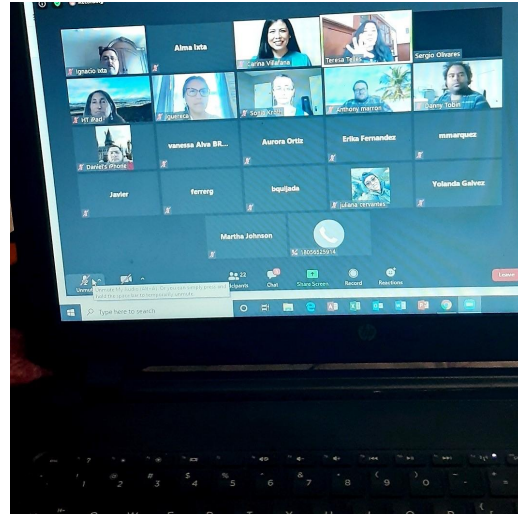


# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Issue 5 • July 2020



## Connecting During Times of Change

Since our last newsletter in June, summer began and we celebrated graduations, Father's Day and the Fourth of July. With our county still impacted by Covid-19, Zoom meetings are the norm, and we are starting to venture back to our workplaces. We will continue to feature you and your agencies, list upcoming meetings webinars, and mention new resources in the community. Talking about substance use is especially important now and we are helping to link people with prevention and treatment resources.

*Photos by Alma Ixta. Westminster Free Clinic, Oxnard; Zoom Meeting, Oxnard Police Department Community Outreach Meeting*

## Featured Agency: Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing Taskforce

### Why is Smoke-Free Living Important?

50,000 nonsmokers die every year in the U.S. from exposure to secondhand smoke.



Everyone should have the choice to live in a smoke-free home. Healthy smoke-free apartments and condominiums are essential to good health for children and adults. Secondhand smoke poses harmful health threats to everyone, especially those who live near someone who smokes or vapes. Studies have shown that 60% of the airflow in your apartment comes from your neighbors, even after sealing leaks and openings. That is why a smoke-free policy is important for housing landlords and property managers to adopt. And it is legal for them to adopt policies to prohibit or limit smoking in indoor areas of their building and even on their property.

Learn more:

Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing Taskforce. Shar Busch, Ventura County Public Health, Tobacco Policy Program,  
[Shar.Busch@ventura.org](mailto:Shar.Busch@ventura.org), 805-981-6644.  
[www.vchca.org/ventura-county-public-health-tobacco-programs](http://www.vchca.org/ventura-county-public-health-tobacco-programs)

Secondhand Smoke, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/secondhand\\_smoke](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/secondhand_smoke)



## Message from Alma: Parenting during Challenging Times

As we started this month to prepare for the reopening of businesses and services, we got

notice that we needed to shut down several of the businesses again. The COVID-19 cases are continuing to increase in the past weeks. Many people are going back to doing what they used to do prior to COVID-19 and think things are back to normal. It is important to continue being careful, social distancing, and wearing a mask to keep our families and our community safe.

Many people may also be dealing with other challenges. During this time, I am also raising a grandchild. It has been as challenging as it is rewarding, and I never imagined I would be starting over as a parent. I am dealing with doctor's appointments, emergency room visits getting stitches on a chin, going to bed early, and late nights with a crying child. I recently had a Zoom meeting and when it was my turn to speak my grandchild Adrian started talking and asking for help. It was embarrassing and funny at the same but these are the challenges many are having while working from home; trying to balance work, children and taking care of ourselves. The pressures of family life can be great, and it is important to lean on others for support and encouragement.

While at home we have an opportunity to connect with our children, especially teens. There is a lot of down time right now, teens are not in school, so it lends itself for many teachable moments. When parents are working, it gives teens more opportunities to experiment with substances and take risks. Take the time to talk about alcohol and drugs. Please see our recent campaign "Tips for talking with your Kids."

*Photo: Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinators at work.*



---

## Featured Campaign: Tips for Talking With Your Kids



While at home together, take time to talk with your children about healthy choices.

Here are some tips for talking with your kids about vaping, drugs and alcohol:

- Remember: Parents are the #1 reason that kids choose not to use drugs.
- Start young and make talking about it a regular habit.
- Find the right times for relaxed conversations that won't be interrupted. If sitting at the family dinner table feels too intense, try talking while driving, walking the dog or cooking together.
- Comment on media stories and popular culture news. Frame it as a health issue. Start the conversation in ways your child can relate to.
- Listen. Be patient.
- Be clear about your expectations for them to make healthy choices.
- Ask open ended questions, not intrusive or blaming. "What would you do if a friend offered you...?" Focus on 'what if' questions and what they could say or do. Be informed and answer questions.

See the campaign:

[Tips for Talking With Your Kids](#)

---

## Message from Erika: Talking to Your Child about COVID-19

Having to explain COVID-19 to your children can be a difficult task. At least it was for me. I have a 10- and 5-year old who love to question everything. I have always been honest with them when they want to know about certain subjects because I'd rather



they hear it from me than get inaccurate information from somewhere else. This situation was different and there was a lot of uncertainty, making it hard to explain to my children without worrying them.

