

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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Featured Video Let's Talk About Opioids - The Conversation



See our campaign addressing the importance of learning the risks of prescription opioids, and getting in the habit about taking with your doctor. We will continue to feature our awareness campaigns about prescription drug prevention in future newsletters.

Some people might think prescription opioids are safer than alcohol or illegal drugs, but they can carry risks and side effects. Talk with your doctor about your concerns and make informed decisions about pain management together. Prescription opioids are one of the many options for reducing severe pain. Ask your doctor these questions to fully understand both the benefits and risks of prescription opioids.

Learn more:

Ventura County Responds

www.venturacountyresponds.org/preventing-overdose

Out & About In the Community



By Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinators

In October, we attended the Family Resource Fair by Promotores de Justicia in Santa Paula, Gold Coast Health Fair at Lemonwood Park in Oxnard, and the Oxnard High School Red Ribbon Week Wellness Fair. It was really wonderful to be in the community offering our Prevention Services information and getting to know everyone.

We presented on overdose prevention at Cabrillo Economic Development in Simi Valley, and to parents of Balboa Middle

School. We collaborated with BRITE to provide a vaping presentation in Spanish for the parents of the Fillmore Unified School District.

Photo: Red Ribbon Week at Oxnard High School

In the News: DEA Issues Public Safety Alert On Sharp Increase In Fake Prescription Pills Containing Fentanyl And Meth



DEA Warns that International and Domestic Criminal Drug Networks are Flooding the United States with Lethal Counterfeit Pills

September 27, 2021

The Drug Enforcement Administration issued a Public Safety Alert warning Americans of the alarming increase in the lethality and availability of fake prescription pills containing fentanyl and methamphetamine. DEA's Public Safety Alert seeks to raise public awareness of a significant nationwide surge in counterfeit pills that are mass-produced by criminal drug networks in labs, deceptively marketed as legitimate prescription pills, and are killing unsuspecting Americans at an unprecedented rate.

These counterfeit pills have been seized by DEA in every U.S. state in unprecedented quantities. More than 9.5 million counterfeit pills were seized so far this year, which is more than

**Overdoses are increasing.
Fentanyl may be in any street drug.**

Know the signs of overdose

- Breathing slowly or not at all
- Unresponsive
- **Call 911 immediately**
- **Give naloxone/Narcan®**

Could someone you care about be at risk?

- Always carry naloxone/Narcan®
- Call for a free confidential rescue kit: 1-805-667-6663

NO OD Help for Addiction
Access Line: 1-844-385-9200
Toll-free • Confidential • 24/7

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the last two years combined. DEA laboratory testing reveals a dramatic rise in the number of counterfeit pills containing at least two milligrams of fentanyl, which is considered a lethal dose. A deadly dose of fentanyl is small enough to fit on the tip of a pencil.

Counterfeit pills are illegally manufactured by criminal drug networks and are made to look like real prescription opioid medications such as oxycodone (Oxycontin®, Percocet®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), and alprazolam (Xanax®); or stimulants like amphetamines (Adderall®). Fake prescription pills are widely accessible and often sold on social media and e-commerce platforms - making them available to anyone with a smartphone, including minors.

“The United States is facing an unprecedented crisis of overdose deaths fueled by illegally manufactured fentanyl and methamphetamine,” said Anne Milgram, Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration. “Counterfeit pills that contain these dangerous and extremely addictive drugs are more lethal and more accessible than ever before. In fact, DEA lab analyses reveal that two out of every five fake pills with fentanyl contain a potentially lethal dose. DEA is focusing resources on taking down the violent drug traffickers causing the greatest harm and posing the greatest threat to the safety and health of Americans. Today, we are alerting the public to this danger so that people have the information they need to protect themselves and their children.”

Learn more:

[DEA Issues Public Safety Alert On Sharp Increase In Fake Prescription Pills Containing Fentanyl And Meth](#)

Ventura County Responds

www.venturacountyresponds.org

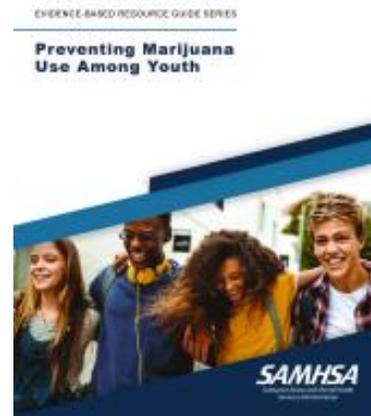
**In the News: 2021 Findings on Youth
E-Cigarette Use**

In the Know

New Resources from Industry Partners

Preventing Marijuana Use Among Youth, SAMHSA

The goal of this guide is to review the literature on prevention of marijuana use among youth, distill the research into recommendations for practice, and provide examples of the ways these recommendations can be implemented. Marijuana use among youth and young adults is a major public health concern. This guide covers programs and policies to prevent marijuana use among youth aged 12 to 17.



