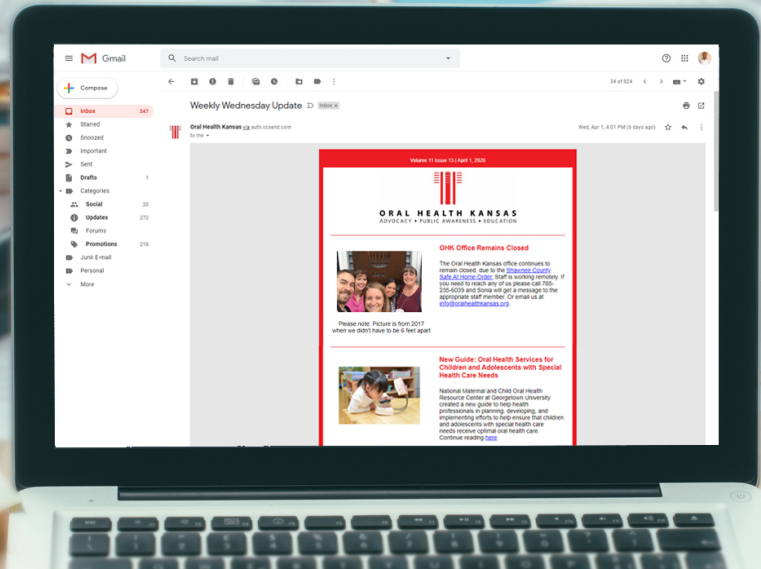




WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATE

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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Scan the QR code



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[Weekly
Wednesday
Update.](#)



Milestone Achieved! My Dental Care Passport Gets Certified

To ensure our educational materials remain accurate and legally compliant, My Dental Care Passport in English and Spanish as well as their How to Use guides have undergone a formal copyright review and certification process. Receiving copyright certification confirms that our publications appropriately acknowledge and protect original content while meeting applicable copyright standards for text, images, graphics, and other licensed materials.

This milestone reinforces our commitment to producing high-quality, trustworthy resources that can be confidently shared with partners, healthcare professionals, educators, and communities. Once we have the newly copyrighted document ready to go, we'll share with everyone and add it to our website. In the meantime you, can browse the [Pathways to Oral Health](#) website and the [Oral Health Kansas](#) website.



Oral Health Kansas Connects with Children's Mercy Families

The Children's Mercy Clinic has an Autism Clinic which provides comprehensive, family-centered care for children and adolescents on the autism spectrum. Oral Health Kansas staff, Abby Richwine, was featured in the Children's Mercy Autism Clinic newsletter and shared techniques individuals with disabilities including autism can use to feel comfortable at the dental office. Abby also presented to families on Gentle Routines, Bright Smiles: Oral Care for Autism on July 28 highlighting the unique oral needs of individuals with autism and the challenges they may face, such as sensory sensitivities and resistance to brushing.

Read Abby's article below which was featured in the Children's Mercy Autism Clinic Newsletter:

Oral health is an important part of overall health. Healthy teeth and gums help with eating, speaking, sleeping and daily comfort. Regular dental visits can prevent cavities, gum disease and infection.

For many individuals with autism, going to the dentist can be hard. Bright lights, unfamiliar tastes and smells, loud sounds and close physical contact can feel overwhelming. In addition to sensory concerns, other factors can make dental visits and access to care more difficult. This could look like:

- Anxiety about unfamiliar environments and procedures
- Communication challenges between patients and dental teams
- Difficulty finding providers experienced in caring for individuals with autism

These challenges can make it harder to access dental services, leading some individuals to delay care until a problem arises. The good news, support is available! [Pathways to Oral Health](#) was created to help individuals with disabilities. Caregivers and dental professionals work together to improve access to dental care. Many [free resources](#) can be found on their site designed to make dental visits more comfortable and successful.

One of the most valuable resources Pathways provides is the [My Dental Care Passport](#). This allows individuals and caregivers to share important information with the dental team prior to an appointment. The My Dental Care Passport is a way to share communication preferences, sensory sensitivities, mobility considerations and past dental experiences so the dental office can better prepare to meet each person's unique needs.

Other helpful resources available include:

- [Confidence in Every Smile](#) videos: practical oral hygiene tips and techniques.
- Sensory-friendly dental office resources: for providers to make simple accommodations.

- **Find a Dentist tool:** help locate dental providers who serve individuals with neurodivergent differences, disabilities and Medicaid members.

Everyone deserves access to dental care that respects their individual needs. With the right preparation, communication and support, dental visits can become more predictable, comfortable and successful.

