

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Issue 11 • October 2020



What Happened to Halloween?

It's a ritual for many. Families going door to door. Kids dressing up in costumes. Candies galore for one day. Filling our homes with the scents of autumn and spices. Now just another change for us during COVID. The county's "Not Permitted" list include social events such as Halloween gatherings, parties, carnivals and haunted houses. The list of "Not Recommended" activities includes door-to-door trick-or-treating and "trunk or treating" where children go from car-to-car instead of door-to-door to receive treats. Along with remote learning, we need to be creative with remote trick-or-treating and virtual Halloween celebrations.

Once again, we find ways that work for us. Dressing our dogs in costumes, baking spice muffins, decorating with candy and carving pumpkins. Having family over for festive food. Sometimes small things bring the joy we need now.

Have a happy Halloween this October, and stay safe and social distance while scaring those goblins away. We all need to shout Boo every now and then, and maybe reach out to neighbors with some cookies and a friendly note!

Spotlight: Ventura County Responds

Our website has a new look



Check out our updated Ventura County Responds website at www.venturacountyresponds.org

In Ventura County, nearly 100 people die every year from opioid overdoses. Prescription painkiller abuse, rising heroin use, and accidental overdoses are part of a nationwide crisis. Learn about our efforts to prevent and reduce prescription drug and heroin abuse. Together we can reduce opioid supply, reduce opioid demand, and save lives.

Message from Alma:

Write a Letter? What's That?

I want to share how difficult it has been to stay connected with my loved ones that are far away from me. I took for granted how easy it was to travel to see family and now with the pandemic that has changed. I cherish the family that is close to me and the

importance of making family memories.

Many of us don't have our families close by and we must find ways to stay connected from a distance. My way is to mail old family photos to relive the memories of happy times together. I like to tell family stories during our phone calls. Sharing humor, funny stories and happy memories has uplifted my mood during these times. We don't need to only rely on technology either. How about dropping a postcard or an old-fashioned letter in the mail? Write about what your child is learning and what's new in your life. Whatever we can do to stay connected is important.



Social isolation can be a challenge for our mental well-being, and talking about how we are coping can help. It is important to reach out to the people in our lives that can help us to stay positive. This is a great way to stay connected that is safe, and you might just find you get a letter in response!"

See some great resources that have helped me:

Coping During Coronavirus
wellnesseveryday.org/coping-during-coronavirus

Photo: Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinators, pre-COVID-19.

Snapshot: Preventing Overdose Campaign

Concerned about someone you know?

If prescription pain medications are misused, it could lead to an overdose. It's good to get the facts. What are opioids? What is fentanyl? Why should you learn about it? Someone you care about could overdose, and it's important to know the risks and dangers.

In October, we rolled out a new

outreach campaign starting with county public libraries to share the dangers about opioids and fentanyl. We are expanding our overdose awareness campaigns in the community so that more people learn about the risks of an overdose, how to get naloxone, and how to access help.

Concerned about someone you know? Talk about risks with family and friends.

What You Can Do

Watch out for prescription misuse

- Experimenting or sharing
- Ignoring label directions
- Taking meds to get high

Look for warning signs

- Changes in appearance
- Loss of interest or motivation
- Unexplained pills or paraphernalia

Don't make it easy

- Track and secure all medicines
- Drop off unused or expired medications
- Find disposal locations near you

Learn more:

Opioids FAQ, Ventura County Responds

www.venturacountyresponds.org/preventing-overdose/opioids

What You Need to Know About Opioids brochure

[What You Need to Know about Opioids.](#)

Photo by Ashley Nettles: Posters at the Ojai and Oak View libraries.



DID YOU KNOW

that our community is AT RISK from fentanyl?

Anyone who takes a drug that isn't prescribed for them may accidentally take fentanyl.

- Our local opioid epidemic has been worsened by a recent influx of illegal fentanyl, which is sometimes mixed in with other drugs.
- If your doctor didn't prescribe medication for you or a family member, there's no way to know what's really inside a pill.
- Fentanyl is so strong that even a tiny amount can lead to overdose and death for people of any age.

