



PALA YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER

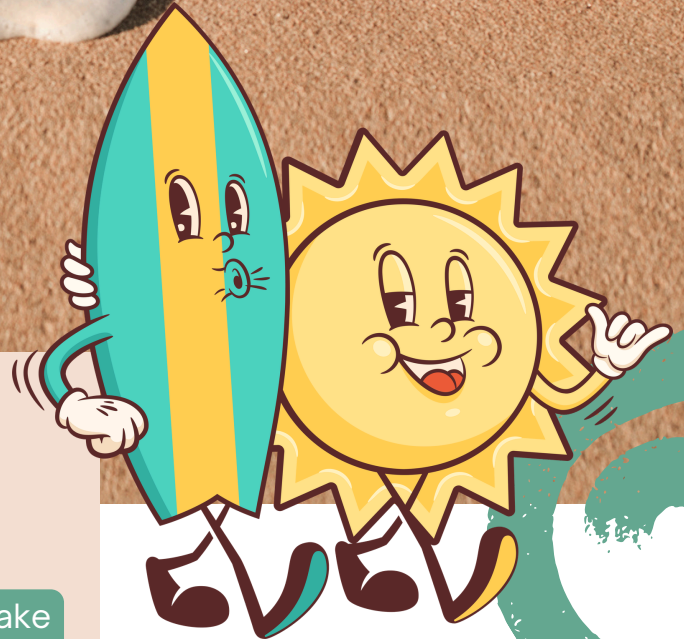
June 2026

Vol. 36

School out for summer

School's out, and summer is finally here! 🎉

Summer is a time to relax, have fun, and make memories with friends and family. Whether you're traveling, spending time outdoors, joining community events, or just enjoying a break from schoolwork, remember to make choices that support your health, safety, and future.

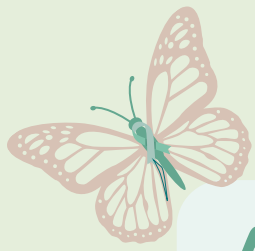


NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH

National Safety Month, held annually in June and led by the National Safety Council (NSC), focuses on reducing leading causes of preventable injuries and deaths at work and in homes. Since 1996, this initiative provides free resources, posters, and 5-minute safety talks to promote a culture of safety

STAY SAFE





NATIONAL PTSD AWARENESS MONTH



Check in
on
friends
and
family
members



AWARENESS FOR TEENS

National PTSD Awareness Day, observed annually on June 27th, focuses on educating the public and reducing the stigma around PTSD, which affects teens through trauma from abuse, accidents, or disasters. It is crucial to recognize symptoms in teens, like flashbacks, emotional numbness, or acting out, and encourage seeking professional help.



RESOURCES FOR TEENS

- [National Center for PTSD](#) — Information about PTSD symptoms, treatment, coping skills, and awareness materials.
- [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) — Free 24/7 support by call or text for anyone in emotional distress.
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\) Teen & Young Adult Help](#) — Mental health education and support for teens and young adults.
- [The Trevor Project](#) — Crisis support and mental health resources for LGBTQ+ youth.
- [SAMHSA National Helpline](#) — Mental health and substance use treatment referrals.
- [Jed Foundation](#) — Teen and young adult emotional wellness resources.
- [PTSD Coach App](#) — Tools for stress management, grounding, and coping strategies.



Wear teal
or green to
support
mental
health
awareness





June is NATIONAL SAFETY MONTH

June: National Safety Month

June is recognized as National Safety Month by the National Safety Council (NSC), with a focus on preventing injuries and fatalities. Safety is important to watch for, not only in the home, but at work, in the car while driving, and in all aspects of daily life. It's a time to reflect on the best practices that keep us and those around us safe. The NSC encourages everyone to be proactive about safety by identifying potential hazards, staying informed about safety protocols, and ensuring that safety equipment is properly maintained and used.