If you have any questions, email Abby at arichwine@oralhealthkansas.org.



FREE Webinar Behind the Curtain: How Dental Advocacy Creates Change

Happening soon! Register for another FREE webinar hosted by Oral Health Kansas, the Kansas Dental Association and the Pathways to Oral Health team. On August 11 from 12:00pm-1:00pm, Behind the Curtain: How Dental Advocacy Creates Change will give you a look behind the scenes of advocacy. This webinar will explore the many components of effective advocacy, including preparing written and in-person testimony, building relationships with legislators and policymakers, listening to providers and consumers to understand their needs and challenges, and navigating changing state and national political landscapes. Participants will also learn how ongoing collaboration with state agencies, including the Kansas Department of Health

and Environment (KDHE), Medicaid managed care organizations, providers, advocates, and community partners help drive meaningful systems change.

Whether you are new to advocacy or looking to strengthen your impact, or if you are just curious about what Oral Health Kansas is doing every day to improve the oral health of Kansans this session will provide practical insights into how partnerships, persistence, and data-informed storytelling contribute to improving Medicaid rates, addressing systems challenges, and expanding access to oral health care for Kansans.

Register today to learn how advocacy efforts at the local, state, and national levels can influence policy, strengthen systems, and improve access to oral health care for Kansas Medicaid beneficiaries. Receive 1.0 Free CE! If you have any questions, email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.

Recognizing Breastfeeding Week

Breastfeeding Week is recognized beginning August 1-August 7. Breastfeeding is important for babies because it provides them the nutrition they need and contains antibodies that help protect against ear infections, respiratory illnesses, diarrhea, and other infections. Breastfeeding does not cause cavities if



good oral hygiene steps are followed. Wiping the gums of your baby with a small wash cloth is a way to wipe away the milk that stays on the gums. It also may reduce the risk of developing misaligned teeth compared with prolonged bottle-feeding.

[Breastfeeding and Healthy Baby Teeth](#) is a new Tips and Tricks created by Oral Health Kansas to share the importance of breastfeeding and how to take care of your baby's mouth when breastfeeding. It's also

available in [Spanish](#).

The [Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition](#) is a resource for families and providers that gives helpful resources on breastfeeding. Their mission is to improve the health and well-being of Kansans by working collaboratively to promote, protect and support breastfeeding. Healthy steps early on can make a difference for a child as they get older and continue to maintain the healthy ways they were taught!



Concorde Career College Seeks Dental Hygiene Program Director

Our friends at Concorde Career College are looking for their next Dental Hygiene Program Director.

The Dental Hygiene Program Director is responsible for the overall administration, accreditation, curriculum development, faculty leadership, and student success within the Dental Hygiene program. This role ensures compliance with accreditation and licensing standards, fosters excellence in teaching and clinical education, and collaborates with faculty, students, and external stakeholders to advance the program's mission. You can read the full job description [here](#).



Community Care Clinic Month

Community Care Clinic Month begins on Saturday, August 1. This month recognizes the vital role that free and low-cost dental and health clinics called Community Dental Clinics, play in expanding access to care for underserved populations. Throughout the month, we celebrate the dedicated providers, volunteers, and community health workers who deliver essential services to patients facing barriers such as cost, insurance gaps, transportation, and limited availability of care in their area. These clinics serve as a critical safety net, offering everything from preventive checkups and dental care to health education and referrals, often for individuals who would otherwise go without treatment.

To find a Community Dental Clinic in your area, you can visit [this link](#). Community Care Network of Kansas has a list of member clinics in Kansas with health, behavioral health or dental clinic. Check out their list [here](#)!



Upcoming Events

- Self paced courses: [Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals](#) and [Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers](#).
- **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.



A final thank you is in order for the Kansas Hospital Association and our health system partners for organizing the three Kansas Candidate Forums in Lenexa, Wichita and McPherson. These events provided health

care leaders with an opportunity to get to know candidates running for the Kansas House of Representatives and their ties to health care before the election. OHK staff Monica Turner and intern Laura Gigstad joined Brooks Robertson at the McPherson forum to share Oral Health Kansas's work and connect with candidates. Join us in thanking Dr. Jill Jenkins, Dr. Rob Kiser, Dr. Kent Haverkamp, Trina Morgan, Stephanie Coleman, Melanie Jacobs, and Robyn Kirkpatrick for supporting Oral Health Kansas at these events and forwarding our mission as we prepare for the next legislative session. These commitments to advocacy on our behalf are deeply appreciated. Watch for other exciting opportunities next fall!





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



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