

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Issue 3 • June 2020



Connecting with our Community Making a Difference

During the past few months, social distancing and sheltering in place became our new normal. We have been challenged by how to connect with each other during this time. Our focus has been rethinking how to stay in touch without seeing you in person at our events. Virtual outreach is a challenge but many in the community have found ways to stay connected. We all have had to be creative and adaptable in this situation. Our newsletter is one of our ways to let you know we are here, we are still doing community work, and we want to stay engaged now and in the future.

Talking about substance use and mental health risks is especially important now and we are helping to link people with resources. Please continue to contact us through email, online meetings and our websites. This is a new way for us to stay in touch, and for you to have a way to share your stories and photos with us.

The words from our team are very personal. We hope that sharing our own experiences during this unprecedented time resonates with you and helps bring to light the struggles we face together.

What we are doing:

- Sharing through social media channels
- Listing your virtual meetings

- Sending bi-monthly newsletters
- Posting your stories on our websites
- Sharing videos for parents and educators

Featured Agency

City of Oxnard Housing Authority

Hello, my name is Rose Banuelos, Resident Services Coordinator for the City of Oxnard Housing Authority. During these trying times, I have continued to stay in the workforce assisting our communities and our public housing residents and senior population. We were able to supply the community with food and resources during this COVID-19. With the assistance of Food Share we were able to supply our two downtown senior buildings with monthly Senior food kits and a box of fresh vegetables from Totally Local VC and the Local Love Project.

In the community of La Colonia, we were able to do two large drive through food pantries which served over 1,000 families and had weekly food distribution for over 800 families. The Housing Authority also assisted Oxnard residents and small businesses needing assistance with their unemployment applications during COVID-19.

We continue assisting communities with Zoom support groups or meetings and with the collaboration of community-based organizations, we will continue to assist with the needs of our low-income/disadvantaged population.

If you would like more information, please contact me at rose.banuelos@oxnard.org

Learn more at www.oxnard.org/city-department/housing







Message from Alma

In the last few weeks we have been hearing about different issues in our communities and in our own personal lives. I know for me it has been very difficult to continue going through my life in the new “normal” as I can imagine it has been for everyone else.

Then I asked myself, if I am struggling and having a hard time adapting and dealing with everything going on, can you imagine how low-income families, immigrant families, people who are homeless, and individuals with mental health or addiction problems are suffering right now?



This made me realize and think about how much more we will need to do in our communities moving forward to help our vulnerable populations get through all these obstacles with the new “normal”. I have realized that everyone’s perspective during COVID-19 is very different. We all have our own reality to live so we must all be sensitive to everyone’s way of dealing with their own reality. Not everyone can work from home, has enough money to fill their pantry with food so they can stay at home, or has family for support. All we can do is try our best to meet our community members where they’re at.

Mental health issues also hit home in my family. I know that many

are dealing with mental health and substance use issues now. It is hard to see loved ones suffering with mental health issues, fear and depression during these times. We need a lot of compassion and patience to help. That's why it is so important to stay informed about all the different resources and help that is available during these trying times. It not only impacts others, but these struggles exist in our own families.

People are also drinking alcohol and using more substances because their triggers are high right now during this vulnerable time. If you have a loved one in need of any of our [substance use treatment services](#) please reach out to us. We are here to help get our community back on their feet and get through these difficult times. I feel very fortunate to be able to work with so many partner agencies that have the same vision as us which is to help our community of Ventura County.

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

Building Healthy Habits

Ventura County Behavioral Health Launched the “Healthy Habits” and “How Are We Coping” Campaigns to promote wellness and address mental health and substance use issues during this time of COVID-19.

The “Healthy Habits” campaign launched in early April, as a digital messaging campaign of wellness that rolled out countywide. Facing the COVID-19 emergency and Safer-At-Home orders, messaging to the community about increased risks of developing unhealthy habits is urgently needed. The “Healthy Habits” campaign is about the risks of substance use and mental health issues during this time and wellness for all who live in Ventura County.

The “How Are We Coping?” campaign focuses on risks of substance misuse and addiction, with a message of “are you concerned about someone you care about.” The ads are both in English and Spanish.