Read the [report](#)

2020 National Survey of Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), SAMHSA

NSDUH's latest annual report focuses on substance use and mental health in the United States based on NSDUH data from 2020 and earlier years. The annual report presents trends over time to study changes in society and emerging issues. The 2020 Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators report summarizes the following:

- Substance use
- Initiation of substance use
- Perceived risk from substance use
- Substance use disorders
- Any mental illness, serious mental illness, and major depressive episode
- Suicidal thoughts, plans, and non-fatal attempts for adults aged 18 or older
- Substance use treatment and mental health service use

Read the [report](#)

Just For Fun

Delightful Recipes - From the Kitchens of Alma and Erika

By Erika Fernandez,
Community Services
Coordinator



My parents were born in Mexico and since they didn't celebrate Thanksgiving in Mexico the traditions are fairly new in our family. Although we have a Thanksgiving turkey dinner, my mom adds her Mexican touch, a spicy salsa for the turkey, horchata, champurrado, or calabaza con piloncillo.

Calabaza en Dulce or Mexican Candied Pumpkin

Ingredients

- 1 medium pumpkin (cut into slices or chunks)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water
- 1 cone of piloncillo or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup brown sugar
- 2 cinnamon sticks (optional)

Instructions

- Pour the water into to the pot, then add the piloncillo or brown sugar. Bring to a soft boil. Place the pumpkin slices in the pot.
- Turn heat to medium low and allow to simmer until the pumpkin is tender. Flip the pumpkin so that both the top and bottom layers cook and absorb the flavor of the piloncillo or brown sugar. The liquid will reach a thicker consistency almost like syrup.
- Once the pumpkin is ready to eat you can either eat it cool or slightly warm. If desired, pour some milk over it.

Remember: Doing fun things with your kids can be an opportunity to talk about drugs and alcohol and how to stay safe. For more resources check out [Tips for Talking With Your Kids](#) and [Wellness Every Day](#).

In the News: Methamphetamine-involved Overdose Deaths Nearly Tripled Between 2015 to 2019, NIH Study Finds

Public Health Approaches Must Address Methamphetamine Use

Overdose deaths involving methamphetamine nearly tripled from 2015 to 2019 among people ages 18-64 in the United States, according to a study by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). The study suggests that increases in higher-risk patterns of methamphetamine use, such as increases in methamphetamine use disorder, frequent use, and use of other drugs at the same

time, may be contributing to the rise in overdose deaths.

“We are in the midst of an overdose crisis in the United States, and this tragic trajectory goes far beyond an opioid epidemic. In addition to heroin, methamphetamine and cocaine are becoming more dangerous due to contamination with highly potent fentanyl, and increases in higher risk use patterns such as multiple substance use and regular use,” said NIDA Director Nora D. Volkow, M.D., one of the authors of the study. “Public health approaches must be tailored to address methamphetamine use across the diverse communities at risk, and particularly for American Indian and Alaska Native communities, who have the highest risk for methamphetamine misuse and are too often underserved.”

In 2020, more than 93,000 Americans died from drug overdoses, marking the largest one-year increase in overdose deaths ever recorded, according to provisional data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This increase has largely been driven by rising overdoses involving synthetic opioids, primarily fentanyl. Overdose deaths involving psychostimulants, and particularly methamphetamine, have also risen steeply in recent years, and many of these deaths involved use of an opioid at the same time. However, questions remain on how trends in methamphetamine use contribute to greater risk for overdose deaths.

Read the report

[Methamphetamine-involved overdose deaths nearly tripled between 2015 to 2019, NIH study finds](#), NIDA. 2021

For more information about NIDA

www.drugabuse.gov.

Meth - Don't Buy the Lie Campaign

www.talkingaboutmeth.org

Upcoming Events

We will keep you posted on upcoming events in each newsletter.



**Stimulant Webinar Series Part 1:
Recommendations for Addressing Stimulant
Use: What the Data Shows**

11/10/21, 10:00 AM, ET

Central East PTTC

[Register](#)

**Implementing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Throughout the
SPF**

11/10/21, 11:00 AM, PT

Northwest PTTC

[Register](#)

**The Intersection of Harm Reduction, Prevention, and Recovery
- Part 2**

11/16/21, 10:00 AM, PT

PTTC Network

[Register](#)

Substance Use & Psychosis: Interventions for Intertwined Issues

11/17/21, 3:00 PM, ET

NAADAC

[Register](#)

Helpful Resources

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

Ventura County Limits

This website is a portal to help learn about our efforts to address substance use challenges in our communities.

www.venturacountylimits.org

Ventura County Responds

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.

venturacountyresponds.org

[COAST Opioid Data Dashboard](#)

Vaping FactCheck

Learn about the risks of vaping and the impact on teens. Keep informed about the latest research and news.

www.vapingfactcheckvc.org

Social Determinants of Health

The Social Determinants of Health website provides resources, news, and features community agencies or “Drivers of Change” who are working to building healthier communities through individual, organizational and community wide effort and engagement.

www.healthequityvc.org

Ventura County Behavioral Health

The Ventura County Behavioral Health Department (VCBH) provides mental health and substance use treatment services. Learn about our services and how to access help.

vcbh.org

Follow us on Social Media

www.facebook.com/VCBehavioralHealth

www.facebook.com/venturacountylimits
twitter.com/vclimits

Check out our Newsletters

www.venturacountylimits.org/community-connections

www.healthequityvc.org/newsletters

Coast Newsletters at

<https://www.venturacountyresponds.org/news-updates>

About Us

Supporting Health – Preventing Harm

Ventura County Behavioral Health, Substance Use Services - Prevention, 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 and community-based organizations.

Contact Us

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Photo: Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez



STAY CONNECTED

