

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
PREVENTION COMMITTEE
MINUTES - Tuesday, March 9, 2021**

<p>Members Present</p> <p>Janis Gardner, Chair BHAB Prevention Committee Claudia Armann, BHAB Elizabeth R. Stone, BHAB Jesse Finkbiner, BHAB Patricia Mowlavi, BHAB Alyson Lucas, Saving Lives Camarillo Cynthia Bautista-Rodriguez, Pacific Clinics' TAY Tunnel Ezequiel Sanchez Gabe Teran, Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) Gail Parker, DEA Operation ENGAGE Katherine Kasmir, Reality Improv Connection - BRITE Maya Lazos, Aurora Vista Del Mar Hospital Scott Walker, Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Theresa Plante, Casa Pacifica Vicky Gonzales, Ventura County Public Health (VCPH)</p>	<p>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Managers/Staff Present</p> <p>Dr. Loretta Denering, SUS Division Chief Dr. Jamie Rotnofsky, MHSA Sr. Manager Cynthia Salas, Ethnic Services Dan Hicks, SUS Prevention Brad Friday, SUS Prevention Cari Kawell, SUS Prevention Greg Bergan, MHSA Program Administrator - Data Joanna Peterson, VCBH Administrative Division, Zoom Engineer</p> <p>Lorena Suarez, Interpreter, Homeland Language Services</p> <p>NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 11, 2021, 3:15 – 4:30 p.m.</p>
<p>Others Present</p> <p>Carmen Wyttenbach, Ventura County Human Services Agency (VCHSA) Gail C. Parker, Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Ruth Morales, Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)</p>	<p>Ventura County Behavioral Health 1911 Williams Drive, Oxnard, CA 93036</p> <p>Zoom link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85118862194?pwd=ZmwwRVQ1cDNRY2pFQ1kwcHA3Y0VyUT09</p> <p>Meeting ID: 851 1886 2194 Password: 332632 Dial-in: 669 900 9128</p>
<p>Note: The committee has not yet approved these minutes. There may be additions/deletions or corrections before the minutes are accepted in final form.</p>	

	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS/ ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE
I.	<p>Call to Order Chair Gardner called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.</p>		
II.	<p>Welcome and Introductions Ms. Gardner welcomed everyone and stated that introductions would be completed through roll call during the approval of the agenda and minutes.</p>		
III.	<p>Approval of the Agenda Ms. Gardner asked the Committee to review and approve the March 9, 2021 agenda. The motion carried unanimously through roll call.</p>	<p>The agenda was approved as written. M/S/C</p>	<p>Motion: Claudia Armann Second: Jesse Finkbiner</p>
IV.	<p>Approval of the Minutes Ms. Gardner asked the committee to review and approve the minutes of the January 12, 2021 meeting. The motion carried unanimously through roll call.</p>	<p>The minutes were approved as written. M/S/C</p>	<p>Motion: Claudia Armann Second: Jesse Finkbiner</p>
V.	<p>Chair Announcements Chair Gardner shared with the group the BHAB Prevention Committee Mission Statement, as follows: "To promote measures which prevent mental illness and/or substance use issues from becoming destabilizing components in the lives of Ventura County residents. Our aim is to collaborate and help support education, prevention and early intervention efforts with particular emphasis on community health, engagement and the interaction of mental health and substance use challenges."</p>		

