

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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Spotlight: Just Not Worth It Prevention Campaign



**“I still love
him so much.”**

“Why did weed
matter more
than me?”

justnotworthit



**“Todavía lo
amo tanto.”**

“¿Por qué le importó
más la mota que
nuestra relación?”

nolovale.

The newly launched “Just Not Worth It” prevention campaign is targeted toward teens and young adults who may be at risk for trying and continuing to use drugs illegally. This encompasses both illicit drugs (like heroin and meth) legal drugs taken illegally—typically cannabis and prescription medications.

The goal of the campaign is to educate teens and young adults on the risks to their health, well-being, life-opportunities, and relationships. However, as a critically important component of any campaign targeting young adults, the mood and method of the messaging is purposefully constructed to avoid triggering the reflexive opposition so common to young adults. Instead, the campaign’s messaging allows them a way to choose a different path without losing face.

Instead of blame, the campaign addresses the issue from the perspective of friends that love and miss the person that is currently using. By showing only love and despondence on their friends' part, there is no negative accusation to push back against.

As a secondary goal, the campaign serves as a discussion platform for adults to discuss illegal drug use with young adults in their care.

View the websites and videos:

[English](#)

[Spanish](#)

Out & About

Community Outreach Happenings

By Alma Ixta, Community Services Coordinator

Here are some of the places and people we've met recently. We had resource tables and presentations on substance use awareness and prevention in English and Spanish. We look forward to seeing more of you in the coming year.



Outreach at Mexican Consulate (Ventanilla de Salud)

I presented in-person to the Spanish speaking community of the Mexican Consulate. I felt very welcomed and proud to see our collaboration is very much appreciated. Everyone that was present showed interest, either when I presented or when people approached my table.

Suicide Prevention Walk & Resource Fair, California Lutheran University

Many shared personal stories and how grateful they were to participate in this event. They had beads representing the different relationships they had with people who had either attempted or passed away from suicide. It was a very touching opening ceremony to see young children holding up their beads to grandparents.

By Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinator

I attended the **CSUCI Psychology Club Think Before You Drink** event. After the CSUCI police department gave a presentation, I participated virtually in a panel together with Dr. Anastasia Flores, DUI Behavioral Health Manager, to answer questions from the audience on alcohol prevention, DUI, and substance use. We shared Prevention resources available to the community about alcohol use.

I participated in person at the **Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation Resource Fair** that took place in one of their Ventura properties. We talked with several youth and parents about our

resources how drugs and alcohol can affect us, and how to get help for substance use.

Photo: Alma Ixta, Mexican Consulate; Suicide Prevention Walk

Words from Erika

Alcohol Prevention

By Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinator

Drinking is socially acceptable despite the potential for addiction, alcohol abuse, and alcoholism. It is available everywhere and people continue to normalize it. Many forget that alcohol is considered a drug, a legal one for anyone over the age of 21. In my Mexican family, alcohol is always present at all family events, parties, barbecues, and more. Taking a shot or two of tequila is something you will always see during our family gatherings. It is not looked at as a risky behavior or bad, it is just part of the celebration to have a good time.

With all this, one of my biggest challenges is teaching my 12-year-old son the dangers of alcohol use. Being brought up as a first-generation Mexican American in a low-income neighborhood, I know the struggles of peer pressure regarding troubling activities; additionally, as a prevention specialist I know the importance of talking with your children about alcohol and other drugs. Having seen family and friends suffer through drug addiction, I worry that my son is at risk.

I have realized it takes more than just having conversations with your children about not doing this or that or about how bad alcohol and drugs can be. I believe it is important that we teach our children healthy coping skills, so they can regulate their emotions and overcome difficult obstacles without turning to drugs. It is also important to have positive and fun activities available so our children can find ways to have fun without alcohol, such as, sports, afterschool programs, or community engagement opportunities. I make it easy for my son to share information about his life at school and with his friends and about his feelings in any given situation. I support his interest in playing baseball and encourage him to pursue a college education for better opportunities in the future.

Alcohol consumption is everywhere, which is what makes it harder, the acceptance, the popularity and the pressure are all around. And marijuana consumption is becoming similar too. That is why prevention is key. Together, communities can change the norms and expectations; parents can change the risks young people face.

Learn more:

SAMHSA ["Talk. They Hear You."® Campaign](#)

[Tips for Talking With Your Kids](#)



Local Heroes Spotlight

Hero: "a person who is admired for great or brave acts or fine qualities."

We are excited to introduce our new series "Local Heroes" with interviews from community members who inspire and are admired in their communities. Often our local heroes make a difference in small ways, impacting others, and those small actions can change lives and neighborhoods.

There are countless small gestures and acts of kindness that all go to make our days brighter. If you know of a hero to highlight, please let us know. Send an email to Alma.lxta@ventura.org.



This month we are featuring Nelva C. Guzman, Coordinadora de Ventanilla de Salud (Window of Health Coordinator), Mexican Consulate in Oxnard.

Tell us a little about yourself.

Nelva: I am a first-generation Latina, born and raised in Oxnard. I graduated from CSUCI with a bachelor's degree in Spanish and a double minor in Chicano studies and psychology. I am currently working on my master's degree in Counseling.

Tell us about the work you do in your community?

Nelva: I currently work in La Ventanilla de Salud at the Consulado de México in Oxnard where we give information about services in our community. The services we share are at low cost or free. People come to the Ventanilla de Salud with so many different types of needs and I am happy to help them find resources and help as much as I can. I am also a volunteer and co-leader for a local Girl Scout Troop.

