

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](#).

March 6, 2024

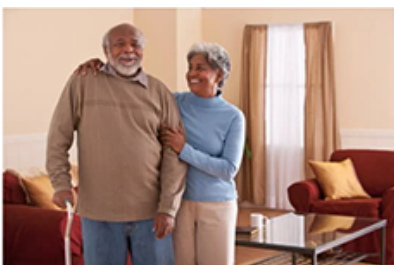
Volume 15, Issue 9

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**Weekly
Wednesday
Update.**



Oral Care for Veterans

Join us on March 12 at 12:00pm for a dynamic one-hour webinar sponsored by American Institute of Dental Public Health designed to empower state-based stakeholders to illuminate gaps and identify solutions for Kansas veterans and their oral

health. Did you know that 8.6% of the Kansas population, or about 192,964 people, are veterans? Let's work on strategies to provide them access to proper dental care.

You can also earn one CEU for this free webinar. Register [here](#)!



OHK Supports the Work of Early Childhood

OHK staff attended the Annual Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference in Wichita last week, visiting with many wonderful people that work alongside our younger Kansans. We were excited to see two of our supporters presenting at the conference! Board member, Trina Morgan, presented on the importance of sustaining the mental well-being of early childhood professionals. Lived Experience Advisory Group member, Stephanie Coleman, presented on a pilot program with focus groups that were held about the needs of childcare providers in Kansas to develop a childcare provider certification in developmental disabilities.

We appreciate the work they do to make Kansas a better place for families.



Dr. Preddis Sullivan



Dr. Chuck Abbick



Dr. MaryAnne Lynch Small

Today is National Dentist Day

Dentists are more than just someone we see every six months who remind us to floss. Dentists serve on boards, volunteer their time at events such as the Kansas Mission of Mercy

or spend time at conferences learning new strategies to use in their dental practices. They also serve on important groups like our Sedation Dental Care Task Force.

We are fortunate to have two dentists on our board who bring their dental profession knowledge as well as their compassion for making oral health in Kansas a priority. Thank you Dr. Preddis Sullivan and Dr. Charles Abbick for your service!

OHK staff member, Dr. MaryAnne Lynch Small, Medicaid Projects Manager, practiced as a primary care dentist for a period of over five years in her home of Scotland. We value her expertise she provides in our work.

Tell your dentist how much you appreciate them and their hard work!



Women in the Dental Profession

During Women's History Month, we explore the impact women have made in the dental profession. Did you know by 2028 there will be 10,400 new dentists? [According to the American Dental Association](#), the percentage of dentists who are women is growing, a trend that mirrors the makeup of dental schools and the general workforce.

"Dental school enrollment is now 50-50 gender split, so that is the main reason why we are seeing more dentists who are women in the workforce," said Marko Vujicic, Ph.D., chief economist and vice president of the American Dental Association Health Policy Institute. "The gender shift is not unique to dentistry at all. In fact, the majority of the U.S. labor force is now women."

Data from the Health Policy Institute show the percentage of dental school graduates who are women grew from 46% to 50.6% between 2009 and 2019 and the percentage of dentists in the workforce who are women grew from 24.1% to 34.5% between 2010 and 2020.

In summary, the evolving role of women in the dental workforce is contributing to a more diverse and inclusive profession. Women may feel comfortable entering a dental office when they see someone who is similar to themselves and trust their care.



Strengthen Your Mind and Your Mouth

Read Across America Week is celebrated from March 2 to 6 although the entire month of March is dedicated to reading. Behind Read Across America is the National Education Association which aims to encourage reading and educate people about its benefits, especially among children and young adults. Fostering reading at an early age helps to develop habits early and helps strengthen brain activity.

Not only can you read a book together with your child, you can also brush your teeth together. Start by incorporating Brush Book Bed in your nightly routine. [Brush Book Bed \(BBB\)](#)

is a program by the American Academy of Pediatrics, to educate families with children to have healthy oral health and bedtime routines. This program has been implemented in community based settings across the state by Oral Health Kansas. We are partnering with safety net clinics, Parent as Teachers, Healthy Families, Head Starts, and health departments. Participating programs have told us how important it is to provide families with a book and a toothbrush kit while establishing healthy routines.

If you're interested in learning more about BBB, email Sonia at solmos@oralhealthkansas.org.



Plan for the 2025 Kansas Mission of Mercy

The Kansas Dental Charitable Foundation (KDCF) has announced the dates and location for the 2025 Kansas Mission of Mercy (KMOM). It will be held in Hutchinson on January 17 and 18th. The free dental clinic is open to anyone, on a first come first served basis. Stay up to date by checking the [KDCF website](#).



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](#).
- Missouri Oral Health Policy Conference, March 7-8, 2024, DoubleTree by Hilton, Jefferson City, Missouri. Register [here](#).
- First Annual Community Care Fair, Saturday, March 9 from 12-6 pm, Salem Baptist Church, 1824 N 11th St, Kansas City, KS. Click [here](#) for more information.
- **Webinar:** Advancing Veteran Oral Health in Kansas, March 12 at 12pm CST. Register [here](#).
- Interhab Advocacy Day, March 14. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Alliance for a Healthy Kansas monthly meetings, [Events | Alliance for a Healthy Kansas 2022 \(expandkancare.com\)](#)
- **Save the date!** 2024 Conference on Oral Health will be Friday, November 8 at the Kansas State Olathe Campus, 22201 W Innovation Dr., Olathe, KS.

If you would like to add your event to this list, email info@oralhealthkansas.org.



On February 23, the OHK Board of Directors held their first meeting of the year. At this meeting, board members Tami Allen and Linda Sheppard were elected to new office positions. Tami will take on the role as Vice President and Linda will be in the Secretary role. We appreciate them both taking on these important responsibilities.



Tami Allen



Linda Sheppard



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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