Throughout the month, various themes are emphasized, such as emergency preparedness, workplace safety, and mental health. These topics remind us of the importance of creating a culture of safety and health where we live and work. By staying vigilant and informed, we can significantly reduce the risk of accidents and promote a healthier, safer environment for everyone.





Pala Tobacco
PROGRAM

Escape the Experiment

NEWS **kpbs**

Warning: High-dose nicotine products can cause lung damage, gum lesions, and rapid addiction.



Source: KPBS.org, April 6, 2026

© 2026 California Department of Public Health

UNDO END TOBACCO DAMAGE NOW

Californians are fighting back against Big Nicotine alongside a new, state-wide campaign that comes with a strong warning: a new generation of nicotine products have hit the market before the long-term health effects have been studied.

Young adults don't realize they've become a part of Big Nicotine's real-time experiment. The results are already showing up: lung damage, gum lesions, and rapid addiction.

Don't let the industry addict another generation of young people.



Kick It California

Kick It California is a free program that helps Californians quit vaping, smoking, and other tobacco products through personalized support, coaching, text messaging programs, and helpful resources. The program is available for youth and young adults and is completely confidential.



Gun Violence Awareness Month

Native youth recognize National Gun Violence Awareness Day—widely known as #WearOrange Day—which falls on the first Friday in June, and is followed by Wear Orange Weekend. Indigenous youth groups and advocates participate to honor victims, raise awareness about disproportionate firearm violence in Native communities, and demand safer futures.



Hispanic and Indigenous people are more than **twice as likely** to die by gun violence than white people.

Get the facts about gun violence
www.sandyhookpromise.org/BIPOC



#WearOrange
#ProtectOurKids
#EndGunViolence



TALK ABOUT GUN SAFETY AT HOME

6.7 million children in the U.S. live in homes with unlocked and loaded guns.

To help prevent kids in your community from experiencing gun violence, one thing you can do is talk with other concerned adults about secure gun storage. If you're a parent talking with another parent, you may also find our parent-to-parent conversation guide helpful.

Many people don't know that home gun safety measures are a proven way to prevent gun-related deaths and injuries—including unintentional shootings, gun suicides, and intentional shootings. Conversations about preventing access to guns can help others understand the risks and encourage them to secure the guns in their home.

ADULTING AFTER GRADUATION

A NEW JOURNEY FOR YOUTH

Take one step at a time, lean into your strengths, and don't be afraid to reach out for support. You carry generations of wisdom, and your future holds endless possibility.



RESOURCES

After Graduation Check List

- Do not be afraid to fail
- Be open to change, do not be scared to step outside of your bubble
- Learn from the experts and find a mentor to lean on for advice
- Remember to take breaks
- Figure out what you are good at
- Create a Resume
- Actively look for a job
- Take on internships
- Enroll in college or trade school
- Financial Managing



Adulting After College

Graduating college is a powerful milestone — one that comes with both pride and new challenges. The shift into adulthood can feel overwhelming as you navigate finding a job, managing finances, securing housing, or even just figuring out what comes next. For Native youth, this transition is also about holding on to cultural identity, staying grounded in community, and walking in two worlds.

It's okay to not have everything figured out right away. Your path doesn't have to look like everyone else's — it just has to be yours.

"When you walk in the world with your ancestors behind you, you're never truly alone."
— Native Proverb

Education & Scholarships

American Indian College Fund Scholarships, career prep, and tribal college info.

collegefund.org

Native Forward Scholars Fund Scholarships and mentorship for undergraduate and graduate students.

nativeforward.org

AIHEC (American Indian Higher Education Consortium) Info on Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) across the U.S.

aihec.org

Jobs & Internships

Native Youth Community Adaptation and Leadership Congress (NYCALC) – Leadership and environmental internships.



