

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Issue 23 • September 2021



Quote of the Month

"When we celebrate our connections to the diversity of people from all walks of life striving for recovery, we find support and courage to speak up for inclusion, respect, and opportunity. This year's theme, "Recovery is for Everyone: Every Person, Every Family, Every Community" reminds people in recovery and those who support them, that recovery belongs to all of us.

We are all called to end gatekeeping and welcome everyone to recovery by lowering barriers to recovery support, creating inclusive spaces and programs, and broadening our understanding of what recovery means for people with different experiences."

— National Recovery Month 2021

Suicide Prevention in our Community

Conversations about Suicide:

Help & Hope - 6th Annual Forum



Suicide touches us all. Join us to hear personal stories and points of view. Learn about local resources and how to make a difference.

Thursday, September 23, 2021
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Register:

www.brite.link/conversations

www.brite.link/conversaciones

For more information, email mhsa@ventura.org

For suicide prevention resources: www.WellnessEveryDay.org

Just for Fun

Try Something New! Hobbies We Started During Covid

By Erika Fernandez, Community Services Coordinator

Working from home, lockdowns, distant learning, following safety guidelines, people needed new hobbies to help cope with the stress or boredom. Adjusting to the new pandemic life was a challenging time for many of us. In my family we took on raising chickens.

When the lockdowns began back in March 2020, there was a shortage of several essential needs such as toilet paper, sanitizer, Tylenol, meat, canned foods, and even eggs. I remember going out grocery shopping and finding stores with long lines and empty shelves. A week into the pandemic we still did not seem to find enough eggs for our family, stores were either sold out or there was a limit of one dozen per customer. With no school or sports and plenty of free time, my kids thought of bringing chickens from the ranch home. They said that if we had chickens in our backyard, we would never have to worry about not having eggs for breakfast. I explained that it would be a lot of work and commitment, but they insisted, so I agreed.

They spent time watching YouTube videos on how to raise chickens, took several weeks to build a chicken coop, and we now have fresh eggs daily. The kids learned to become resourceful and responsible; additionally, they have taken on more ranch life activities such as horse riding and roping.

Hobbies help us explore new things and learn more about ourselves and what we enjoy. Having something to put your energy during a period of so much uncertainty can be a way to express yourself and release stress, which is good for maintaining mental health and wellness.

For more ideas check out [Building Healthy Habits.](#)



September is National Recovery Month

**Recovery is For Everyone: Every Person,
Every Family, Every Community**

Now in its 32nd year,
Recovery Month celebrates
the gains made by those in
recovery, just as we celebrate

improvements made by those who are managing other health conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma, and heart disease.



NATIONAL
RECOVERY
MONTH 2021

Each September, **Recovery Month** works to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices, the emergence of a strong and proud recovery community, and the dedication of service providers and community members across the nation who make recovery in all its forms possible.

The 2021 theme, “**Recovery is For Everyone: Every Person, Every Family, Every Community,**” reminds people in recovery and those who support them that no one is alone in the journey through recovery. Everyone’s journey is different, but we are all in this together. Recovery Month will continue to educate others about substance use disorders and co-occurring disorders, the effectiveness of treatment and recovery services, and that recovery is possible. All of us, from celebrities and sports figures to our co-workers, neighbors, friends, and family members, throughout our lives have experienced peaks and valleys, both big and small. But with strength, support, and hope from the people we love, we are resilient.

Learn more:

Recovery Month Website: [National Recovery Month](https://www.recoverymonth.org/)

Spotlight: Meth - Don't Buy the Lie Campaign

Providing the Truth About Meth



The “Meth - Don’t Buy the Lie” campaign is targeted to young adults who may be at risk for trying meth. The goal of the

campaign is to provide the truth about meth without preaching nor invoking the reflexive opposition which comes easily to people in this age range.

As part of this campaign, attention-catching geo-targeted messages were displayed at selected locations throughout the county. We will continue to share the campaign videos in upcoming editions of this newsletter to help increase awareness and educate the community about this problem.