Did you know that you could save a life with an Overdose Rescue Kit?

Call 1-805-667-6663. It's confidential and free.

LEARN MORE:
www.VenturaCountyResponds.org

NO OD



Snapshot: "Talk. They Hear You." Campaign

Find the time to talk to your kids about
alcohol & drugs



"Talk. They Hear You." See this campaign by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA). This substance use prevention campaign helps parents and caregivers start talking to their children early about the dangers of alcohol and other drugs.

Learn more:

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

Tips for Talking with Your Kids Campaign
habits.vcbh.org

Spotlight: Mexican Consulate

Connecting with the Community

We collaborate with the Mexican Consulate and share our outreach campaigns. We want to highlight what they have been doing since COVID-19.

The Mexican Consulate in Oxnard is the diplomatic representation of Mexico in the Tri Counties Area (Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, California). Their duties are focused around assisting Mexican citizens living in or traveling in the United States and defending



the rights and interests of Mexican people.

Among other objectives it has the responsibility to encourage stronger ties between the Mexican, Mexican-American and Latino Communities. They provide documents, protection and legal affairs, civil registry, and a Health Window (Ventanilla de Salud). Currently they are educating everyone about the safety measures needed in our county to protect themselves and their families from COVID-19.

Learn more:

[Mexican Consulate](#)

Around Town & Elsewhere

Our List

Every issue we like to feature stories of individuals and agencies that are making a difference in their communities during this time of COVID-19. Sometimes we just want to give a shout out to the work you are doing, and make a list so everyone knows.

Checking in with our partners around the county:

- In Oxnard, there are monthly Oxnard Police Department Community Outreach Meetings. They share what is timely in the community. Meetings are the first Wednesday of every month at 10:30 am. teresa.telles@oxnardpd.org
- Food Share delivers food to Ventura County residents. Download their app to find pop-up locations. foodshare.com/app
- The naloxone distribution program continues to outreach to community partners and provides overdose rescue kits to those in need. Learn about overdose prevention and how to get an overdose rescue kit at www.venturacountyresponds.org/preventing-overdose

What is the latest in your community? Send us a line and we'll add you to the list!

Find out more. Or just check it out.

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

Ventura County Responds
venturacountyresponds.org

Marijuana FactCheck
www.mjfactcheck.org

Vaping FactCheck
www.vapingfactcheckvc.org

Ventura County Limits
www.venturacountylimits.org

Social Determinants of Health
www.healthequityvc.org

Follow us on Social Media
www.facebook.com/venturacountylimits
twitter.com/vclimits

Finding Balance in the "New Normal"
www.wellnesseveryday.org/news

Need Help?

If you or a family member are struggling with addiction, talk to your healthcare provider or call the confidential 24/7 Access Line: 1-844-385-9200.

> [Learn about Substance Use Treatment Services.](#)

Happenings

We will keep you posted on upcoming events in each newsletter. If your agency is planning any online meetings, please send us the information so we can post it.

Multi-Unit Housing Taskforce Meeting, Public Health
October 15, 11am-12pm
Contact: Shar Busch, Shar.Busch@Ventura.org

Got Snapshots?

Send us your photos of Ventura County scenes and we'll share in future newsletters. As the county continues to adapt, we want to capture the changing landscape of our communities. We will give you credit too!

Photo by Janet Kaplan: Pumpkin patch

Photos by Alma Ixta: Larsen Elementary School, Oxnard; CAPSLO Migrant Head Start, Oxnard; Blackstock Park, Oxnard; Human Services Agency table with applications for services.





About

Supporting Health — Preventing Harm

Prevention Services 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.

Contact Us: We Are Here

Alma Ixta Alma.Ixta@ventura.org

Erika Fernandez Erika.Fernandez@ventura.org

Erika is currently out on maternity leave.

Share your stories with us. Want us to feature you and your work in the community? Send an email to Alma!

STAY CONNECTED