<p>V.</p>	<p>Chair Announcements - continued</p> <p>Chair Gardner announced that Pacific TAY Tunnel will continue to offer (by appointment only) on-site computer, shower, laundry and kitchen services on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. TAY members can continue to pick-up their mail, care packages and clothing.</p> <p>Chair Gardner mentioned that the Ventura County Sheriff’s Department has been busy dismantling a human trafficking organization with multiple arrests. The Sheriff’s Department has also arrested multiple prescription drug and methamphetamine drug dealers – one of which had 34,000 illegal pills and a crocodile.</p> <p>Chair Gardner announced that there is a new Ventura County District Attorney named Erik Nasarenko who was a former Mayor of Ventura (2015-2017). Recently, Mr. Nasarenko shared that prosecutors need to be mindful of a just, fair and rational approach to defendants based on individual facts and circumstances of each case including homeless and mentally ill people.</p>		
<p>VI.</p>	<p>Public Comments</p> <p>Elizabeth R. Stone shared that at the Ventura Social Services Task Force (VSSTF) meeting which focuses on issues around housing (most specifically around the City of Ventura but also around Ventura County) she had mentioned information that was passed on to her at the TAY Tunnel that people that identify with LGBTQIA were frequently uncomfortable at the services and shelters that were offered by faith-based services because of either accurate or perceived acceptance of their identities. Addressing this will be an agenda item in the upcoming months when the VSSTF meet.</p>		
<p>VII.</p>	<p>BHAB Prevention Committee Member Comments</p> <p>A. Jesse Finkbiner, Aspire Counseling Services and BHAB PC member mentioned several items that included the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From a Prevention standpoint, he does recognize the limitations, particularly with COVID, that a lot of people are self-medicating with COVID causing a lot of stress. There is an increased use in methamphetamine and fentanyl among Ventura County youth. Mr. Finkbiner believes it is incumbent upon BHAB PC members and meeting participants to figure out ways to disseminate information of a preventative nature so that Ventura County residents know that resources are available. 2. Mr. Finkbiner extended gratitude to the Simi Valley Police Department because t it is his understanding that a lot of changes have taken place from a consumer standpoint and people that interact with the Simi PD are noticing that they are taking a radically different approach in working with people with mental health and substance use disorder challenges. 		
<p>VIII.</p>	<p>Provider and Stakeholder Comments</p> <p>A. Katherine Kasmir, Executive Director, Reality Improv Connection – BRITE, shared the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Despite COVID, they have been very busy this fiscal year with prevention workshop sessions for middle schools and high schools including a lot of requests from teachers for mental health support and coping skills sessions for students. 2. Many young people are doing advocacy projects such as Oxnard students doing Photovoice projects where they’ve had the opportunity to speak at neighborhood council and speak up for things they’d like to change. 3. BRITE has a lot of CSUCI students that are doing capstone projects such as the sociology research classes survey around how COVID is impacting their well-being and their use and/or abuse of drugs and alcohol. 4. BRITE also offers a 3D virtual environment where people can interact as avatars. Thousand Oaks and Simi Valley Youth Councils both have groups of teens that are creating prevention events. They will have family and parent activities including a Virtual Reality Party for Parents event in April. <p>B. Gabe Teran, Operations Specialist, Comprehensive Health and Prevention Programs, VCOE announced the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two weeks ago, they hosted their annual “Teens Kick Ash” conference using a virtual format. In the past, they usually had about 210 in-person participants, but, because this time the event was virtual, they were able to allow a larger audience. 2. Over the course of the 2-day event, there were 564 participants who watched the many presenters that included BRITE. This conference focuses on nicotine, tobacco, vaping, cannabis – all smoking related types of substance use issues and the prevention and awareness around them. 3. Mr. Teran gave thanks to Katherine Kasmir, Executive Director BRITE, for her participation in this event. 4. Currently, Mr. Teran’s team is now preparing for their annual FNL Youth Leadership Conference, a countywide, student-planned event from the Ventura County Friday Night Live program. It will be held on Saturday, March 13th. 5. They have observed that out in the Ventura County school system that mental health and 		

	<p>emotional well-being are highly affected issues with local students and staff. Many are self-medicating during these COVID times. They have adapted what was previously piloted as an in-person Rx drugs presentation to now offer it to a couple of different schools in the county who are using it for information dissemination to their students and staff.</p> <p>C. Alyson Lucas, Community Coordinator, Saving Lives Camarillo (SLC) gave the following updates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SLC has expanded their water bill insert to include an additional 4 locations and addresses of drug disposal bins in Camarillo which explains why it's important to dispose of Rx drugs. The new locations include Ventura Orthopedics Medical Group, Vu Pharmacy, First Stop Urgent Care and St. John's Hospital. 2. SLC has been working with the Camarillo City Council to be part of the FY 2021-22 city goals to collaborate to use more city signage in pharmacies regarding opioid disposal. 3. Ms. Lucas asked that if anyone in the group had experience with Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) ordinances, please contact her at: alyson@savinglivescamarillo.net <p>D. Gail Parker, Drug Enforcement Administration – Operation Engage Program shared the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Operation Engage has officially launched as of February 23. Currently, they are in the phase of connecting and building the programs looking for youth serving organizations and coalitions within Ventura County communities that focus on drug prevention. 2. Operation Engage is looking to find out what Ventura County communities are looking for in terms of drug prevention efforts and how they can be of resource. 3. Ms. Parker introduced Ruth Morales, Diversion Outreach Coordinator, DEA, who announced that the DEA Take-back service will still occur this April. It will be a modified strategy because of COVID restrictions, but, there will be participating sites in Ventura. <p>E. Maya Lazos, Vista Del Mar Hospital gave updates that included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They are in the stages of planning for Mental Health Awareness month and are leading efforts for the mental health awareness initiative that originally started with new Port Hueneme City Council member Misty Perez in partnership with Port Hueneme Police Department. This has now become a countywide mental health initiative with Santa Paula Council and Santa Paula Police Department, Fillmore, Oxnard, Camarillo, Moorpark CHP. 2. They will do a collective Public Service Announcement to launch in May to raise money for an upcoming NAMI Walk. They will also host the 1st Responder Suicide Prevention Training, as well as a training for coaches. They are currently seeking coaches from Ventura County cities to contribute to the PSA and promote the training. 3. The 16th Annual NAMI Walks Your Way event will be in-person and virtual to be held on May 22, 2021 at the Ventura County Fire Academy. 		
IX.	<p>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Staff Updates</p> <p>A. Dr. Jamie Rotnofsky, MHSA, introduced herself and the new VCBH MHSA Manager and a licensed clinical psychologist with a background in adult and youth prevention and suicide and violence prevention. Dr. Rotnofsky who has been on board for about a month. This is her 1st meeting with the BHAB Prevention Committee.</p> <p>B. Greg Bergan, MHSA/Prevention Early Intervention (PEI) shared the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The VCBH MHSA Team is in contract season for their PEI providers. 2. They are also working on their annual report for the state which is based off last fiscal year's data – not just for PEI, but for the entire MHSA program. 3. They have a new grant that they are working on with VCOE which focuses on adding Wellness Centers in Ventura County schools. This grant was awarded to Ventura County along with several other counties in California. More information can be found at: https://mhsoac.ca.gov/ 4. Group discussion was held which clarified that these new wellness centers are not clinical locations. In addition, while each individual school district is adapting the wellness center locations to their specific population needs, there is a large amount of student involvement in their design. <p>C. Vicky Gonzales, Public Health Tobacco Policy Coordinator, Ventura County Public Health stated:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invited the group to an upcoming Multi-unit Housing Taskforce Meeting to be held Thursday, March 11th from 11 a.m. to Noon. One of their main objectives is to reduce tobacco use in apartments and condominiums especially in the City of Oxnard. 2. This meeting will feature keynote speaker, Dr. Bonnie Hopper-Fleischer, a professor in the division of adolescent medicine and the Dept. of Pediatrics at Stanford University who is also the Founder and Executive Director of the Tobacco Prevention Toolkit and the Cannabis Awareness Toolkit. 3. The taskforce is being trained to be community educators on tobacco and cannabis. 4. On Thursday, March 18th, VCPH will be having the Ventura County Action on Smoking and Health Coalition meeting. This is the advocacy arm of their efforts to promote policy throughout Ventura County. 		

