

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](#).

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Pathways Video Series Wins Award!

On Saturday, February 21, during the American Advertising Awards in Topeka, Pathways to Oral Health Project partners, Oral Health Kansas, Compass Marketing and Advertising Partners, and Jeff Carson were awarded the Mosaic Award for the Confidence in Every Smile Video Series. The Mosaic Award

honors companies and individuals who display their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion through creative work, advocacy, and company-wide initiatives.

The Confidence in Every Smile Video Series includes seven videos designed to make brushing and flossing easier for people living with physical or intellectual disabilities. Each video shares practical tips, creative tools, and encouragement so everyone can care for their teeth with confidence. From handling toothbrushes and toothpaste, to managing gagging or flossing with limited mobility, to brushing comfortably when you can't stand at the sink, these videos help you discover what works best for you.

This award reflects a shared effort between partners. We want to give a special thanks to:

- Oral Health Kansas staff member and Dental Program Director, Kathy Hunt, for the years of brainstorming and planning to make the video series a reality!
- Pathways to Oral Health Project partners for coordinating the video production and scripts.
- Our videographer Jeff Carson for shooting, producing, and editing the video series.
- Compass Marketing and Advertising for their expertise, many hours of edits and clips as well as their patience with us as we made many, many changes!
- Kansas Neurological Institute and TARC for allowing their staff and individuals to serve as actors for the videos. They are the real MVPs!

You can watch the video series [here](#)!



Turn Around at the Legislature

Last week marked the halfway point for the Kansas Legislative Session. At this point most policy issues that will move forward this year have passed one chamber and are now under consideration in the other chamber.

The Medicaid dental rate increase is our top priority this year, and at Turn Around, it is still in play. The House Appropriations Committee included \$6 million in State General Funds for the dental rate increase in their budget for the next fiscal year. The full House of Representatives is voting on the budget bill today, so we are hopeful the funding remains in the House budget. The funding is not in the Senate version of the budget, but if it remains the House version, we will be able to work with members of a Budget Conference Committee to try to keep the money. We will keep you informed about the next steps and when we may need additional help with advocacy.

Another issue we have been following for the past several years is a bill that would fix an error in how eligibility is calculated for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Our partners at Kansas Action for Children have been leading the advocacy to fix the error for several years, and it looks like it may be permanently fixed this year. **SB 271** has passed the Senate. A similar bill has passed the House, so it may be easy for both chambers to agree on a final bill in the next few weeks. Oral Health Kansas has provided testimony in favor of this bill several times, and we are hopeful that it will be resolved this year.



Read Books for Children's Dental Health Month

As we wrap up Children's Dental Health Month, find fun ways to incorporate oral health into time spent with your children. Reading a book about oral health is a fun way to teach good dental habits. Reading a book about brushing, flossing, and visiting the dentist helps children learn good habits in a fun and friendly way. Stories make oral health less scary and show kids that taking care of their teeth can be easy and even fun!

OHK board member, Davette McCoy, is the author of [Goodnight Teeth: A Nighttime Brush Book](#). The book is about establishing a nighttime routine and also includes a toothbrushing chart! There are many books about visiting the dentist, toothbrushing, drinking water and eating healthy. Visit your local library or bookstore to find what works for your family.



Watch this Free Webinar!

Last August, Oral Health Kansas (OHK) began a series of free webinars titled "New Era, New Opportunities" Making Medicaid Work for You". The first session, [New Rates, Better Coverage](#), shared information about the KanCare (Medicaid) program and the improvements in services in the Medicaid program and the increases in dental rates as well as how OHK can help providers with their questions regarding

Medicaid and how to become a Medicaid provider. The webinar is only 30 minutes, so check it out!

Visit the Pathways to the Oral Health website to find a [list](#) of free webinars.



Picture courtesy of Harvard.edu

Last Celebration for Black History Month

This is the last week of the month of February and Black History Month. George F. Grant, DDS was a dentist and Harvard Professor who was introduced to the field of dentistry at age 15 when he was hired to run errands for a local dentist and soon became his laboratory assistant. Grant learned the basics of dental practice for five years and in 1867, at the age of 21, he moved to Boston where he was hired at Harvard Dental School as a laboratory assistant and later attended the school. In 1870, he graduated with distinction and was subsequently hired as an assistant in the Department of Mechanical Dentistry in 1871. In 1884, he was elevated to the post of instructor in Treatment for Cleft Palate and Congenital Diseases, a faculty appointment, which made Grant the first Black

professor at Harvard University and the nation's first Black faculty member in dental education. He went on to open his own practice before he died at the age of 64.

Fun fact about Dr. George F. Grant! His favorite hobby was golf, and he was the inventor of the wooden golf tee.

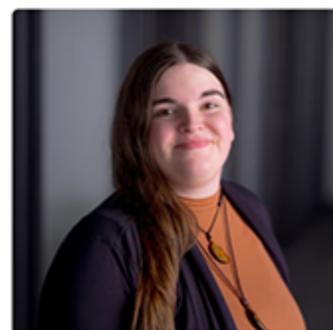


Upcoming Events

- Course: An Introduction to Value-Based Care in Oral Health: Moving from Volume to Value, 1 CE. Click [here](#) for the course information.
- Self paced courses: [Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals](#) and [Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers](#).
- Dental Clinic Leadership Conference co-hosted by Community Care Network of Kansas and the Health Center Association of Nebraska on 4/9-4/10 in Manhattan. Learn more [here](#).
- Save the date! The 2026 Conference on Oral Health will be Friday, November 13.



Congratulations to Christina Noland, Designer and Client Partner for Compass Marketing and Advertising Partners for winning the Volunteer of the Year Award during the American Advertising Awards. She is a valuable member of our Pathways to Oral Health team who created the Pathways marketing brand, and she is a dedicated volunteer in the community. Christina deserves this award for the countless hours she puts into her work, always with a smile on her face and a Squishmallow by her side!



Christina Noland
Picture courtesy of Compass Marketing and Advertising Partners



Sugary Drink Display

We have Adult and Children's Sugary Drink Display's available for reservations. These displays are eye catching at exhibits, schools, library, dental offices, clinics and just about anywhere you see them! We only have a limited amount so please sign up soon if you're interested in reserving one. Click [here](#) to learn more about sugary drink display reservations!

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