At first my 10-year old boy was excited that school was canceled. He knew that there was a virus going around that could make people very sick. He quickly realized that school was not the only thing canceled; soccer, baseball, catechism, play dates, family reunions, spring break vacation, playing at the park, and movie theater days. He was especially upset that our vacation to Mexico had to be postponed; however, he understood that for our safety we had to follow these rules and stay home. After providing him with age-appropriate information regarding COVID-19 and teaching him what we can do to reduce the spread of germs, he was calm and started to get used to the new normal.

On the other hand, my 4-year old did not understand why we had to stay home. Every day she asked when we could go out again. She had just started preschool and baseball so she was very anxious to get back to that. The explanation we gave her was very short and different than for my son. We taught her some basic hand washing and cleaning tips. It didn't take long before she became the hand sanitizer officer at home. She reminded everyone to sanitize their hands, toys, tables, and other surfaces. As days passed I could distract her by having family fun activities, such as going for a walk, cooking, going in the pool, making a fort in the living room, crafts, movie nights - anything I could do to take our minds off what was going on and enjoy family time.

As communities start to re-open and new guidelines are set in place, new questions come up, such as "Why do I have to wear a mask to school, why are stores open but not parks? Why do they take my temperature before soccer practice?" and "Are Thanksgiving and Christmas canceled too?" Children are curious and will pick up on your cues and emotions so it is important to remain calm around them. Some great resource for parenting during Covid-19 can be found on the [Wellness Everyday website](#).

As of this newsletter issue, I will be going on maternity leave for a few months. I look forward to sharing news of my baby when I return in October. I will have more exciting stories to write about parenting!

---

## Featured Website: Vaping FactCheck

**What You Need to Know About  
Teens & Vaping**

*3 out of 5 9th grade students  
said they feel obtaining vape*

devices is easy.

Many teens are using pocket-size vape devices or e-cigarettes at home or school. Vaping produces an aerosol, often mistaken for water vapor. The vapes are often odorless and quickly heat to dispense nicotine, flavored liquids or high-potency THC (cannabis or marijuana).

This website is intended for parents and educators to stay updated on the facts about vaping and the harms to youth.

News updates include the latest research and news on vaping, as well as upcoming webinars and meetings.

Learn more:

[www.vapingfactcheckvc.org](http://www.vapingfactcheckvc.org)



---

## Overdose Prevention

If a loved one or someone you know may be at risk of an overdose, call about getting an Overdose Rescue Kit.

If you are eligible for a kit, you can be trained online on how to use naloxone. You will then be instructed on how to pick up a kit by appointment at one of the VCBH locations. Call about a Rescue Kit at (805) 667-6663

Naloxone is administered when someone is showing signs of opioid overdose. Naloxone can very quickly restore normal respiration to a person whose breathing has slowed or stopped due to abusing heroin or prescription opioids, or accidentally ingesting too much pain medication. If we can act early when a person shows signs of an overdose, we can work quickly to help save a life.

Learn more:

[venturacountyresponds.org/how-to-get-naloxone](http://venturacountyresponds.org/how-to-get-naloxone)

To download the NoOD High Risk Card:

[venturacountyresponds.org/en/naloxone-faq](http://venturacountyresponds.org/en/naloxone-faq)

---



# Stay Connected

If you are looking for resources in the community, please check out these websites. There are more resources available in Ventura County than most people realize. Check back regularly for news and information updates, and new materials for educational outreach.

**Ventura County Behavioral Health**

[www.vcbh.org](http://www.vcbh.org)

**Building Healthy Habits - How are we coping?**

[habits.vcbh.org](http://habits.vcbh.org)

[habitos.vcbh.org](http://habitos.vcbh.org)

**Ventura County Coronavirus Information**

[www.vcemergency.com](http://www.vcemergency.com)

**Substance Use Resources**

[vcbh.org/en/information-resources/substance-use-resources](http://vcbh.org/en/information-resources/substance-use-resources)

**Ventura County Human Services Agency**

[www.ventura.org/human-services-agency](http://www.ventura.org/human-services-agency)

**Ventura County Responds**

[venturacountyresponds.org](http://venturacountyresponds.org)

**Vaping FactCheck**

[www.vapingfactcheckvc.org](http://www.vapingfactcheckvc.org)

**Social Determinants of Health**

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

---

## Upcoming Events

We will keep you posted on upcoming events, trainings and meetings in each Newsletter. If your agency is planning any type of online meetings, please send to us so we can post this.

**Preventing Youth Vaping Part II: Policy Recommendations and Promising Practices for Addressing Youth Vaping, 8/6/20.**

Sponsored by the Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) Network.

[Register here](#)

**Cannabis Use in Pregnancy and Lactation: Understanding the Science and Assisting Practitioners with Prevention Strategies, 8/24/20.** Sponsored by the Prevention Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) Network.

[Register here](#)

## Share your Photos

Send us photos of Ventura County scenes (be sure to get permission if people's faces are in the images) and we'll share in future newsletters. As the county opens up more businesses, we want to capture the changing landscape of our communities.

*Lunchtime Cornhole Game at VCBH, Oxnard - VCBH staff, safely social distancing: Left to right, Vince Franco, Brad Friday. Cornhole (also known as bags, sack toss, or bean bag) is a lawn game in which players take turns throwing 16 ounce bags of corn kernels at a raised platform with a hole in the far end.*



## Contact Us

Alma Ixta [Alma.Ixta@ventura.org](mailto:Alma.Ixta@ventura.org)

Erika Fernandez [Erika.Fernandez@ventura.org](mailto:Erika.Fernandez@ventura.org)

STAY CONNECTED

