

## **Julie Parnell**

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**From:** Oral Health Kansas <jparnell@oralhealthkansas.org>  
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**To:** jparnell@oralhealthkansas.org  
**Subject:** Oral Health Kansas Weekly Wednesday Update



**ORAL HEALTH KANSAS**  
*Weekly Wednesday Update*

**Our Mission:**  
To improve oral health in Kansas through advocacy, public awareness and education.

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**Weekly Wednesday Update Survey**

**Two is Too Late**

**Kathy Hunt, Kansas Cavity Free Kids**

Dental decay in children under the age of five is on the rise. Children as young as 10 months of age have been seen with severe decay, known as Early Childhood Caries. This condition is painful, harmful, and expensive. Treatment of severe decay in young children often requires hospitalization and general anesthesia. Tooth decay is a common chronic disease that affects children and is the largest unmet health care need for low income families-who experience a higher rate of decay and more barriers to accessing dental care. Untreated oral disease can have a lifelong impact on overall health, social and emotional development, and a young child's future ability to succeed in school. We all must play a part in helping reverse this trend.

**Here are proven strategies for combating decay:**

- 1. Recognizing and eliminating risk factors**
- 2. Strengthening teeth**
- 3. Identifying decay early**

Young children should be seen by a dental professional within six months of the eruption of the first tooth or no later than one-year old. In addition to dental offices, dental professionals are also seeing children during early childhood developmental screenings and at health departments and early childhood centers. Check with local health departments and school districts for availability of these services.

Over the past couple years Oral Health Kansas has been sharing regular updates through our Weekly Wednesday Updates. We hope you have found these to be valuable.

We would like to have your input as we plan our update topics for 2012. Please take just a few moments to respond to a brief survey at [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com). If you encounter any trouble with the survey, please let us know.

## Did You Know???

**Children between the ages of 8-17 are at the greatest risk for tooth decay from consuming acidic, sugar rich soft drinks because the enamel protecting their teeth has not fully developed.**

(Massachusetts Dental Society)

## 2012 Oral Health Kansas Conference

Make plans now to attend the 2012 Oral Health Kansas Conference September 13-14 at the [Hotel at Old Town](#) in Wichita, Kansas.

The Conference will feature a special reception with a new exhibit at [Exploration Place](#).

Dental decay is almost 100% preventable. Knowing which factors protect your child's teeth and those that can harm them will help to identify changes you can make that will keep your child cavity-free. Dental decay is preventable, not inevitable. Decay can begin as soon as the first teeth emerge in toddlers. Adopting "tooth healthy" behaviors and seeking regular dental services by a child's first birthday will go a long way in reducing the caries rate and improving oral and over-all health that will last a lifetime.



## Legislative Update: ECP III & Kids Oral Health Improvement

Last Friday, Oral Health Kansas provided an update on several bills working through the Legislature this year. On February 13 [HB 2631](#) was amended by the House Health and Human Services Committee and passed favorably. The full House of Representatives will vote on the bill sometime in the next few days. The bill includes the Extended Care Permit III provisions discussed last week, as well as the Kids Oral Health Improvement provision also discussed last week. HB 2631 will improve access to dental services through Extended Care Permit dental hygienists. A detailed report of the February 13 Health and Human Services Committee meeting is available from the [Kansas Health Institute](#).

Today the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee amended and passed favorably [SB 326](#) which is the Kids Oral health Improvement bill. A similar provision is in HB 2631, discussed above. This bill is on its way to the Senate floor for a vote in the next few days. If passed, it would improve access to dental hygiene services for Kansas school children who are dentally underserved.

## Job Opening

The KS Dept of Health and Environment Bureau of Oral Health is seeking a Program Consultant II in Topeka to assist in efforts to increase the number of communities with

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community water fluoridation and provide support for their children's oral health programs. Requires one year of program planning, implementation and monitoring experience or one year of clinical dental professional work. Bachelors degree preferred. Go online to [www.Jobs.ks.gov](http://www.Jobs.ks.gov) for details about this position (Req # 170727)

Applications are being accepted through February 16. If you have any questions please call the Bureau at (785) 296-5116.

If you have an idea, story or suggestion for a Oral Health Kansas Weekly Wednesday Update please send an email to [jparnell@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:jparnell@oralhealthkansas.org)

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