Learn more:

Meth - Don't Buy the Lie

www.TalkingAboutMeth.org

HablandoDeMeth.org



In the News: A Proclamation on Overdose Awareness Week, 2021

The White House, August 27, 2021

The overdose epidemic has taken a toll on far too many Americans and their loved ones. Addiction is a disease that touches families in every community, including my own. The epidemic is national, but the impact is personal. It is personal to the millions who confront substance use disorder every day, and to the families who have lost loved ones to an overdose. During Overdose Awareness Week, we recommit to taking bold actions to prevent overdoses and related deaths, and enhance our support for individuals with substance use disorders.

In recent years, we have seen synthetic opioids, such as illicitly manufactured fentanyl, drive many overdose deaths with cocaine- and methamphetamine-related deaths also increasing at alarming rates. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the overdose epidemic, as necessary pandemic restrictions made it harder for individuals with addiction to receive the treatment and support services they need. These factors contributed to the more than 93,000 drug overdose deaths in 2020. As a Nation, we need a strong response to America's overdose epidemic and an investment in prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery services, as well as strategies to reduce the supply of illicit drugs.

Read more:

[A Proclamation on Overdose Awareness Week, 2021](#)

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Spread Hope

“We can all help prevent suicide...All month, mental health advocates, prevention organizations, survivors, allies, and community members unite to promote suicide prevention awareness.”

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month — a time to raise awareness on this stigmatized, and often taboo, topic. In addition to shifting public perception, we use this month to spread hope and vital information to people affected by suicide. Our goal is ensuring that individuals, friends and families have access to the resources they need to discuss suicide prevention and to seek help.

Learn more:

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)

[National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#)

For suicide prevention resources: www.WellnessEveryDay.org

In the News: Punishing Drug Use Heightens the Stigma of Addiction

By Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

“Our understanding of substance use disorders as chronic but treatable health conditions has come a long way since the dark days when they were thought of as character flaws — or worse. Yet societal norms surrounding drug use and addiction continue to be informed by myths and misconceptions.

Stigma has major negative impacts on health and well-being, which helps explain why only 18% of people with drug use disorders receive treatment for their addiction. Stigma impedes access to care and reduces the quality of care individuals receive. People with addiction, especially those who inject drugs, are often distrusted when presenting for care in emergency departments or when visiting other providers and are often treated in demeaning and dehumanizing ways. And physicians holding stigmatizing attitudes may not provide adequate evidence-based care for patients with addiction.”

Learn more:

[Punishing Drug Use Heightens the Stigma of Addiction](#), Nora D. Volkow, STAT, August 3, 2021

Out & About in the Community

Community Outreach News

Our Community Outreach team, Alma and Ignacio Ixta, attended the Mary Star of the Sea Church Resource Fair on August 21 & 22. It was great to see everyone in the community again!



Calendar

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

A Gestalt View of the Latino Experience with Substance Use Disorders

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

NAADAC

[Register](#)

COPN Convening: Fall 2021

9/16/21, 10:00 AM, PT
Overdose Prevention Network
[Register](#)

Community Engagement during COVID-19: A Webinar for Substance Misuse Prevention Practitioners
9/22/21, 3:00 PM, PT
PTTC
[Register](#)

Conversations about Suicide: Help & Hope - 6th Annual Forum
9/23/21, 4:00 PM, PT
VCBH
Register:
www.brite.link/conversations
www.brite.link/conversaciones

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

This website is a portal to help learn about our efforts to address substance use challenges in our communities.

www.venturacountylimits.org

Ventura County Responds

This website tracks what is being done in Ventura County to address the opioid crisis and provides the latest information for prescribers and community members.

venturacountyresponds.org

Vaping FactCheck

Learn about the risks of vaping and the impact on teens. Keep informed about the latest research and news.

www.vapingfactcheckvc.org

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

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

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

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.

Contact Us

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*Photo: Alma Ixta and Erika Fernandez
pre-COVID-19; Mary Star of the Sea Church Resource
Fair, Alma Ixta.*



STAY CONNECTED

