ISSUE 4: HEALTHY HOLIDAYS

IMPACT!

PUBLIC HEALTH AMBASSADORS NEWSLETTER

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health values the important and innovative work that our Parent, Student, and Early Childhood Public Health Ambassadors are doing across Los Angeles County to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and keep communities thriving. *Impact!* is a monthly newsletter for our community partners with valuable health resources and learning opportunities that highlight the great work of our Public Health Ambassadors and the community at large.

How do you make an IMPACT?

WHAT'S NEW?

01 ***Keeping Kids Safe from Fentanyl***

02 ***Public Health Ambassador Spotlights***

03 ***Staying Safe During the Holidays***

04 ***Double Protection - Flu & COVID-19***

05 ***Wellness Corner***

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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Public Health

KEEPING KIDS SAFE FROM FENTANYL

In November, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) Public Health Ambassador Program in partnership with Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Unit (SAPC), hosted over 500 parents and students from across Los Angeles County, to talk about recent youth opioid trends and risks and shared lifesaving information including how to use Naloxone to reverse the effects of overdose.

This month, the LACDPH Public Health Ambassador Program is once again partnering with SAPC to offer an interactive follow-up to the November youth opioid prevention training: **Fentanyl/Naloxone Public Health Ambassador Training Part II: Let's talk more about youth opioid prevention**. Parents will learn tips to talk to teens about opioids, like Fentanyl, and students will learn strategies to refuse and resist opioids when offered.

Participation is free. Attending Part I is not required to attend this training. Registration details can be found below. First time Public Health Ambassador trainees will receive a $25 electronic gift stipend for their participation in this training.

Fentanyl/Naloxone Public Health Ambassador Training Part II: ***Let's talk more about youth opioid prevention***

Parent Training Dates/Times
Tues. 12/13 @6-7pm (English)
Thurs. 12/15 @6-7pm (Spanish)
Register here

Student Training Dates/Times
Thurs. 12/15 @5-6pm
Register here

Questions? Email TK12Ambassador@ph.lacounty.gov

PUBLIC HEALTH AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHTS

STUDENT PUBLIC HEALTH AMBASSADORS, ASHLYN SZE AND JOURNEY WALOK, EDUCATE THEIR CLASSMATES ABOUT WAYS TO KEEP THEMSELVES FROM GETTING SICK WITH COVID-19.

Student Public Health Ambassador, Journey Walok

DPH: What COVID-19 information from the Public Health Ambassador training have you shared with others?

Journey: I have shared that COVID-19 has affected many people regardless of their age, nationality, or beliefs. Marginalized people have been more severely affected by COVID-19. I have emphasized the importance of washing hands, using sanitizer and getting fully vaccinated to reduce the spread of COVID-19. I have explained some myths about the vaccine. For example, the vaccine does not give you COVID-19 or cause infertility.

DPH: How did you share this information with others?

Journey: I have spoken to classmates, friends and family members.

Student Public Health Ambassador, Ashlyn Sze

DPH: What COVID-19 information from the Public Health Ambassador training have you shared with others?

Ashlyn: I have spread the importance of staying home when sick and the importance of [most] people in a community getting the vaccine to initiate herd immunity.

DPH: How did you share this information with others?

Ashlyn: I shared this information by simply opening discussion about this topic, [as it is] a relevant discussion and we should not disregard the virus. We should still prioritize our health and stay safe.

HOW DO YOU STAY HEALTHY FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

In case you missed our November **Staying Healthy for the Holidays** Parent and Student Public Health Ambassador trainings, below are several helpful ways that you can prevent the spread of respiratory illness as you gather with loved ones this holiday season.

1. Get vaccinated for the flu and boosted for COVID-19 with the new bivalent booster.
2. Wear a mask that fits and filters well indoors in public spaces, including at schools and worksites.
3. Stay home if you're sick.
4. Cover coughs and sneezes.
5. Wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer often.
6. Improve indoor air quality.
7. Get tested for COVID-19
    a. Before gathering with others
    b. Before returning to school from break
    c. After travel

For current COVID-19 case, hospitalization, and testing positivity rate, visit the LA County COVID-19 Data Dashboard. Learn about RSV. The Winter Break COVID-19 Toolkit has more great resources for you!

COVID-19 BOOSTERS

COVID-19 protection needs to be regularly updated, just like our cell phones. The virus that causes COVID-19 has changed a lot over the past two and a half years. New variants of the virus can get us sick even if we are vaccinated

COVID-19 protection needs to be regularly updated, just like our cell phones. The virus that causes COVID-19 has changed a lot over the past two and a half years. New variants of the virus can get us sick even if we are vaccinated or we have had COVID-19 before. Get your COVID-19 booster today at any of the over 1,000 sites across LA County!

MASKS NOW STRONGLY RECOMMENDED INDOORS

COVID-19 cases continue to rise. The elevated transmission means masking is now strongly recommended for all individuals. A high-quality mask that fits well is recommended in the following settings:

- In public indoor spaces, including child care and K-12 school settings;
- When using public transit, including buses, ride shares, taxis, and medical transport;
- Correctional and detention facilities;
- And homeless and emergency shelters.

Masking continues to be required:

- For people who have been exposed to COVID-19 during the past 10 days;
- In healthcare settings and congregate care facilities;
- And anywhere where it is required by the site.

WELLNESS CORNER

MANAGE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE HOLIDAYS

A study from the National Alliance on Mental Illness showed that 64% of people with a mental illness report that holidays make their existing conditions worse.

Use these tips to reduce stress and support your mental health during the holidays:

- Stay COVID-19 safe. Follow recommendations like masking, vaccines, and testing found throughout this issue of Impact!
- Accept your needs. Identify the things that trigger you. Once you know this, you can take steps to avoid or cope with the stress that is causes.
- Manage your time. Don't try to do too much. Prioritize your needs, make time for activities that make you happy. A daily schedule can help you make sure you don't overwhelm yourself with tasks and deadlines. Say no to plans that don't fit in your schedule and do not make you feel good.
- Set boundaries. Family dynamics can be complex. Acknowledge this and accept that you can only control your role.
- Exercise daily. Walk, bike, jog, dance, jump rope, and make it fun. Exercise naturally produces stress relieving hormones.
- Eat nutritious foods. This can feel difficult during the holidays, but it's important to try to eat a healthy diet throughout. Unprocessed foods, whole grains, vegetables, fruits and lean proteins are nutritious choices.
- Get outside! Studies show that time in nature reduces stress. Find your local park and take a walk.

For more information and resources, see Maintaining Mental Health During the Holiday Season, 11 Ways to Manage Mental Health During the Holiday Season, and Holiday Resources.

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