

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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Spotlight: Fentanyl is Forever Prevention Campaign



Reflecting the United States struggles with tragic drug overdoses exceeding 100,000 deaths in 12 months, Ventura County's local accidental fatal overdoses have also risen dramatically. In both cases, the increases are driven and sustained by illegal fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid that has flooded the illicit drug supply.

In response to the covert dangers of fentanyl, Ventura County Behavioral Health has been running a community campaign since last November, "Fentanyl is Forever" (English) and "El Fentanilo es para Siempre" (Spanish). The prevention messages unfold through five diverse short stories that allow people to experience and understand the risks of fentanyl to their friends, families, and communities. In addition to warning the public about the dangers of fentanyl, viewers are then linked to local resources for more information and help.

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.

See our messaging campaign photos in the community, on Gold Coast Transit District buses and at markets throughout the county.

Learn more:

www.FentanylVenturaCounty.org - English

www.FentaniloVentura.com - Spanish

[Ventura County Responds](#)

Out & About

Community Outreach Happenings



By Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinators

Community outreach for Substance Use Services - Prevention 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. Sharing the county's resources

regarding substance use and treatment services and how to access help is also part of the outreach we do. It is important for us to develop relationships with other organizations and members in the community for collaboration and support regarding substance use prevention.

In June, we attended and participated in many outreach events, meetings and offered presentations. These included the Oxnard Police Department Outreach Coordinator meeting, Circle of Care, Fillmore meeting, Santa Paula Social Services Coalition meeting, VCBH Empower Up! event, Mexican Consulate - Ventanilla de Salud outreach and presentations, HUD Strong Families Resource Fair in Ventura, and Swapmeet Justice Health Fair at Oxnard College. Here are a few highlights of our outreach activities.

Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) Paseo de Luz, Oxnard

We participated in the Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) Paseo de Luz Wellness Fair in Oxnard. The focus was to bring awareness to May is Mental Health Month. Many agencies were in attendance and CEDC had entertainment and lunch for the residents. Residents shared they were grateful that we were there with our valuable information and resources provided by other agencies.

CEDC has been in business since 1981. They are one of the largest developers of affordable homes in Ventura County. Their mission is to provide affordable housing to individuals and families lacking in opportunity in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, with 24 properties for low income and farmworker families, seniors 55 and older, and those with disabilities. This housing, comprising 1,129 units, is funded by an array of affordable programs through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, Low Income Housing Tax Credit/ Tax Credit Allocation Committee and the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

Spring into Summer Family Event, Santa Paula

We enjoyed being a part of the Spring into Summer Family Event in Santa Paula. This event was put together by the Santa Paula Social Services Coalition in collaboration with the City of Santa Paula. The event was held at the famous Santa Paula Veteran's Park and was a fun-filled event for families. They provided entertainment for children such as a mechanical bull, face painting, magic show, and fun activities provided by different agencies. They also had raffle prizes that families were able to participate just by filling up their "passport card" which happened by visiting the resource tables that were present.

The event ended with the showing of the movie *Encanto* and offered popcorn at dusk. The city of Santa Paula has a large Latino community, and it has a very warm feel to it. People are very friendly, and many residents know each other. The church community was present and religious agencies work together to help residents in this small town.

Did you know the city of Santa Paula advertises itself to tourists as the "Citrus Capital of the World"? The city of Santa Paula has a population of 30,297 (2020) and it was one of the early centers of California's petroleum industry.

PRIDE Resource Fair, Fillmore

We attended the PRIDE Resource Fair in Fillmore. This event was put on by a local organization, One Step A La Vez. One Step A La Vez is a non-profit organization that began in 2008 with a group of teens and founder Lynn Edmonds, who wanted to bring needed services to youth in Fillmore and Piru. Their center is in Fillmore and provides behavioral health outreach, engagement, prevention and intervention services to the communities of the Santa Clara Valley (Fillmore, Piru & Santa Paula).

We had a table with information about our different prevention initiatives, including marijuana and the teen brain, vaping, meth, fentanyl, and prescription drug use; additionally, we had information on VCBH substance use treatment services. Several organizations from all over the county attended this event, including Fillmore High School Wellness Center, First 5 Ventura County, Coalition For Family Harmony, Logrando Bienestar, Central Coast Climate Justice Network, Planned Parenthood, and many more.

They had several performances and delicious food for sale. There were about 100 attendees at the event, and it was a great success. We connected with other community organizations and discussed future collaborations on substance use prevention efforts with youth from Fillmore. We had the opportunity to share information on our latest campaign about fentanyl. See www.fentanylventuracounty.org.

Many people don't know how dangerous fentanyl can be and how common it can be found in our community. Several attendees were very interested in learning more about fentanyl and many were surprised to learn that we are experiencing a nationwide epidemic of fentanyl deaths.

Stay in touch with us and learn about our latest campaigns at www.venturacountylimits.org.

Spotlight on Vaping

**Did you Know?
Answer These Questions About Vaping**



By Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinator

Let's test your knowledge:

- True or False: It is just water vapor in vapes.
- True or False: The liquid in vapes does not contain any harmful chemicals.
- True or False: Vaping helps people quit smoking tobacco.

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling the aerosol, often referred to as vapor, which is produced by an e-cigarette or similar device. Instead of burning tobacco or marijuana, vapes or e-cigarettes heat liquid nicotine or marijuana oils to make “vapor”.

The vapor that vapes or e-cigarettes make is actually an aerosol (a fine mist of tiny particles). The aerosol can contain nicotine, marijuana, toxic chemicals, and heavy metals.

Many people think that vaping helps people quit smoking; however, many smokers who have tried vaping, to help them quit, have found they just end up using both. In fact, there's evidence that young people who vape are more likely to go on to use illicit drugs and tobacco products such as cigarettes. In a recent study, vape juices advertised as having zero nicotine were tested, and over 90% of them contained up to 24% nicotine.

How to Help

Talk to your child:

- Find the right moment
- Be informed and answer their questions
- Be patient and listen

For more information visit:

(all answers are false)



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

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

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

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STAY CONNECTED

