



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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Oral Health Kansas Presents to Self-Advocates

Oral Health Kansas staff member, Abby Richwine and Oral Health Kansas Board Member Shane Lewis recently presented at the annual Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas Conference (SACK), engaging attendees in a lively discussion about the importance of oral health and its connection to overall well-being. Participants learned why healthy teeth and gums matter, explored practical strategies for maintaining good oral hygiene, and discussed how making healthier snack choices can help protect their smiles.



One of the highlights of the presentation was the introduction of the My Dental Care Passport, a tool designed to help individuals communicate their unique needs, preferences, and accommodations with their dental team before an appointment. The Passport can help create a more comfortable and successful dental experience by giving providers valuable information in advance.

Attendees were highly engaged throughout the session, asking thoughtful questions and sharing their own experiences with dental care. The conversation sparked meaningful discussion about ways to improve access to care and build confidence when visiting the dentist. Participants expressed excitement about the My Dental Care Passport and felt it would be a valuable resource for helping individuals feel more prepared, empowered, and supported during dental visits.

Oral Health Kansas is grateful for the opportunity to connect with attendees at the SACK Conference and continue promoting tools and resources that help individuals achieve better oral health and more positive dental experiences.



What to Know About Sparkling Water

What is sparkling water and is it good for your teeth? Let's learn and find out!

Sparkling water is infused with carbon dioxide gas, either naturally from mineral springs or artificially under pressure, creating bubbles and a fizzy taste. It includes types like seltzer, mineral water, club soda, and tonic water, each differing in mineral content and additives. Although it may taste good, it's not always good for our teeth and not as safe to sip as if you were drinking fluoridated water all day. The [American Dental Association Morning Huddle news shares](#) that individuals who consume sparkling water with added flavors and citric acid may sip sparkling water continuously over long periods of time. If doing so, sparkling water may be at an increased risk of enamel erosion.

What can you do? Drink fluoridated tap water when possible. If you enjoy your sparkling waters, we're not saying don't drink them. Instead, drink them during meals or along with fluoridated tap water to minimize the risk of erosion.



Keep Your Child Busy This Summer with These Fun Activities

If you're like most parents, we're looking for ways to keep our children busy this summer with fun but educational resources. Why not teach about oral

health while also having fun? Oral Health Kansas created two picture find pages that are not only fun, but also teach about oral health along the way. [What's In Your Mouth](#) shows bacteria in our mouths but also various items related to our oral health. Find the items and color them. The next picture find is [Healthy teeth...right from the start!](#) These picture finds are fun because they relate to a child's first birthday!

Have you tried [Super Smiles for Your Child](#)? This is a fun one! First, start out by taking the [Mighty Molar Cavity Quiz](#). This will help you learn where you stand with your oral health habits. Then from there, you could start with [Smart Snacking for Healthy Smiles](#) and play the Smart Snacking Game! How did you do? Try more interactive games with your child and see what you learn!

The summer is a good opportunity to practice cooking together and making snacks. Having your child assist with prepping meals encourages them to eat what they made and offers a higher chance that they will like it! [Check out the Cooks Corner: Recipes for Healthy Snacks](#) for some easy and fun recipes.



Are You Registered to Vote?

The deadline to register to vote in Kansas is July 14. You can register to vote or update your voter registration to change address or name to be able to participate in the August 4, 2026, primary election and the Kansas general election on November 3, 2026. You can use the [Online Voter Registration Application](#) or [Print the Voter Registration Application](#).

You can vote in person or by mail. Voters are allowed to vote by mail prior to election day in the state of Kansas. In order to do so, you must complete an application for an advance ballot and include your driver's license number or a copy of your photo identification. Beginning in 2026, all mail ballots must be received in the county election office by close of polls on Election day to be counted. Kansas elections will no longer include a 3-day grace period. Here is the mail in application in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

You can find more voter information on the Kansas Secretary of State [website](#).



Resources for Vapes, Nicotine and Kids

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment Community Health Promotion recently developed a new resource, "Vapes, Nicotine and Kids: What Every Caregiver Should Know," in collaboration with Safe Kids Kansas, Kansas Maternal and Child Health and the Kansas Poison Center. The [flyer](#) states nicotine is found in products like pouches, pods, cigarettes, lozenges, gum, and smokeless tobacco. Bright labels, sweet smells, and colorful packaging can make these products look like candy or toys.

[Oral Health and Vaping](#) is an Oral Health Kansas educational resource on vaping. The use of e-cigarettes, also known as vaping is on the rise in the United States, especially among young people. E-cigarettes may be less harmful than conventional cigarettes for adult smokers, but they are not harmless.



Upcoming Events

- Self paced courses: [Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals](#) and [Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers](#).
- Community Care Network of Kansas annual conference, September 23-25 in Manhattan, Kansas. Learn more [here](#).
- Kansas Public Health Association Conference, October 5 - 6, 2026 in Manhattan. Click [here](#) for information.
- Rutgers University offering Perinatal Oral Health ECHO Series webinar. Check out the list of series [here](#).
- Save the date! The 2026 Conference on Oral Health will be Friday, November 13 at the KU Edwards Campus.



While the Oral Health Kansas team was in Washington, DC earlier this month for the OPEN Hill Day. We had a chance to meet CareQuest Institute for Oral Health CEO Wade Rakes. Wade brings a wealth of experience in state and federal government and insurance to the CareQuest Institute. Our team enjoyed getting to know him and sharing the good work we are doing in Kansas. We appreciated his interest in the work of OPEN and its members across the country.



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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