nps.gov/subjects/youthprograms/nycalc.htm

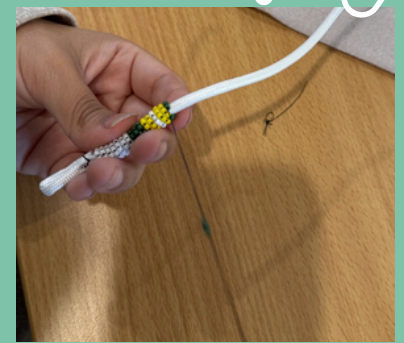
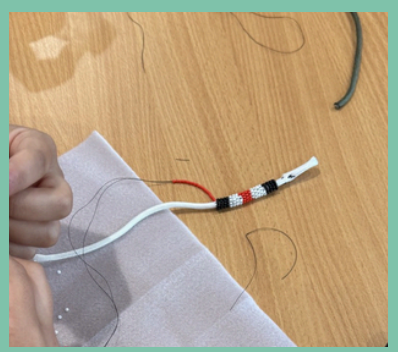
Indian Health Service (IHS) Career Opportunities – Jobs and scholarships for careers in health and wellness.

ihs.gov/careeropps

Congratulations 2026 Graduates!!

WHAT YOUTH ARE UP TO

Over the past month, our youth have been actively participating in ongoing Rooted-N-Culture workshops. These workshops have provided opportunities for youth to connect with their culture, learn new skills, and spend time in a positive and supportive environment.



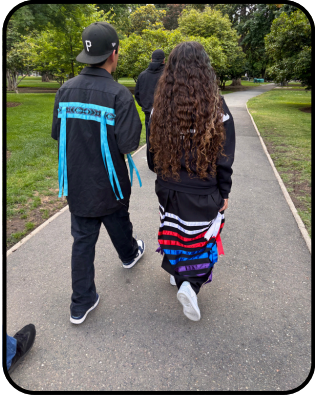
Youth participated in language classes, where they continued learning and strengthening their knowledge of their traditional language. They also took part in a beaded keychain workshop, creating unique pieces while learning cultural art techniques. The youth greatly enjoyed both workshops and appreciated having a space where they could create meaningful cultural items and connect with one another.

As we enter the summer months, we look forward to offering even more Rooted-N-Culture workshops. These activities will continue to provide opportunities for youth to learn about their culture, develop new skills, and build lasting connections within the community. We encourage youth to join us this summer and be a part of these exciting cultural learning experiences!



ANNUAL LEGISLATION / MMIP WEEK

Sacramento, CA.
May 4 - 7, 2026



The youth had the opportunity to participate in the candlelight vigil service for the second time this year. Our own, Evan Pepper, spoke at the press conference held the morning of the candlelight vigil. MMIP is an important issue for youth to learn about and understand, including the statistics impacting Indian Country and how often our people and their cases go unseen or unrecognized in the public eye. Having our youth present to speak up and share their voices on why this epidemic matters is meaningful and helps bring awareness to the ongoing MMIP crisis.

PHRC EVENTS

Pala Youth Empowerment Initiative

WE ARE OPEN

JUNE

June Schedule

Monday - Friday 10:30 am-7 pm

Closed: June 25th

For Any Questions
Contact Paula Ellenwood
(760) 638-1767



Pala Youth Empowerment Initiative Presents

DRIVING LESSONS

Attention all youth enrolled in online driving school classes! The PHRC is offering a space where you can complete your online classes and get answers to any questions you may have about the driving school.

Every Wednesday starting January 14, 2026

4:30 pm-6:30 pm

*check-ins are required



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



REGISTRATION NOW

Contact: Maria Villegas
(760) 315-0104




REGISTER NOW



The Pala Housing Resource Center is calling all youth 15 and up to join the waiting list for driving school. Let's work together on getting our youth safely on the road.


