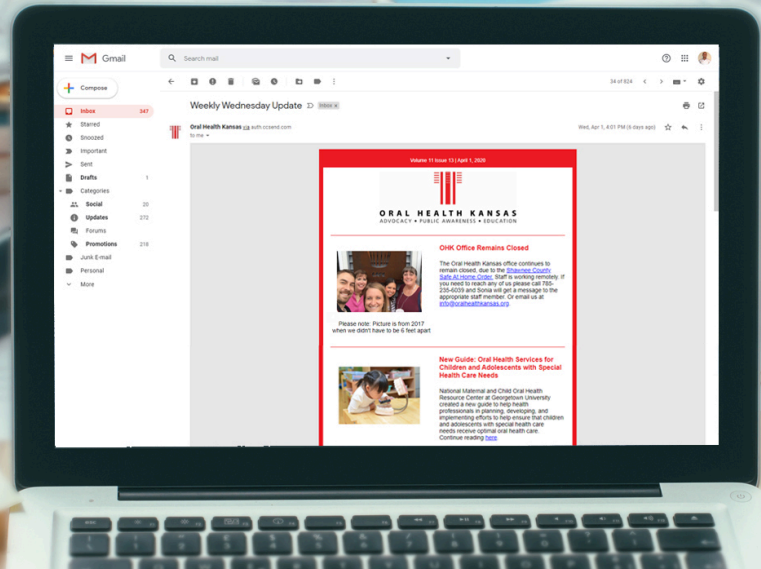




ORAL HEALTH KANSAS
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION



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](#).

July 15, 2026

Volume 17, Issue 27

Scan the QR code



or click here to
sign up for our

**[Weekly
Wednesday
Update](#)**

A Fresh New Look!

Oral Health Kansas has been producing Tips and Tricks for many years. Tips and Tricks are one pager helpful resources on different oral health topics. Now, Tips and Tricks have a new look. Concise and polished, you can download the one pagers from our Oral Health Kansas [website](#) and share with your networks. Some of the handouts are available in English and Spanish. They are available under these topics but be prepared. There are MANY different handouts under one topic.

- Pregnancy
- Infants & Toddlers



- Children
- Elders
- Nutrition
- Home Care
- Dental Services
- General Health
- Special Concerns

Is there an oral health topic you're interested in learning more about but can't find? Email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org and we'll try to help you find it or create one!



OHK Co-Hosts KC Candidate Forum

Oral Health Kansas co-hosted a candidate forum in Lenexa on Monday, July 13. The event was organized by the Kansas Hospital Association, Kansas Dental Association, Community Care Network of Kansas, and several other statewide health organizations. This event was an opportunity for the candidates for the Kansas House of Representatives to meet advocates and share about their ties to health care.

Thank you to Oral Health Kansas Board members and Advisory Committee members Stephanie Coleman, Dr. Kent Haverkamp, Dr. Jill Jenkins, and Dr. Rob Kiser, who were able to attend the Lenexa forum and visit with legislative candidates.

There will be two more opportunities to visit with candidates. If you would like to attend, you **MUST** RSVP. Email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org if you are interested in attending and we will connect you with information for registration.

July 21 - Reeds Cove Health and Rehabilitation in Wichita at 5:00pm

July 28 - The Cedars in McPherson at 5:00pm



Who Will Be the Next Outstanding Policy Maker?

In 2025, the Bob Bethell Outstanding Policy Maker Award was awarded to Representative Allen Reavis. The Outstanding Policy Maker is awarded to a policy maker that is distinguished from others in excellence, who shows support for the oral health of all Kansans.

While Oral Health Kansas works with legislative champions each year, it is rare to find a champion as uniquely suited to the role and as committed to oral health policy as Dr.

Reavis. He came to the Kansas House of Representatives with fresh eyes and enthusiasm for making change. He is the only dentist in memory to serve in the Legislature, and he is using his unique role to educate his fellow legislators about the importance of a strong Medicaid dental program and what it takes to make it stronger. He previously owned his own dental practice in Atchison and helped start the Federally Qualified Health Center in that community. In his "retirement" he serves as AllWays Community Health Center's Dental Director. He also serves in a leadership role at the American Dental Association.

Do you know someone that has done amazing work around oral health? Submit your nominations by Friday, August 28 by 5:00pm. Click [here](#) for the nomination for the Excellence in Oral Health Award or [here](#) for the Ron Alexander Outstanding Dental Champion Award. There are several categories to choose from. Winners will be recognized during the Conference on Oral Health, Friday, November 13 at the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park. We ask that you do not nominate someone who has won an award in the past to allow everyone an opportunity.

Email info@oralhealthkansas.org with any questions about the award nominations.



National Minority Health Month

July is **National Minority Mental Health Month**, a time to raise awareness about the mental health challenges experienced by racial and ethnic minority communities and the importance of equitable access to care.

Mental health and oral health are closely connected. Stress, anxiety, depression, and trauma can affect oral health through conditions such as tooth decay, gum disease, teeth grinding, and dry mouth. Likewise, poor oral health can impact self-esteem, nutrition, and overall well-being.

By recognizing the connection between mental and oral health, we can help reduce health disparities and support whole-person care. Everyone deserves access to quality, culturally responsive healthcare that supports both their mental and oral health.

What can you do to maintain your oral health?

- Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- Floss!
- Visit a dentist every 6 months
- If you grind your teeth, talk to your provider about the possibility of a mouth guard or why you grind your teeth to discuss possible solutions.
- Eat a limited amount of foods with sugar and starches and serve them at meal times instead of as a snack. Limit snacking to planned times.

Remember, oral health is part of your overall health, not just your mouth. It plays a part in our mental health every day!



Upcoming Events

- Self paced courses: [Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals](#) and [Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers](#).
- Webinar: Special Needs Oral Health Lunch & Learn: Behavior Management for Pediatric Dental Patients with Autism, July 17 from 12:00pm-1:00pm. Click [here](#) to register.
- Webinar: Substance Use Disorders and Oral Health in People Living with HIV, August 27 at 12:00pm CST. Click [here](#) to register.
- 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.



Each year, the YWCA of Northeast Kansas recognizes outstanding women who are making a lasting impact in their communities through its Women of Excellence Awards.

Congratulations to Tanya Dorf Brunner, former

Executive Director of Oral Health Kansas and current Executive Director of the American Network of Oral Health Coalitions, on being named a 2026 Women of Excellence Honoree! Your leadership and dedication to advancing oral health continue to inspire and create meaningful change.



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
Copyright 2026