How has the pandemic affected you during the past years?

Nelva: The pandemic has been challenging but it has come with many positives. This difficult time has helped me spend more

time with my family and appreciate every moment. “Al mal tiempo buena cara” (Give your best face to bad times).

What are your hopes for the future?

Nelva: My hopes for the future are to continue to help my community while becoming the best school counselor I can be.

What does a “hero” mean to you?

Nelva: A hero to me is someone who inspires and helps someone while being caring, loving, and humble.

Do you have any words of closing or inspiration for us?

Nelva: “We must use our lives to make the world a better place to live, not just to acquire things. That is what we are put on the earth for.” –Dolores Huerta

Thank you Nelva for sharing your story with us. You are an inspiration and a true Local Hero!

Alcohol Awareness Month

Alcohol Awareness Month takes place in April every year. It offers communities a chance to gain more understanding of how individuals struggle with alcohol abuse, offers advice and help for those affected, and highlights the serious health issues caused by alcohol.



Learn more:

[Alcohol Awareness Month 2022](#)

[Not a DUI](#)

[National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism](#)

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day April 30, 2022 - 10AM to 2PM

The drug overdose epidemic in the United States is a clear and present public health, public safety, and national security threat. DEA’s National Prescription Drug Take Back Day reflects DEA’s commitment to Americans’ safety and health, encouraging the public to remove unneeded medications from their homes as a measure of preventing medication misuse and opioid addiction from ever starting.



In Ventura County, more than 200 people die each year from opioid overdoses. Prescription painkiller abuse, rising heroin use, fentanyl and accidental opioid overdoses are part of a nationwide

crisis.

Ventura County is actively engaged and committed to preventing prescription drug misuse and abuse. One of the ways the County works to address the issue locally is by reducing access, especially to teens. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office, in collaboration with Ventura County Behavioral Health, established a countywide Rx disposal program that allows residents to safely dispose of unused, unwanted, or expired Rx medication via secure, confidential disposal bins. Learn the signs of overdose and how to take action. Find disposal bin locations near you.

Learn more:

[Ventura County Responds - Safe Medication Disposal](#)

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

[National Prescription Drug Take Back Day](#)

Resources from Industry Partners

Stay Informed of Recent News & Research

[Words Matter When Discussing Alcohol Issues: A New Stigma-Free Vocabulary for Better AUD Outcomes](#)

- The stigma created by the language that is used to describe alcohol problems can decrease many people's willingness to seek help for alcohol problems. It can affect how people with alcohol use disorder (AUD) are treated in all aspects of life.
- 90 percent of people with substance use disorders and 35 percent of people with serious mental illness do not receive treatment.
- Scientifically accurate language and terms that centralize the experience of patients with mental illness and substance use disorders is one key component to reducing stigma.
- "Stigma is a factor that prevents some people from reaching out for help and from being treated with dignity, understanding that AUD is a medical condition and choosing our words carefully when discussing alcohol-related problems are important steps toward changing the conversation and reducing stigma around AUD."
- Replace potentially stigmatizing terms and labels with neutral, person-centered language. Person-centered language reflects that the disorder or illness is only one aspect of a person's life, not the defining characteristic. For example, instead of describing a person with drug addiction as an "addict" or "abuser," refer to them as having a substance use disorder or having an addiction.

Learn more:

[National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism \(NIAAA\)](#)

Alcohol Use Among Girls and Young Women: A Worrying Trend

- This fact sheet provides data about trending alcohol use among girls and young women.
- For at least the past two decades, data showed that boys and young men were more likely to drink than girls and young women.
- Data now show that girls and young women, ages 12 to 20, are drinking more alcohol than their male counterparts.



Learn more:

[Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Alcohol Use Among Girls and Young Women: A Worrying Trend](#)

Rethinking Drinking: Alcohol and Your Health

Rethinking Drinking is designed for U.S. adults who drink alcohol. It provides evidence-based information about alcohol and health along with tips, tools, and resources for those who want to cut down on or quit drinking.



Learn more:

[Rethinking Drinking website](#)
[Rethinking Drinking: Alcohol and Your Health](#)

Featured Resource in Your Community

By Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinator

Did you know the County of Ventura has its own museum? The Museum of Ventura County is located on 100 East Main Street, Ventura. The museum celebrates the history, art, and culture of Ventura County and the Channel Islands through its collections,



exhibits, educational programs, and publications. It first opened in 1913 and transformed significantly over the next 100 years. Currently they have 4 locations: Museum of Ventura County, Research Library at the Museum, Agriculture Museum, and the Albinger Archaeological Museum.

The Ventura campus includes permanent and changing exhibit halls, a gallery dedicated to the George Stuart historical figures, a children's garden, an historic courtyard, an events pavilion, and the Research Library. The library provides support to researchers at all levels interested in deepening their understanding of Ventura County's historic, cultural, and artistic heritage. They offer in person and virtual exhibits; additionally, they offer school tours, teacher resources, summer camps, and educational internships.

If you are looking for something fun and educational to do with your kids this spring break, the Museum of Ventura County is a great option. For more information on the specific services and resources they offer you can go to venturamuseum.org.



Calendar

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

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



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

www.venturacountylimits.org

Ventura County Responds
venturacountyresponds.org
[COAST Opioid Data Dashboard](#)

Vaping FactCheck
www.vapingfactcheckvc.org

Social Determinants of Health
www.healthequityvc.org

Ventura County Behavioral Health
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
www.coastventuracounty.org/newsletter

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.

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Photo: Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez



STAY CONNECTED

