



## 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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or click here to sign up for our

**Weekly Wednesday Update.**

## Join the new Dental Provider Advisory Group

If you are a provider who wants to help make a difference in dental care, Oral Health Kansas is launching a Dental Provider Advisory Group. Recognizing the importance of the dental profession in the health of all Kansans, we want to understand the experiences of our dental providers delivering dental care across the state. By leveraging the voice of a diverse professional body, we hope to bridge the gap between the dental workforce and the



Share your experiences and explore existing barriers and possible strategies as we work to improve the dental landscape for providers and all Kansans.



Who: Dentists & Dental Hygienists

Where: Virtual

When: Quarterly Meetings

Time: Approx. 8 hours/year

A stipend will be provided

Scan the QR code

or [click here](#) to

learn more



For further information please contact [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org)

community, policy makers and insurance industry and ensure advocacy efforts hold the interest of communities and the workforce at their core.

This is an opportunity for a **broad range of providers - dentists, dental hygienists, Medicaid providers, non-Medicaid providers, sedation dental providers, non-sedation dental providers, rural and urban** etc. to come together to discuss topics such as barriers and solutions to sedation dental care access, barriers and solutions to becoming a Medicaid provider, and barriers and solutions to practicing in a rural community.

**When:** We plan to meet quarterly for 2-hour virtual meetings at a time best suited to Advisory Group

members. Stipends will be provided for each meeting.

**Sign up:** Click [here](#) to sign up or [here](#) for the flyer.



## Final Legislative Wrap-up

While Governor Kelly may be calling the Legislature back into session to discuss cutting taxes, the legislative issues we have been following and promoting this year are complete. We have shared the great news that the Legislature appropriated funding to cover dental exams, x-rays, and cleanings in Medicaid. [Read our brief 2024 Legislative Session](#)

[Wrap Up](#) to see a quick overview of a few policies that passed and others that did not.

Let us know if you have questions at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org).

## Physician Assistant Students Learn about Oral Health

Last week, OHK's Dental Program Director Kathy Hunt was joined by Dr. Taylor Pratt from Konza Dental and our own board member, Dr. Charles Abbick, from Salina Family Healthcare



Center to present oral health information to the Physician's Assistant students at Kansas State University in Manhattan. This is the third time we have offered this 4-hour event, and it continues to be well received by the students and staff.

Thanks to the 100 Million Mouths campaign, we have been able to work with physician assistant schools and nurse practitioner schools to integrate oral health into their curricula. This in turn will produce medical professionals who better understand how the mouth affects overall health and the importance of including oral health in conversations with their patients. If you have any questions, email Kathy at [khunt@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:khunt@oralhealthkansas.org).



## Family Wellness Month

May is Family Wellness Month and also a month full of holidays, graduations and lots of time spent with family. This observance encourages families to engage in activities and adopt habits that foster health and happiness.

During this month, spending time with family can include planning and preparing nutritious meals together. Involve children in cooking to teach them about healthy eating habits. Include fruits and vegetables every day with a meal or a snack. Involving your children encourages them to eat what they helped prepare! [Super Smiles for Your Child](#) has some [smart snacking games](#) you can play!

Don't forget to include oral health this month in your family fun. Brush and floss your teeth as a family to encourage brushing. Children need help brushing until age 6-8 but should still be supervised to make sure they are brushing correctly. How much toothpaste should you use? The American Dental Association recommends that children use a smear of toothpaste (the size of a grain of rice) from the time the first tooth erupts until age 3 years. After that point, from 3 years to 6 years, children should use a pea-sized amount of paste. If you struggle with your child wanting to brush his teeth, find some fun games and videos on our [Beating Brushing Battles webpage](#).



## May is Older Americans Month

Oral health among older Americans is a critical but often overlooked aspect of their overall well-being. As people age, they become more susceptible to

various oral health issues due to factors such as medications, chronic illnesses, and natural wear and tear on teeth and gums over time.

Here are some key factors to consider:

- **Dry Mouth:** Many older adults experience dry mouth, which can result from certain medications or medical conditions. Saliva plays a crucial role in oral health by neutralizing acids, washing away food particles, and preventing infections. Dry mouth can increase the risk of tooth decay and other oral health problems. Oral Health Kansas has a [Tip and Trick one pager for Dry Mouth](#) that provides tips on what you can do.
- **Tooth Loss:** Tooth loss is common among older adults and can occur due to various reasons, including gum disease, tooth decay, and accidents. Missing teeth can affect speech, chewing ability, and self-confidence.
- **Oral Hygiene Challenges:** Limited dexterity or mobility issues can make it difficult for older adults to maintain good oral hygiene practices such as brushing and flossing. Additionally, cognitive decline may impact their ability to remember or understand the importance of oral care. Here are [adaptive aids resources](#) that can help with mobility issues and [here](#) are ways to improve your toothbrushing if you have limited mobility.
- **Barriers to Dental Care:** Older adults may face barriers to accessing dental care, including financial constraints, lack of transportation, and limited availability of dentists who accept Medicaid or offer services tailored to older patients. [Finding a Dentist webpage](#) provides a list of safety net clinics, dentists who accept Medicaid (KanCare) and other dental resources.
- **Importance of Regular Dental Visits:** Regular dental check-ups are crucial for older adults to prevent and detect oral health problems early. Dentists can provide preventive care, treat existing issues, and offer guidance on proper oral hygiene techniques.
- **Nutrition and Oral Health:** Good nutrition is essential for maintaining oral health in older adults. A balanced diet rich in vitamins and minerals supports healthy teeth and gums, while poor nutrition can weaken oral tissues and increase susceptibility to infections.

Find more helpful resources on our [website](#). [The Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors](#) created a document as a resource to assist with training and educating professionals who work with older adults. You can view that toolkit [here](#).



## 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](#).
- Webinar: Examining the Connection Between Sleep and Oral Health, May 23, 6:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- Community Care Network of Kansas and the Health Center Association of Nebraska (HCAN) are co-hosting the second annual two-day Dental Clinic Leadership Conference, June 13 - June 14. Register [here](#).
- **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](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org).



Congratulations to Carolyn Campbell on being celebrated as one of Topeka's Historic African American Trailblazers in a recent exhibit at the

Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library. Carolyn is a member of the Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition, and you will often find her sharing information about good oral health at community events, such as Safe Kids Day at the Zoo. She has a distinguished career and has had an important impact on the city of Topeka and in the state of Kansas. Carolyn served on the Topeka Public Schools Board and then as the first African American on the Kansas State Board of Education from [2008 to 2016](#).



Last week marked the 70th anniversary of the landmark Brown v. Topeka Board of Education case that determined segregated schools were not equal. Carolyn attended one of the segregated schools during the time of the Brown case and went to school with Linda Brown, whose father was one of the lead plaintiffs in the case. She continues to recount her experiences in interviews and in local media. A few links to learn more are below. Carolyn Campbell continues to be a leader in our community, and we are grateful to have the chance to work with her and learn from her.

- WIBW TV: [History Lived: Former Topeka students remember the impact of Brown vs. Board](#)  
WIBW TV: [Board of Education at Brown v. Board National Park site to share history & highlight 70th anniversary](#)  
Kansas Reflector: [Idea of lifting Brown v. Board of Education name from landmark 1954 case stirs Kansas dissent](#)  
Kansas Oral History Project: [Interview of Carolyn Wims Campbell](#)  
National Park Service: [Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Park](#)



## 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!

### Follow Us



**Oral Health Kansas** • PO BOX 4567 • Topeka, KS 66604  
785.235.6039 phone • 785.233.5564 fax • [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org)

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