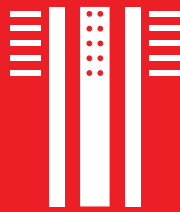


2024 KANSAS ORAL HEALTH REPORT CARD



ORAL HEALTH KANSAS
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION

Kansas Oral Health 2024 REPORT CARD

State Score: 

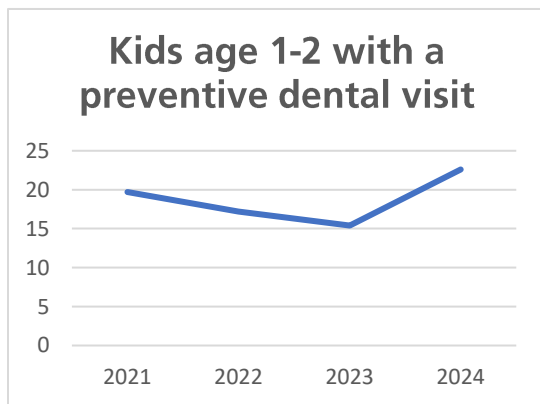
Navigating the Path to Improved Oral Health

Oral Health Kansas is releasing its fourth report comparing Kansas' oral health grade to the nation's performance. The Kansas Oral Health Report Card shows that our state is doing many things right, but that we have a long way to go to ensure that all Kansans are able to maintain their oral health. For the fourth year in a row, Kansas received a grade of C on a series of indicators. **The data shows us where more research, advocacy, and education is needed.**

The 2024 Kansas Oral Health Report Card presents opportunities for stakeholders in the oral health community to take action to improve the dental provider network, especially for people living in poverty and underserved populations, and to increase Kansans' understanding of how to access the dental care they need. We invite dental professionals, managed care organizations, policymakers, community service providers, and consumers to join us in the work to improve oral health for all Kansans.

Improvements

Children enrolled in Medicaid are receiving preventive dental care at higher rates. From the 2023



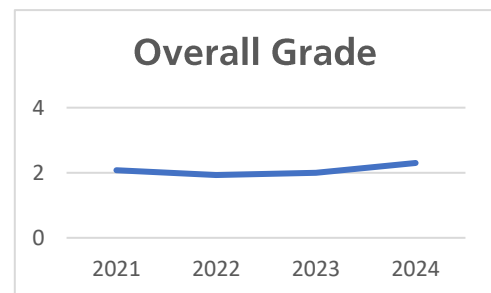
to 2024 Report Card, there were jumps of nearly 10% of children ages 1-2, ages 3-5, and ages 1-20 who received a preventive dental care visit. The steady increase in the number of kids enrolled in Medicaid is an indicator that the trend is going in the right direction, but less than 50% are receiving preventive dental care.

The number of Kansas children overall who had a dental visit in the last year is up to 85%. For many years Kansans have been working to improve kids' access to dental care. The work is not done, but the data shows the trends are going in the right direction.

There is a **slight decrease in the number of older adults who have lost some or all of their natural teeth**, which is a positive sign.

Not enough progress

Since the first Kansas Oral Health Report Card four years ago, there has been **almost no change in outcomes for adults**. About two-thirds of Kansas adults had a dental visit in the last year. This number has not changed over the last four Report Cards. The rate of adults with a dental visit is roughly equivalent to the percentage of Kansas adults who have dental insurance.¹



Kansas' overall grade has been a C since the first Report Card. While individual measures may be moving up or down, overall Kansas is not making significant progress in improving oral health.

Next Steps

Oral Health Kansas and our partners are addressing the fact that the Medicaid dental provider network for children and adults, and especially people with disabilities, is not robust. There are positive signs, especially with a new requirement that Medicaid managed care organizations track and publish their lists of sedation dental providers in 2025. The 2024 Report Card demonstrates that dental care access for adults is lacking.

Research, education, and advocacy strategies are needed to make more progress.

- **Research**
 - The most recent dental insurance coverage report is based on research from 2017. In 2022 the Kansas Medicaid program began covering dental care for adults, so it is likely the rate of dental insurance in Kansas among adults has increased. **Kansas needs a new study to show how much the percentage of adults with dental insurance has increased.**
 - In 2024 Oral Health Kansas will form a Provider Focus Group to learn more about dental providers' capacity and barriers to becoming Medicaid providers and to provide care for people with disabilities. This group should shed light on myriad strategies to address the challenges for providers. **A Kansas dental workforce capacity study would be another important way to understand the barriers and potential solutions.**
- **Education**
 - Because more adults have dental coverage through Medicaid, it is important to **make sure adults are aware of their benefits and understand how to access that care.**
 - It is perhaps even more important for **dental providers to understand the dental coverage available for this new population.**
- **Advocacy**
 - Since 2022 adults enrolled in Medicaid have had restorative dental coverage. Oral Health Kansas is leading advocacy in 2024 to add coverage of preventive dental care for adults. **In future years additional services should be added to the coverage, and the low rates for Medicaid dental care need to be addressed.**
 - Oral Health Kansas leads a Sedation Dental Care Task Force that will launch a **comprehensive survey of dental providers in 2024 to determine their ability to provide sedation dental care and to treat people with disabilities.** This data will help the Medicaid managed care organizations produce the newly required sedation network reports beginning in 2025 and will help shine a light on capacity and access.

Oral Health Kansas Resources

Oral Health Kansas is a statewide organization whose mission is to improve oral health in Kansas through advocacy, public awareness, and education. Follow us on our [website](#), as well as our [e-newsletter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

- [Medicaid adult dental benefits](#) webpage has resources for consumers and providers.
- [Consumer webpage](#) features tips, resources, and strategies for maintaining good oral health.
- [Lived Experience Advisory Group](#) focuses on the real oral health challenges faced by people who have Medicaid coverage.

¹ Kansas Health Institute: "Dental Insurance Coverage and Unmet Dental Needs in Kansas," 2020. <https://www.khi.org/articles/dental-insurance-coverage-and-unmet-dental-needs-in-kansas/>