PHRC EVENTS

PALA YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE



ROOTED-N-CULTURE

June 19 & 26, 2026



PALA YOUTH 12-24

Basket Weaving

Instructors: Tishmal Herrera

Pala Housing Resource Center


11:00 am - 2:00 pm

CONTACT: PAULA (760) 638-1676 OR DEANN DRA (760) 893-0769

PALA YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE

PALA HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER & CUPA CULTURAL CENTER PRESENT

CUPEÑO LANGUAGE CLASS




STARTS IN-PERSON

JUNE 3

WEDNESDAY

10TH, 17TH, 24TH

3:30PM - 4:30PM

AGES 12-24



Join us @ PHRC for an exciting journey into the Cupeño language! Youth Ages 12 - 24, come and learn with our awesome instructor, John A. Machado. With his guidance and a fun, structured curriculum, you'll expand your language skills! Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to connect with the Cupeño culture.

@PALA HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER

CONTACT: PAULA ELLENWOOD (760) 638-1676

ROOTED-N-CULTURE WORKSHOPS

The Pala Tobacco Program

YOUTH ADVOCACY CONFERENCE

REGISTER BY JUNE 8TH

Ages 14-17



July 13-16

CYAN's annual statewide conference is designed for youth who are working on making their communities smoke and commercial tobacco-free, and offers them the opportunity to learn more about advocacy and practice their skills.

More info: <https://www.cyanonline.org/youth-advocacy-conference>

HAPPY VALLEY CONFERENCE CENTER, SANTA CRUZ

LIMITED SPACES

If interested: Deann Dra Molina (760) 893-0769



TOBACCO LOGO Competition

OPEN FOR PALA YOUTH!

The Pala Tobacco Program is hosting a Logo Design Contest, and we want to see your creativity shine! We are looking for a logo that represents the mission of the Pala Tobacco Program while honoring our cultural values and traditions.

Submission Deadline: 27 July 2026

Youth Ages 12 and 25



Register now: dmolina@palatrive.com



PALA COMMUNITY EVENTS



Pala Youth Center
~SUMMER KICK OFF~
BIKE RODEO
JUNE 12TH
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

BIKE SAFETY~ SAFETY COURSE~ FREE BIKE HELMETS
WATER SLIDES~ MUSIC~ RAFFLES~ LUNCH PROVIDED

PALA ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
12192 PALA MISSION RD. PALA, CA. 92059

BRING YOUR BIKE. E-BIKE. OR SCOOTER

IN COLLABORATION WITH



“Chemwáxalyim, Our Little Sisters”

Basketball Camp



Pala girls 11 and under.
 At least 5 years old.

Let's get ready for Pala ITS Summer Basketball

For the first hour of camp the Big Sisters buddy up with the Little Sisters and help them work on basic fundamentals. Then the Little Sisters go home and the Big Sister will continue to work on their own fundamentals.

Pala Fitness Center

Saturday May 30

Saturday June 6

Little Sisters 9am-10:00am

Big Sister 9am-11:30am



Contact: April Cantu Acantu@palatribe.com
 Anna Rameshwar Arameshwar@palatribe.com
 760-696-0018 text

SOFTBALL

Throwing and Catching Practice

'íi Táwpa!

Pala Youth Co-ed C-level

11U at least 8-years old

This Summer

Improve your throwing and catching skills for ITS fall ball.
 Walking or running laps for the first half hour is required.



Bring a glove.
 Bring water.
Wednesday Mornings
Starting June 10
June and July
7:30am- 9:00am
Women's Field



Acantu@palatribe.com
Arameshwar@palatribe.com
 Text: 760-696-0018

PALA COMMUNITY EVENTS



PALA
Pop Up Shop

JUNE 26, 2026

10AM-4PM
PALA MISSION PARK
11773 PALA MISSION CIRCLE

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

FOR VENDOR INFO
CONTACT APRIL
760-638-6462



HELLO SUMMER



COASTAL DEFENDERS KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE WATER GUARDIANSHIP TRAINING

Sun, June 7, 2026

3 LOCATIONS:

UCSD CANYONVIEW AQUATIC CENTER POOL
SCRIPPS INSTITUTION OF OCEANOGRAPHY
LA JOLLA SHORES

**BREAKFAST,
LUNCH, & DINNER
INCLUDED**

BUS DEPARTS PALA ADMINISTRATION BUILDING @ 8:30pm & RETURNS @ 6pm

PALA YOUTH JOIN IN FOR A DAY (9:30am-5pm) OF...

