

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Issue 35 • January 2023



Community Conversations: New Video Podcast Series

This is the first video in our newly launched video podcast series featuring Alma and Erika, Community Services Coordinators, talking about the risks of substance use. Check out our first episode and feel to contact us about sharing our videos with your community. Join us in our chat and have a cup of coffee with us.

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

English

- [Community Conversations - Fentanyl and Fake Pills](#)
- [Alma's story](#)



Spanish

- [Plática con café - Fentanilo y Opioides](#)
- [La historia de Alma](#)



Reflecting Back & Looking Ahead

Relationships & Collaboration

We published our first newsletter in May 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic. By July 2022, we began to participate in community events in person, and by the end of December, we were up to speed giving presentations at schools, meeting parents and students and attending health fairs. Over the past six months we attended and presented at over 100 community events.

Our Community Services Coordinators play an important role in our department. In SUS Prevention Services, under the broad umbrella of Community Health Promotion, our community outreach involves being in the community and educating people about the negative effects of alcohol and drug use. We educate parents about the risks of marijuana, vaping, opioids, fentanyl, meth, and underage drinking, and help to raise awareness to prevent and reduce alcohol and drug-related issues across Ventura County.

We appreciate our relationships with partner organizations and members in the community and look forward to our collaboration in the coming year!



Fentanyl is Forever Campaign - The College Buddy



"Somebody gave my friend a pill at a party and he took it. There was fentanyl in it, and he died right there."

Any pill or powder you get on the street may have fentanyl in it. All it takes to die is a few grains. If you take someone else's word that a drug is safe, they probably did too.

Fentanyl gives no warnings. It has no smell, no special color. It has been showing up in other drugs on the street and at parties. Whether it's your first time or your tenth time, it can too easily become your last time.

The goals of the campaign are to increase awareness of fentanyl risks and its impact on communities, and to decrease the stigma related to talking about substance misuse and addiction. It complements messaging related to naloxone preparedness and substance use disorder treatment.

Learn more:

Campaign Websites

www.FentanylVenturaCounty.org - English

www.FentaniloVentura.com - Spanish

Ventura County Responds

www.venturacountyresponds.org/preventing-overdose



Out & About

Community Outreach Happenings





By Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinator

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 partnered with the Oxnard School District, Santa Paula Social Services Coalition, Ventura County Office of Education, Fillmore High School, MICOP, and more.

On October 15th, I attended the Health and Wellness Awareness Health Fair at the Ventura College Market Place. This event was organized by Promotoras y Promotores Foundation. There were about 28 community agencies that attended this event and about 150 persons were reached and learned about the resources available. The day started with the threat of rain, but this did not stop most of the community organizations and community members to show up.

We shared information on the risks of substance use and the treatment services offered. I talked to parents about the risks and dangers of substance use, including opioids, fentanyl, vaping, marijuana, and meth, and the importance of prevention and talking with your kids. A mother shared her story with me about her journey dealing with her daughter using drugs and how VCBH has helped with her recovery. The event was a great success.

On December 8th, I gave a presentation in Spanish for parents of the Ventura Unified School District on fentanyl risks. Many parents showed up and were actively engaged in the presentation. I talked about opioids, fake pills, medication safety, tips for talking with your kids about vaping, drugs and alcohol and VCBH treatment services. I provided them with tips and resources to prevent drug use. The parents

had so many questions and shared their concerns and personal experiences. The presentation went longer than expected; nonetheless, it was great, and I loved the passion and willingness to learn that the parents showed.

Learn more:

habits.vcbh.org/kids

www.venturacountylimits.org



A Shout out to our Prevention Contractors

A Commitment to Prevention

- BRITE (Building Resilience & Inclusion Through Engagement)
 - Evalcorp Research & Consulting
 - Give an Hour California
 - Idea Engineering
 - Leslie Zellers, JD
 - Redleaf Resources
 - Saving Lives Camarillo
 - Ventura County Office of Education
 - Ventura Unified School District
-



Spotlight on Marijuana Edibles

Did you Know?
Answer These Questions About Edibles



By Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinator

What are marijuana edibles?

Edibles, made with marijuana leaves or higher potency cannabis extracts, are a popular, less-detectable alternative to smoking marijuana. They may look like common baked goods, candies, and beverages, and are often designed in a way that appeals to youth. Package labeling may indicate THC-laden contents, but when unwrapped the product may look like and be mistaken for normal food.

Let's test your knowledge:

- **True or False:** The effects of edibles are different from smoking marijuana.
- **True or False:** Marijuana edibles can send a child to the ER.
- **True or False:** The effects of ingesting cannabis last longer than inhaling marijuana.

The effects of eating or drinking edibles are different from smoking marijuana. How someone will react to edibles depends on the type and strength of the edibles, the person's body mass, chemistry, metabolism, and the amount consumed. When people smoke marijuana, they feel the effect almost right away. When a person starts to feel the effects, they may stop smoking, which can control the dose. However, when people eat or drink marijuana, their bodies take longer to digest and break it down before they feel the effects. By the time they feel "high," it's too late to control the dose, which makes it common for a person to accidentally eat or drink a higher dose of THC than planned.

Accidental consumption of marijuana has led to an increase in emergency room visits by children in many places. After recreational marijuana stores opened, ER visits and poison-control calls for kids also increased and many cases involved kids accidentally eating marijuana edibles.

The effects of ingesting cannabis last longer compared to when

cannabis is smoked or vaped. The effects can last up to 12 hours, with residual effects lasting up to 24 hours; because, it takes a long time for your body to absorb the THC from edible cannabis, the THC is present in your body for longer than after smoking or vaping cannabis.
(All are true)

Learn more:

www.mjfactcheck.org



Just for Fun

Meet Betty the Scottie Dog!
Our Newest Pawsome Member of our Team



Calendar

Monthly Community Meetings

Circle of Care Monthly Meeting

1st Wednesday of every month at 1:00 PM

Contact: Ana Rosa Rizo-Centino, anarosa@myonestep.org

Oxnard Police Department Outreach Coordinator Meeting

1st Wednesday of every month at 10:30 AM

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

Community Insight Coalition Meeting, GCHP

1st Thursday of every month at 10:00 AM

Contact: CommunityRelations@goldchp.org

Santa Paula Social Services Coalition Meeting

3rd Thursday of every month at 2:00 PM

Contact: SPSocialServiceCoalition@gmail.com



Helpful Resources

Ventura County Limits

www.venturacountylimits.org

Ventura County Behavioral Health

vcbh.org



Contact Us

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

Community Services Coordinators:

Erika Fernandez

Erika.Fernandez@ventura.org

Alma Ixta Alma.Ixta@ventura.org



STAY CONNECTED



Ventura County Behavioral Health | 1911 Williams Drive, Oxnard, CA 93036

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