



# ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION

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Last week, OHK Dental Director Kathy Hunt, presented a workshop for the Kansas Head Start Association Early Childhood Conference. Kathy's workshop, *Oral Health Messaging for Pregnant Women and Young Children*, focused on why we should be worried about children's oral health at a young age. She provided messages to share with caregivers and families. She also explained the reasons pregnant women should be concerned with their oral health and design messages for pregnant women

## Save the date for the 2017 Oral Health Kansas Conference!

Brittany Seymour, DDS, MPH, will be our keynote speaker on Friday, November 3. Dr. Seymour will share insight about how the internet and social media have changed our ways of communicating and how the internet shapes the public perception of issues like community water fluoridation. Perception matters more than facts, and this session will help the audience learn to adapt to the changing communication environment.

Dr. Seymour is an assistant professor in the Department of Oral Health Policy and Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine. She is a Faculty Associate at Harvard's Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society and a public health research consultant for MIT's Center on Civic Media.

in a way that will help them understand.

The conference was open to administrators, staff, parents, and early childhood professionals, as well as home visitors, mental health specialists, and special education staff.



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### Best foods for stronger teeth

Do you know what [foods](#) can help with your smile? Apples are a great alkaline fruit and act like a natural exfoliate to take stains off of teeth. Cucumbers are a yummy snack! And have a healthy dose of fiber, vitamin A, antioxidants, potassium, and vitamin K. They are also 95% water! That's a win-win. What other [foods](#) are good for your teeth?



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### Take part in a new KanCare Provider Experience Survey

Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc. is conducting a



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## AHCA jeopardizes oral health for kids and adults

Last week, the US House of Representatives passed the American Health Care Act (AHCA), which is a bill designed to replace the Affordable Care Act or "Obamacare." The bill is now being considered by the US Senate.

Pediatric dental services are included as a part of the "essential health benefits" in the Affordable Care Act. The AHCA would not require the essential health benefits be offered in each state, which means children's dental services may not have to be covered by every state.

Over five million American adults are able to access dental coverage through Medicaid expansion, but the AHCA would phase out Medicaid expansion. Kansas has not yet expanded our Medicaid program (KanCare), but if we do expand it, over 150,000 Kansans would be able to access the preventive dental benefit offered to adults covered by KanCare.

[In an op-ed from Cecile Feldman, Dean of the Rutgers School of Dental Medicine](#) says, "Whatever the fate of healthcare,

KanCare Provider Experience Survey on behalf of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Division of Health Care Finance. The brief survey covers a variety of provider experience questions and is designed to help ensure that the KanCare program is as responsive and provider-friendly as possible.

The survey is estimated to take approximately 5 minutes to complete. May 8, 2017 will be the first day of the survey. Providers are requested to respond to the survey by Friday, May 26, 2017. For any questions regarding the KanCare survey, providers should contact Kelly Stephens, Research Associate at KFMC, 785-271-4112.

[Here](#) is the link to the KanCare Provider Experience Survey.



## Reserve a sugary drink display

If you tried reserving a sugary drink display and we were booked, it's important to reserve one before the slots are full! Reserve a sugary drink display even if its just for a one day event! Reserving yours ahead of time is ensures you can get the date(s) you need. [Sign up now!](#)

Our sugary drink display contains 10 popular beverages and shows how much sugar is in each. We also include some of our [Tips and Tricks handouts](#) and mirror clings! The display is free to use for up to a month, and we reimburse postage!

we urge lawmakers to keep pediatric dental benefits. In fact, we would ask them to go even further by designating dental care as an 'essential' benefit for adults."

The AHCA also would switch the Medicaid program to a block grant, which means each state would receive a fixed amount of money to run its Medicaid program. This is a major departure from the current law that ensures the federal government pays at least 60% of all Medicaid claims. Switching to a block grant could mean many KanCare services are cut and that any expansion of the types of services covered would not be possible.

According to the [Children's Dental Health Project](#), "In addition to increasing premiums and out-of-pocket costs for many Americans, the bill endangers consumer protections and could result in fewer services covered, including dental benefits for children." The bill also would allow states to opt out of guaranteeing insurance coverage for people with pre-existing conditions.



The Senate will begin considering the AHCA after it is scored by the Congressional Budget Office. Scoring is the process by which the non-partisan



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office calculates the cost of the bill and its projected impact.

Even though the Senate has not started its work on the AHCA, it is not too early to contact our Senators to tell them it is important that Kansans need access to affordable dental care. Click to contact [Senator Jerry Moran](#) and [Senator Pat Roberts](#).

## Celebrate Mom, help OHK

Sunday is Mother's Day. Don't forget to buy that special person in your life a gift. Moms teach us how to brush our teeth and remind us to drink more water. Moms are responsible for our smiles!

If you shopping for a gift on-line, you can order from Amazon and help OHK. [Amazon Smile](#) will donate a percentage of your eligible purchase to OHK.

We thank you! And don't forget to thank her!



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