AQUATICS:

CPR/FIRST AID, PADDLING, SCUBA DIVING, SNORKELING,
SWIMMING, WATER SAFETY

RESEARCH:

AQUACULTURE, COASTAL POLICY + WATER RIGHTS, MAPPING,
MARINE PROTECTED AREAS (MPA'S) MARITIME OPERATIONS,
MODELING MONITORING

Scan QR Code
to Register



Questions:
Tina Fernandez
(760) 891-3510
tfernandez@palatribe.com



EVENTS 2026

Hosted by
INTER TRIBAL SPORTS
16th Annual Charity Golf Tournament

Foursome Team \$1000 before May 15th
Late Registration \$1100
All inclusive food & drinks, on course games, awards dinner
Questions? info@intertribalsports.org

REGISTER NOW

June 18, 2026 Shotgun Start @10am **PALA MESA GOLF COURSE**

San Diego American Indian Health Center
[Learn more sdaihc.org](http://sdaihc.org)

Announcing...
GONA
Gathering of Native Americans

ABOUT GONA

GONA (Gathering of Native Americans) is a 3-day gathering that brings together Native youth, families, and elders to strengthen connections to community and traditions while fostering a sense of belonging for youth and young adults (ages 12-24) through hands-on learning, activities, and storytelling.

July 24th, 25th, and 26th
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Daily
Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve Campground
9310 Fanita Parkway, Santee CA 92071

Scan QR Code to RSVP for GONA

Please note: GONA is designed as a daily community gathering experience rather than an overnight retreat. Join us for one day or all three- all are welcome!

Questions? Contact Red Mair and Andrea Wilbur at GONA@sdaihc.org

Please join
THE PALA BAND OF MISSION INDIANS
FOR OUR ANNUAL
Fireworks Show

Saturday, June 27, 2026 @ Dusk

Parking & viewing available at Pala Administration building

Please bring your own chairs for seating

TEPOC INVITES YOU TO
FAMILY NIGHT
GOURD BIRDHOUSE PAINTING
DINNER, DRINKS AND CRAFT SUPPLIES PROVIDED

JUNE 18 • 5pm -8pm
IHC Rincon MPR

PLEASE REGISTER!!
SEATING & CRAFT SUPPLIES ARE LIMITED!

1 GOURD PER PERSON
****please note that gourds are provided for ages 5 and up**

QUESTIONS CONTACT CHRISSY AT 760-749-1410 EXT 5504

COMMUNITY RESOURCES



LITTLE FEATHERS PRESCHOOL ENROLL TODAY!

Join us today! We can't wait to welcome your little one into our warm, nurturing community.

- ✓ Open to ages 2-4 years old
- ✓ Part-time and Full-time
- ✓ Reasonable Rates
- ✓ Occupational & Speech Therapy services on-site

CONTACT US!

📞 760-742-1997 ✉ lfadmin@palatribe.com



ADVENTURE AWAITS
JOIN THE FUN TODAY!



SUMMER PROGRAM FOR 4 & 5 YEAR OLDS

OUR SUMMER PROGRAM INCLUDES:

• FUN WEEKLY THEMES

• DRESS-UP DAYS

• WATER DAYS

• WHILE STILL KEEPING THE

LEARNING GOING ALL SUMMER LONG!