See the campaigns:
habits.vcbh.org
habititos.vcbh.org

Is your coping habit...



another
drink

¿Se está convirtiendo tu
hábito de afrontamiento...



otra
bebida

Featured Agency

Ventura County Sheriff's Office

Through the Rx and Heroin Workgroup, Ventura County Behavioral Health and the Ventura County Sheriff's Office collaborate to offer overdose rescue and treatment information to inmates, families, and visitors.

Learn more:

venturacountyresponds.org/enforcement-and-security



You can save a life.
Call about a Rescue Kit.
1-805-667-NO-OD
Confidential • Free



Message from Erika

Pregnancy is an exciting time, but also stressful and full of uncertainty. We all know people who are dealing with fear and anxiety during this time. I was 21 weeks pregnant when the initial stay at home order was set, and am currently 33 weeks pregnant. Every pregnancy is different but this one has its own unique challenges. It came with a roller coaster of emotions. I was excited for my 3rd pregnancy; my youngest is about to be 5-years old, so it is like starting all over again. I had the perfect workout plan, I was going to have a baby shower, I bought cute maternity work clothes, I was prepared and it was going to be the perfect pregnancy.

Then this pandemic hit. At first, I thought to myself, this is great I will have a couple of weeks to relax at home with my nausea and morning sickness and hang out with the kids away from our daily busy lives. It was the opposite. I couldn't go grocery shopping because the stores had lines out the doors and there was no food on the shelves. I was overwhelmed and stressed. I began to work from home and home-school my ten-year-old, with no child care and while dealing with normal pregnancy symptoms.

During this time, I sought out support from medical professionals and family, who were there to listen to my concerns and support me. It helped to stop for a second and take some time for myself: a long shower, a walk around the block, or a 10-minute nap. I learned new coping skills, such as watching my diet, and decreasing my social media use.

The CDC states that although there are currently no data showing that COVID-19 affects pregnant people differently than others, we do know that pregnant people are at greater risk of getting sick from other respiratory viruses than people who are not pregnant. Therefore, if you are pregnant, be mindful about reducing your risk of getting sick. You can also teach your children everyday

steps (such as proper handwashing) to stay healthy.

I don't know how COVID-19 will affect my pregnancy, but I am learning how to cope, feeling more calm and living one day at a time. I have included some resources to learn more about COVID-19 and pregnancy, and how to find resources to get help.

Healthy Pregnancy Ventura County
healthypregnancyvc.org

[If You Are Pregnant, Breastfeeding, or Caring for Young Children, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov/pregnancy/index.html)

Featured Website

If you are looking for resources in the community, please take a look at these websites. There are more resources available in Ventura County than most people realize. We continually add news updates, campaigns, publications and more, so check back regularly.



Ventura County Responds
www.venturacountyresponds.org

Marijuana FactCheck
www.mjfactcheck.org

Vaping FactCheck
www.vapingfactcheckvc.org

Ventura County Behavioral Health
www.vcbh.org

Social Determinants of Health
www.healthequityvc.org

Resources

Building Healthy Habits - How are we coping?
habits.vcbh.org
habitos.vcbh.org

For help to stop vaping call 805-201-STOP

For Substance Use Treatment Services call Ventura County
Access Line at 1-844-385-9200

Ventura County Coronavirus Information

www.vcemergency.com

Learn how to cope during coronavirus

www.wellnesseveryday.org/coping-during-coronavirus

Substance Use Resources

vcbh.org/en/information-resources/substance-use-resources

Ventura County Human Services Agency

www.ventura.org/human-services-agency

Upcoming Events

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

Oxnard Police Department Community Outreach Meeting, June 10, 10:30-12:00pm, teresa.telles@oxnardpd.org

Circle of Care Meeting, June 3, 1:00-2:00pm, kate@myonestep.org. www.onestepalavez.org

Smoke-Free Multi Unit Housing Meeting, June 4, 11:00-12:00pm, Shar.Busch@Ventura.org or (805)981-6644

Share your Photos

Send us photos of Ventura County scenes (be sure to get permission if people's faces are in the images) and we'll share in future newsletters.

Photos: Costco social distancing line by Roland Roberts.

Signage in Thousand Oaks: Thousand Oaks Library, Wildwood Regional Park, 99 Cents Store, Los Robles Hospital by Alma Ixta.





Contact Us

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STAY CONNECTED

