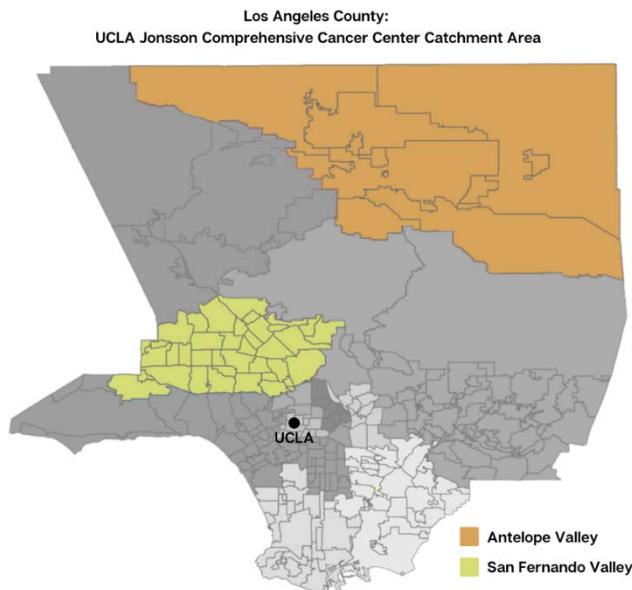


# Community Outreach and Engagement UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center

## Catchment Area

The catchment area of the UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center (JCCC) is Los Angeles County (LAC), California, the most populous and diverse county in the United States. Latinos comprise the largest ethnic group in LAC (49 percent). A majority of LAC Latinos are foreign-born (61 percent), 41 percent have less than a high school degree, and 25 percent live in poverty (2019 U.S. Census). The Antelope and San Fernando Valley regions, which include rural areas and have fewer health services than other parts of the county, are home to a large proportion of LAC's low-income, Latinx population.



## Public Health Focus

E-cigarette use, or vaping, is a serious national health concern. The National Youth Tobacco Survey reported that 1 in 5 high school students and 1 in 20 middle school students used e-cigarettes in 2020. Similarly, the California Healthy Kids Survey found that 1 in 10 high

school students and 1 in 25 middle school students in LAC used e-cigarettes in 2019. Community-based efforts to address the dangers of vaping are taking place across the United States, particularly through schools. Unfortunately, messages about the dangers of these products, signs of use among children, and strategies for intervening have not reached many low-income, Latinx communities. JCCC stakeholders shared a profound need for culturally and linguistically appropriate e-cigarette programming for the Spanish-speaking Latinx community. In particular, they conveyed a need for programs aimed to educate and empower parents so that they may address vaping with their adolescent children.

## At a Glance

In close collaboration with long-time community partner Visión y Compromiso (VyC), the JCCC's Community Outreach and Engagement (COE) team adapted e-cigarette prevention programming for use by promotores, or community health workers, who serve low-income Latinx communities in LAC. We trained 61 promotores to deliver this programming, and more than 650 community members in LAC's Antelope and San Fernando Valley regions received the program during the one-year project period. A majority of participants (82 percent) expressed an intent to discuss e-cigarettes with their children following program participation.

## Collaborators

Visión y Compromiso (VyC), a promotores support agency with a 20-year history of capacity building in Southern California, trains and empowers promotores to provide timely and culturally appropriate health programming. VyC was eager to partner with the JCCC in this project, given repeated requests from promotores for e-cigarette

information and resources. To guide our collaborative work, the JCCC's COE team convened a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) of JCCC tobacco/e-cigarette researchers, promotores, and leaders of promotores agencies, as well as tobacco control leaders from LAC's Antelope and San Fernando Valleys.

## The Approach

Our project had four aims: (1) identify and adapt evidence-informed e-cigarette education for use by promotores and develop a training curriculum for promotores; (2) train promotores to deliver e-cigarette education and prevention programming in LAC Latinx communities; (3) support and evaluate program delivery; and (4) disseminate program materials and evaluation results.

**Program Development:** We identified evidence-informed resources created by Stanford University, Partnership to End Drug Addiction, and the American Lung Association to inform development of a two-day promotores training curriculum as well as materials for promotores to use with community members (flipchart, manual, community resources handout). We conducted six focus groups to guide this work, two with Latinx youth, two with Spanish-speaking parents, and two with LAC promotores.



Cover of Flipchart used by promotores

**Promotores Training, Program Delivery, and Monitoring:** We trained four cohorts of promotores (n=61) to deliver community sessions, or “charlas,” focused on the dangers of e-cigarettes and strategies for

communicating with youth about this topic. VyC hired five of the promotores to deliver charlas with Spanish-speaking Latinx parents in the targeted geographic regions. They held charlas in community and virtual settings over a three-month period, reaching over 650 community members. We observed the charlas and provided feedback to promotores, monitored participants' completion of post-program surveys (n=353), and conducted key informant interviews with a sample of program participants (n=50). Surveys assessed participants' e-cigarette knowledge and intentions to address vaping with their children. Interviews aimed to inform ongoing program revisions.

