were alcohol in 2021, compared to 26 percent of boys that age. And more girls and young women reported past-month alcohol use than boys and young men that year too.²

Why are more girls drinking alcohol than boys? Here are some facts that organizations and those working in prevention should know as they design strategies to curb harmful drinking behaviors among girls and young women.

Mental Health Affects Underage Drinking

Evidence suggests that adolescents with anxiety and depression are increasing among adolescents, particularly among women. Girls and young women can be more susceptible to internalizing stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. This, in turn, may make them more likely to drink alcohol to cope. In fact, even girls have high levels of anxiety. They are more likely than boys to use alcohol, and to do so at earlier ages. Helping girls and young women handle difficult emotions in healthy ways may help them reduce their consumption of alcohol or avoid it altogether.^{3,4}

Because of the association between underage drinking and mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety, girls and young women who have these challenges need strong underage drinking prevention support coupled with general mental health support.

Alcohol Increases the Risk of Certain Health Problems

Girls and young women differ biologically from boys and young men. Females tend to have less water in their bodies than males of the same weight, so the alcohol they drink becomes more concentrated in their blood, where it then travels to the brain.⁵ Other gender-specific physical risks faced by girls and young women who use alcohol include:

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Underage Drinking: Myths vs. Facts

This fact sheet is written specifically for preteens and teens. It compares the myths with the facts about alcohol use among youth and the effects of alcohol use. This fact sheet can help parents and prevention professionals start conversations about underage drinking and alcohol misuse.

Alcohol Use Among Girls and Young Women: A Worrying Trend

This fact sheet provides data about trending alcohol use among girls and young women.

Learn more:

www.samhsa.gov



Calendar

Community Meetings

- **Circle of Care Monthly Meeting**

1st Wednesday of every month at 1:00 PM

Contact: mzumaya@myonestep.org

- **Oxnard Police Department Outreach Coordinator Meeting**

1st Wednesday of every month at 10:30 AM

Contact: teresa.telles@oxnardpd.org

- **Santa Paula Social Services Coalition Meeting**
3rd Thursday of every month at 2:00 PM
Contact: SPSocialServiceCoalition@gmail.com

- **Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) Prevention Committee Meeting**
4th Tuesday at 3:15 PM. These meetings are open to the public.
Contact: [BHAB Prevention Committee](#)



Helpful Resources



Stay in touch with our prevention efforts on our websites. See our latest campaigns!

Websites

- [Ventura County Limits](#)
- [Ventura County Responds](#)
- [COAST Ventura County](#)
- [Social Determinants of Health](#)
- [Vaping FactCheck Ventura County](#)
- [Marijuana FactCheck](#)

Campaigns

- [Just Not Worth It Campaign](#)
 - [Meth - Don't Buy the Lie Campaign](#)
 - [Fentanyl is Forever Campaign](#)
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Contact Us



Interested in presentations or publications to share with your communities? Contact Us!

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STAY CONNECTED



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