<p>X.</p>	<p>Time Certain Presentation – 3:45 p.m. – Dan Hicks, SUS Prevention Services to present, “Emerging Local Risks: Fentanyl”</p> <p>Dan Hicks, Manager, VCBH, SUS – Prevention Services presented information that included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Hicks shared that there are Increases in the use of Fentanyl in Ventura County and that related national trends are continuing to evolve guiding VCBH’s ongoing efforts to address the opioid crisis and illicitly manufactured pills that may contain Fentanyl and a whole range of other substance use issues. • Recent findings from the <i>Journal of American Medical Association</i> about the national scene in terms of people who use drugs in 2019, showed that there were 70,630 overdose deaths in the United States and a 4.3% increase over 2018. About 71% of these were opioids – 52% synthetic opioids that are not methadone. • Fentanyl is now displacing much of the Heroin in terms of the predominant opioid of use for illicit supply. • No state in the U.S. has had a significant decrease in the opioid death rate between 2018 and 2019 – and, the Western Region of the U.S. had the highest opioid death rate. • www.VenturaCountyResponds.org has more information and the entire Ventura County Medical Examiner’s Report is available there. • To address the opioid epidemic, in 2012, Ventura County started an Rx Drug & Heroin Workgroup. At that time, Oxycontin was the primary focus and a lot of people were then concerned about a resurgence of Heroin whereas today, Fentanyl and Meth. • Local 2020 data from the Ventura County Medical Examiner’s Office recently was released showing overdose deaths between year to year increased more than 45%. Accidental overdoses increased by 75% whereas suicide overdoses decreased by 5%. • Locally, Fentanyl contributed to 54 more deaths in 2020 than in the previous year and 34 more overdose deaths from benzodiazepine occurred in 2020 than in 2019. • There were 203 accidental overdoses out of 706 actual postmortem exams. • VCBH – SUS – Prevention has coordinated with VC Law Enforcement, the VC Medical Examiner’s Office, VC Emergency Medical Services and others to create a naloxone distribution program to provide life-saving Naloxone in Overdose Rescue Kits. This No OD program also trains people on Overdose Prevention Response and how to administer Naloxone. • No OD Kits will soon include 3 doses of Naloxone instead of 2 in order to accommodate the rise in local overdoses. • In 2020, this OD Program documented 317 reversals with Naloxone through the lay Naloxone Program. • VCBH – SUS – Prevention has partnered with Ventura County Public Health to offer information to active users as the syringe replacement program, with harm reduction messaging and more. • Also mentioned as a reference to review for local overdose information and statistics is the COAST Data Dashboard which can be viewed at: www.VenturaCountyResponds.org 		
<p>XI.</p>	<p>Old Business None.</p>		
<p>XII.</p>	<p>New Business Future Presentations – Chair Gardner mentioned that Gabe Teran might arrange for a presentation about the new Wellness Centers.</p>		
<p>XII.</p>	<p>Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.</p>		