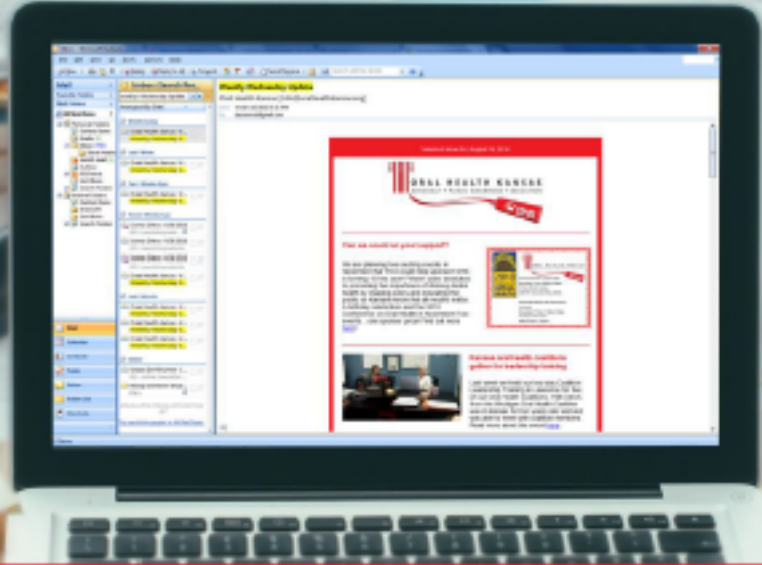




ORAL HEALTH KANSAS
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION



WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATE

The Weekly Wednesday Update is our newsletter which we email every Wednesday with oral health, health and policy updates from around the state and nationally.

To view past issues [click here](#).

Click here to sign up for our [Weekly Wednesday Update](#).

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Celebrate Your Dental Hygienist

Dental hygienists do more than look at your mouth and do x-rays. They look in your mouth to make sure there are no further problems and that you are not at risk for abnormalities. Did you know dental hygienists not only work in private practice but also in safety net clinics, educational institutions, nursing homes, and more.

OHK's Dental Program Director, Kathy Hunt, has been a hygienist for over 30 years and has worked in private practice as well as in public health. She has been instrumental in developing oral health workshops for dental hygiene students and nursing students. Kathy also worked with partner organizations to create [Feeling Good About Your Smile workshops](#); an interactive way for adult with disabilities to learn about ways they can keep their mouth and teeth healthy. These are only a few examples of the important work Kathy does on a daily basis. She truly cares about helping Kansans have healthy mouths and overall health! Thank you Kathy!



Black Maternal Health Week

This week is Black Maternal Health Week! The [Centers of Disease Control and Prevention shared](#) about 75.5% of Black infants are breastfed compared to more than 85% of White and Latinx moms. Breastfeeding is an option some mothers choose to do as a way to feed their baby. Studies have found that babies who were exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months were less likely to have teeth alignment issues such as open bites, crossbites, and overbites, than those exclusively breast fed for shorter lengths of time or not at all. Read more [here](#) to find out why breastfeeding is important for your child's oral health.

There are other benefits to breastfeeding infants. Infants who are breastfed have reduced risks of:

- Asthma
- Obesity
- Type 1 diabetes
- Severe lower respiratory disease

Click [here](#) to read more benefits of breastfeeding. The [Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition](#) is a resource helpful to many parents interested in learning more about breastfeeding.



Oral Cancer Awareness

The month of April is dedicated to raising awareness on oral cancer. Oral cancer affects the mouth and back of the throat. Many times oral cancer begins on the tongue or floor of the mouth. It affects twice as many males as females and primarily affects people above the age of 40. An estimated 54,000 new cases of oral cancer will be diagnosed in the United States this year. Tobacco and/or alcohol use, as well as infections from the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV), are the leading causes of oral cancer. The common symptoms of oral cancer are sore throat, swollen tonsil on one side, white or red patch in the mouth, difficulty in swallowing, ear pain, and a painless lump in the neck. Early detection of oral cancer is important since it spreads quickly. Oral cancer can be diagnosed during routine examinations. The examination is quick and painless and takes only a few minutes. [The Oral Cancer Foundation](#) launched the "[Check Your Mouth](#)" campaign to encourage people to self-discover potentially dangerous abnormalities. For further information, see [Tips & Tricks: Oral Cancer](#).



Upcoming Events

- **Online Event:** Black Maternal Health Week Event, Building for Liberation: Centering Black Mamas, Black Families and Black Systems of Care, April 15. Click [here](#) to register.
- OPEN's New Health Equity Curriculum: Get Involved!
WHEN: Tuesday, April 26th

2:00-2:30 PM CST. Click [here](#) to register!

- **Save the Date!** 16th Kansas Disability Caucus on August 10th-12th. Click [here](#) for details.



In honor of National Public Health Week last week, we recognize OHK Policy Director, Christi Wells, and her service to the Kansas Public Health Association (KPHA)! Christi is currently serving as President-Elect for

KPHA. Her previous roles include Secretary and Oral Health Section Chair. If you'd like to learn more about getting involved in KPHA, contact Christi at cwells@ohks.org.



Sugary Drink Display Sanitation

Out of an abundance of caution, we are suspending use of the Sugary Drink Display until further notice.

During this time, hand washing and social distancing is on everyone's mind. We want everyone to have the comfort of knowing we sanitize our sugary drink displays. They are wiped down and cleaned off after they have been returned.



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