Mental health is just as important. Remember that.

Health & Prevention Program
BY DAISEY LOPEZ VALADEZ

The Comprehensive Health & Prevention Program (CHPP) assists schools within each district to support the whole child in a healthy, safe, engaged, and challenged school environment. Some of the areas we focus on include:

- Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD)
- Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE)
- Suicide Prevention and Intervention
- Mental Health and Social-Emotional Learning
- Youth Development

Working collectively with community leaders and community partners, we strive to make a difference in the lives of youth.
Meet the Health & Prevention Team

Dawn Anderson, School Administrator and Credentialed school nurse has been the Director of Health and Prevention Programs for 5 years. She has worked in the health care field in Ventura County for 23 years, serving our community in the hospital, clinic, and school settings. She loves working with our school districts and community agencies to improve student and community health. She recently earned the Ventura County Pillar of Prevention and an Excellence in School Nurse Administrator Awards.

Maritza Martinez was born in Ventura and currently lives in Oxnard. She holds a degree in Communication with an Emphasis in Business and Nonprofit Organizations from California State University of Channel Islands. Maritza has been part of the Ventura County Office of Education family for the past 5 years. She comes from a diverse professional background working with Ventura County School Districts to developing strategic marketing plans for organizations. Maritza enjoys spending quality time with her family and friends, traveling, and recreating her Pinterest crafts.

Catherine Puccetti, LCSW, MPH, has been working for Comprehensive Health and Prevention Programs for almost one year. She previously worked for Ventura Unified School District as the Director for the Neighborhood for Learning, a First 5 funded program serving children ages birth to five and their families. She brings her passion for prevention services to this position as she is the Tobacco Use and Prevention Education Coordinator. When not working she loves to be outdoors and participate in physical activity.

Suzanne Weist, Coordinator

Moose! Lynx and Bears! Oh My! Suzanne joins us from The Last Frontier, Anchorage, Alaska. She earned a master's degree in Education focusing on K-12 School and Agency Counseling. She holds a PPS credential in the states of California and Alaska. Suzanne has been working with youth for over 10 years, eight of which have been in Anchorage, Alaska. She grew up in California and decided to move back to be closer to family. Working with at-risk youth and special populations has always been a passion and focus of hers. She has presented at the state and federal levels showcasing the positive impact youth programs provide. She enjoys collaborating with others to develop and maintain consistent approaches of supporting and expanding personal growth and leadership skills of young people.
Meet the Health & Prevention Team

Gabe Teran
Operations Specialist

Gabe has worked in the fields of prevention, education, and health advocacy since 2003. For the first seven years of his career, he worked in substance use disorder treatment services, specializing in treatment of adolescents, and provided individual, group, and family counseling services. Since 2008, he has worked in the Comprehensive Health and Prevention Programs department with the Ventura County Office of Education, overseeing Ventura County’s implementation of the statewide Friday Night Live youth development and leadership program. Through this role, he has developed programming and trained hundreds of young people and adult educators from across Ventura County and the state of California in the areas of substance use prevention and positive health promotion.

Amber Macias
Project Specialist Technician

Amber grew up in Ventura California with her mom, dad and sister. In 2018, she purchased a home in Camarillo with her husband to be closer to their workplaces. She earned her Bachelor’s degree in Sociology from the University of California, Santa Barbara and her Master’s Degree in Educational Counseling with a PPS Credential in School Counseling from Azusa Pacific University. Amber has worked for the Ventura County of Education for the past 11+ years in multiple roles including the Regional Occupational Program, Teacher Support, After School Programs and Human Resources. Amber has also worked with Special Education students at Sylvan Learning Center, managed a youth summer camp and worked at the children’s center at the YMCA. In Amber’s spare time, she loves spending quality time with family and friends, going on fun adventures with her husband and working on house projects.

Alejandra Valencia
Project Specialist

Alejandra Valencia was born and raised in Oxnard California. She holds a BA in Communications with an emphasis in Social Change and Rhetoric from California State University, Los Angeles. Alejandra joined the VCOE team in November of 2019. For the past 6 years she has been working with youth from all over Ventura County and focusing her efforts in developing and expanding programs that focus on youth development / advocacy.

Daisey Lopez Valadez
Project Specialist

Daisey was born in Texas but raised in California, living in the cities of Santa Barbara and Oxnard, since she was a toddler. Currently, she is living in the City of Sherman Oaks with her husband and dog. Daisey has achieved a BA in Chicana/o Studies focusing on health disparities and a Master of Public Health with a focus on the community health sciences. She began working with the Ventura County Office of Education in November 2019 in the Health and Prevention program to expand efforts on Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI). Previously, she was working with the Tobacco Policy Program with the Ventura County Department of Public Health. Daisey is excited to continue working with community members and youth to create positive lifestyles.
March

Gender Equality Month
Women's History Month
Youth Art Month

1st Self-Injury Awareness Day
8th International Women's Day
21st International Day for the elimination of Racial Discrimination
31st Transgender Day of Visibility

April

Alcohol Awareness Month
Child abuse Prevention Month
Counseling Awareness Month
Month of the Military child
Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

2nd National Alcohol Screening Day
7th Sexual Assault Awareness Day of Action
22nd Earth Day
24th Day of Silence
Upcoming Training's

March

18th California Health Education Framework Rollout Project from 8:30am-3:30pm
https://vcoe.k12oms.org/eventdetail.php?id=181174

April

2nd safeTALK-Suicide Alertness Training from 2pm-5pm
https://vcoe.k12oms.org/eventdetail.php?id=171628

21st Healthy, Safe, and Supportive Schools: the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Youth from 8:30am-3pm
https://vcoe.k12oms.org/eventdetail.php?id=178999

21st Health Educators Community of Practice from 3:30pm-5:30pm
https://vcoe.k12oms.org/eventdetail.php?id=181336

21st & 22nd ASIST (2-day) Training from 9am-4p
https://vcoe.k12oms.org/eventdetail.php?id=180170
Staff Contacts

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If you would like to highlight a peer, student, or staff member for their hard work and dedication towards reducing stress and stigma around mental health please share with us.

Stay tuned for program updates

To be added to the VCOE-CHPP newsletter subscription, follow the link below
https://forms.gle/ajQA4rohfeajZHUG8