**Program Revision:** To guide additional program revisions, we conducted three focus groups with promotores who had led charlas with community members following the training. Promotores shared their experiences in program delivery, including their perspectives related to feasibility and acceptability, and modification suggestions. Information obtained through these groups was shared with the PAC to inform ongoing program refinement and dissemination activities.

**Outcomes:** The initial focus groups conducted with youth, parents, and promotores informed adaptation of existing resources and, more generally, the development of our promotores training curriculum and community-facing materials. These groups provided critical information related to Spanish-language terminology used in the community to describe e-cigarettes and vaping, the need for clear images of e-cigarette devices, and the importance of addressing vaping of cannabis among youth. These groups also provided specific guidance for ways that Latinx parents can begin and maintain open communication with their adolescent children about vaping, to prevent initiation or aide cessation.

Sixty-one promotores completed the two-day program training. A pre-post assessment demonstrated significant knowledge increases. For example, after completing the training, a majority of promotores agreed that the unknown long-term health risks related to vaping are concerning, compared to only one-third prior to training (82 percent vs.

36 percent,  $p < 0.001$ ). Nearly all promotores (93 percent) indicated confidence in their ability to deliver e-cigarette sessions in the community following the training.

Promotores were eager to deliver the information they learned and share program resources with community members, and repeatedly conveyed to the UCLA/VyC team that they received strong interest from parents who wanted to attend their charlas. However, the pandemic presented barriers to program delivery, given that promotores were unable to schedule classes in community settings and had challenges coordinating and hosting virtual sessions. Nonetheless, the five promotores hired specifically for this program delivered charlas with over 650 community members from the San Fernando and Antelope Valley regions of LAC over a three-month period.

Three hundred fifty-three community members completed brief post-program surveys. Nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of these individuals answered all items correctly, and 82 percent indicated an intention to have a conversation about vaping with their children that week. Post-program key informant interviews ( $n=50$ ) revealed that participants found details about e-cigarette devices, including what they look like and how they work, strategies for parent-child communication, and information about the health risks associated with e-cigarette use to be the most impactful components of the program.

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**A lot of parents had heard about [e-cigarettes] but had never seen them or had any idea that the devices can look like school supplies. And we of course explained it to them but also a lot of parents were shocked . . . what most surprised them was that they can be connected, like a USB, to a computer. They had no idea.**  
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—Promotora, post-program delivery focus group

In focus groups conducted after promotores had delivered at least one charla, we heard that program information and materials were highly impactful for community members. Promotores shared that materials were simple, clear, and easy to understand for their audiences. All agreed the training had prepared them well and indicated that they would continue delivering the charlas in the future.

## Implementation Guidance

### Guide promotores in obtaining sample devices:

Program participants frequently asked promotores to see and touch e-cigarette devices. Promotores and community members alike indicated this would enhance their understanding, since few had been directly exposed to these devices and, therefore, may be unable to identify them. It would be beneficial to empower promotores who will deliver this program and other e-cigarette education to obtain sample vaping devices for use in their charlas. Our PAC suggested that promotores may request confiscated devices from schools or ask friends, family, or even vape shops to donate old or non-functioning devices.

### Close collaboration with schools and school districts:

Schools are the preferred setting for many promotores who deliver community education sessions. It is common for schools to require that materials shared with their parents are approved prior to dissemination. Given this, collaboration with schools and school districts even prior to promotores trainings is highly encouraged as a part of implementation planning. This step should greatly facilitate promotores' ability to schedule and conduct sessions with community members.

**Future Plans:** We are working to further refine our materials based on guidance from the promotores who used them in the community. We are also translating all materials to English for use by community health workers who serve non-Spanish speaking populations. With VyC and our PAC, we will disseminate these critical resources to other promotores organizations in LAC and California. We are eager to share these materials and look forward to supporting the growing evidence-base in the area of e-cigarette/vaping prevention and control.



## Find Out More

The UCLA JCCC COE team conducts and supports health promotion and disease prevention activities to mitigate cancer disparities throughout the greater Los Angeles County area via community and academic partnerships, evidence-based programming, and the dissemination of best practices and research findings. To learn more, visit: <https://healthequity.ucla.edu/>

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## Contact

**Alison K. Herrmann, PhD**  
 aherrmann@ucla.edu

**Diana Trujillo**  
 d.trujillo@ucla.edu

## Community outreach and engagement (COE) activities across the translational research continuum

National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer centers' COE efforts should span all cancer center programs, including basic, clinical, translational, and population research. In FY20, NCI issued a call for Cancer Center Administrative Supplements to support COE activities that focus on either basic science or the translation of evidence-based interventions into community practice. The long-term goal of the supplement initiative is to build capacity for cancer centers' COE programs to adapt and implement evidence-based programs and successfully collaborate with cancer center investigators across research programs and in partnership with community members. To learn more, visit us at: <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/research-emphasis/coe>