

# Promoting Health Equity

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## Quote of the Month

***“Today it’s like, you know what, no.”***

—Simone Biles

*Simone Biles, the four-time Olympic gold medalist, withdrew from the team finals and individual all-around competition in Tokyo because of a mental health issue.*



*“It was a “no” that shook the Olympics and put the sports world on notice. Athletes are more than ready to stand up now, not only for social justice but also for themselves. Biles has thrown a wrench in the system. What that “no” says is really this: Enough is enough. It was an act of resistance, simple and courageous, more powerfully important than any move she could have pulled*

off in competition."

### [Simone Biles and the Power of 'No'](#)

New York Times, July 29, 2021

Photograph by Lindsey Wasson / Reuters

## Spotlight: Mental Health Stigma Campaign

### Reaching Out For Help



Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental illness. And this year, more people than ever before are dealing with emotional challenges associated with the pandemic. These stressors have amplified the need for public awareness and discussion of mental health as a key component of overall health. In May 2021, VCBH launched a countywide campaign, "I'm Talking About My Mental Health."

This campaign was developed with de-stigmatization as a critical goal. By showing relatable people facing relatable challenges, reaching out for help and making positive changes in their lifestyles, we make the goal of improved mental health feel approachable and achievable. By personalizing the message - talking about "my" mental health - the campaign allows viewers to see others talking about, thinking about, and working on their mental health and fitness, and demonstrates this as normal and life-affirming behavior.

Please take a minute to get familiar with the campaign, and join us in continuing to promote the discussion of mental health.

**Learn more:**

[I'm Talking About My Mental Health](#)

# Resource: Challenging Providers to Look Within Themselves

## Reducing Bias in Maternity Care

A new training tool launched to help perinatal providers advance health equity and reproductive justice for their patients. The course, developed in response to a new California law, teaches health care professionals that all humans are biased in some way while also offering historical context for modern-day inequities in maternal health.

The California Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Act passed in 2019. SB 464 aims to reduce pregnancy-related preventable deaths, severe illness, and associated health disparities by addressing bias in the health care system head-on.

This law is the first of its kind in the nation, and its potential impact is huge. The California Health Care Foundation set out to support implementation.

### Learn more:

#### [California Health Care Foundation](#)

*The California Health Care Foundation is dedicated to advancing meaningful, measurable improvements in the way the health care delivery system provides care to the people of California, particularly those with low incomes and those whose needs are not well served by the status quo.*

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## Snapshot: Minority Health Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)

Systemic socioeconomic inequities like poverty, poor housing conditions, and lack of access to quality health care, lead to worse health outcomes among racial and ethnic minority populations in the United States. Such factors also increase risk for the ability of racial and ethnic minority populations to anticipate, confront, repair, and recover from the effects of a disaster or public health emergency. These factors combine to form the concept known as social vulnerability.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the HHS Office of Minority Health developed the Minority Health Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) to enhance existing resources to support the identification of racial and ethnic minority communities at the greatest risk for disproportionate impact and adverse outcomes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Local Efforts: Helping the Community

### Sharing Resources

Our Community Outreach team, Alma and Ignacio Ixta, attended the Day by Day Ministries event at the Oxnard Performing Arts & Convention Center on July 18.

The Ventura County Health Care Agency provided health screenings and shared how to access health care and resources, including VCBH, Logrando Bienestar, Public Health and more. It was great to see everyone in the community again!



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## In the News: California Budget to Train Teachers on LGBTQ+ Issues

### Supporting Students

California Gov. Gavin Newsom approved a final state budget that includes \$3 million for LGBTQ+ cultural competency training for public school teachers. That makes the state the first in the country to allocate funding in this specific way, according to Equality California, an LGBTQ+ advocacy group that has pushed for the training for years. The funding will allow the California Department of Education to develop a curriculum aimed at helping teachers support LGBTQ+ students.

*“There’s no doubt that our schools must be a safe, supportive and welcoming for all students,” Rick Chavez Zbur, executive director of Equality California, said in a statement. “At a time when states across the country are attacking transgender kids, we are elated that California has taken this momentous step toward ensuring that public school teachers and staff have the tools and training they need to support LGBTQ+ students.”*

The training will include topics such as school anti-bullying and harassment policies and complaint procedures; how to identify LGBTQ+ youth who are subjected to, or may be at risk of, bullying and lack of acceptance at home or in their communities; and how to find targeted support services for LGBTQ+ students, including counseling services, among other topics, according to Equality California.

**Learn more:**

[California budget includes \\$3 million to train teachers on LGBTQ+ issues](#), NBC News, July 16, 2021

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## Upcoming Events

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



**Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing: Basics and Best Practices**

8/26/2021, 9:00am, PT  
Public Health Law Center

[Register](#)

**A Gestalt View of the Latino Experience with Substance Use Disorders**

9/15/2021, 3:00pm, ET  
NAADAC

[Register](#)

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## Nominate a Driver of Change

### Share your Stories

You may nominate a community member or colleague for recognition for exemplary work in the community to help build healthier communities and address health equity. Go to the website and nominate someone or yourself!



We would love to hear your stories of community change, what inspired you, and how you are making a difference.

**Learn more:**

Social Determinants of Health, Drivers of Change  
[www.healthequityvc.org/drivers-of-change](http://www.healthequityvc.org/drivers-of-change)

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## Stay Connected

If you are looking for resources in the community, check out our websites. We continually add news, tips, latest research, blogs, publications and more.

**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](http://www.healthequityvc.org)

### **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](http://www.venturacountylimits.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](http://vcbh.org)

### **Follow us on Social Media**

[www.facebook.com/VCBehavioralHealth](https://www.facebook.com/VCBehavioralHealth)

[www.facebook.com/venturacountylimits](https://www.facebook.com/venturacountylimits)

[twitter.com/vclimits](https://twitter.com/vclimits)

### **Check out our Newsletters**

[www.venturacountylimits.org/community-connections](http://www.venturacountylimits.org/community-connections)

[www.healthequityvc.org/newsletters](http://www.healthequityvc.org/newsletters)

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## **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, community-based organizations and more.

### **Social Determinants of Health**

Health equity is achieved when everyone has the opportunity to live a healthier life, no matter who we are, where we live, or how much money we make. And while we can't currently ensure that everyone will be healthy, we can change the physical conditions in which people live, learn, work and play, one community at a time.

These conditions are called the Social Determinants of Health and

by improving these conditions we can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and improve their quality of life.

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. VCBH and Public Health sponsored three Social Determinants of Health events in 2018-2020, and wanted to continue the dialogue in the community about the issue of Health Equity.

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## Contact Us

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STAY CONNECTED