ENDLESS
SUMMER
ADVENTURES

FOR MORE INFORMATION & RATES:
PLEASE CONTACT US AT 760-742-1997 OR
EMAIL: LFADMIN@PALATRIBE.COM

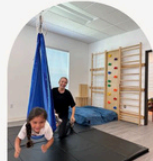
Speech & Sensory Studio

PEDIATRIC THERAPY SERVICES

OUR SERVICES:

SUPPORTING THE WHOLE CHILD THROUGH THERAPY & PLAY

- ✓ HELP CHILDREN AGES 2-6 DEVELOP ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION, MOTOR, AND SELF-REGULATION SKILLS
- ✓ ALL THERAPY IS PROVIDED BY LICENSED SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS
- ✓ USE PLAY-BASED, HANDS-ON, AND INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACHES
- ✓ SUPPORT GROWTH IN:
 - SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
 - FINE MOTOR COORDINATION
 - SENSORY PROCESSING
 - SOCIAL INTERACTION
- ✓ BEGIN WITH A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION TO IDENTIFY EACH CHILD'S UNIQUE STRENGTHS AND NEEDS



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

📞 760-742-1997
✉ lfadmin@palatribe.com
📍 11790 A Pala Mission Circle, Pala, CA, 92059

PALA YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE



“FOR YOUTH BY YOUTH”

WHO WE ARE

The Pala Youth Empowerment Initiative is based on a "For Youth by Youth" approach. We encourage youth to actively be involved with the newsletter, content, training's, podcasts, and activities. We service youth ages 12 to 24 years of age. We strive to provide Pala youth with the life skills needed to become successful adults. Hours of operation Monday through Friday from 10:30 am-7:00 pm and Saturdays held for coordinated events.

MEET THE STAFF



Maria Villegas
Youth Empowerment Lead
Cell: (760) 315-0104
Email: mvillegas@palatribe.com



Paula Ellenwood
Youth Empowerment
Cell: (760) 638-1676
pellenwood@palatribe.com



Deandra Molina
Tobacco Coordinator
Cell: (760) 893-0769
dmolina@palatribe.com

OUR SERVICES

Life Skills

- Cooking Classes
- Driving School
- Budgeting Workshops
- Resume Building

Personal Skill Development

- After School Tutoring
- GED Classes
- Goal Setting
- Community Service

Community Events

- Youth Training/Field Trips
- Community Outreach
- Social Media

Other Services

- Mentorship Guidance
- Career Development
- Youth Mental Health Guidance

 FOLLOW US

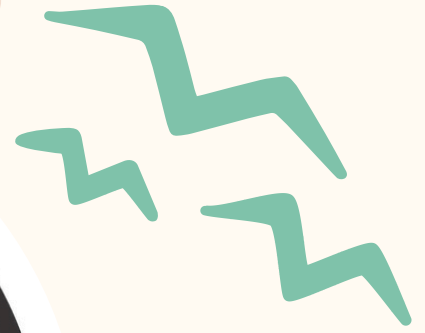
[@palahousingresourcecenter](https://www.instagram.com/palahousingresourcecenter)

www.palahrc.com



PALA YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE

“FOR YOUTH, BY YOUTH”



Location:

35990 Pala Temecula Road
Pala, CA 92059
www.PalaHRC.com

Paula Ellenwood
(760) 638-1676
pellenwood@palatribe.com

Deandra Molina
(760) 893-0769
dmolina@palatribe.com

The Pala Youth Empowerment Initiative is dedicated to preventing youth homelessness by empowering tribal youth, descendants, and community members ages 12 to 24 with the tools and support they need to thrive. Through a youth-guided and culturally grounded approach, we create safe, stable spaces where young people build life skills and transition successfully into adulthood. We provide comprehensive services, including mental health support, education and career readiness, and financial literacy, through both one-on-one mentorship and group learning. Guided by a “for youth, by youth” model, we collaborate with families, elders, and community partners to foster resilience, self-sufficiency, and positive futures.

The Pala Tobacco Program encourages our youth and community to respect the traditional use of tobacco, keeping our culture strong for future generations.