



ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION

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Thirsty for Health is at it again! **THREE** school districts have joined the Thirsty for Health project. Welcome USD 261 Haysville, USD 268 Cheney and USD 309 Nickerson/South Hutchinson. This makes a total of 11 school districts participating!

[Thirsty for Health](#) is designed to develop and implement a comprehensive plan that will increase access to and student consumption of healthy

Legislative News From Our Policy Director



National news

Children's Health Insurance Program
On February 9, Congress passed a spending bill with significant victories for families. The bill further extends the funding of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for an additional 4 years, keeping it funded for a total of 10 years. This bill not only safeguards medical and dental coverage for low income children and pregnant women, but also creates \$6 billion in savings in the process. [Learn more about the CHIP extension from the Children's Dental Health Project.](#)

Kansas news

SB 312 - Dental Therapists

February has been a big month for SB

beverages like water throughout the school day, and milk during lunchtime. By participating in this project, schools districts will have added support to meet the water access parameters stated in the Kansas School Wellness Policy Guidelines for Nutrition.

Sippy is excited to educate children on the importance of drinking water!



Delta Dental of Kansas Opens Grant Cycle

Delta Dental of Kansas has opened their 2018 grant cycle for the Community Dental Health Grants Program. All applications must be submitted by April 9, 2018.

For more information for the Community Dental Health Grants Program and Smile Kit Program, visit [their website](#).



Sugary Drink Display

March reservations are full! Yes, full. We have people requesting drink displays in advance for their health fair events, offices,

312 which would create a new category of dental provider, known as dental therapists, in Kansas. Not only did the dental therapist bill pass out of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, but it passed unanimously out of the Senate with a 38-0 vote! This is the first time the bill has made it out of committee in over eight years of discussion! SB 312 is a compromise bill crafted by Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee Chair Vicki Schmidt, in consultation with dental community stakeholders. The next step for the bill is to have a hearing in the House Health and Human Services Committee.

SB 38 - Medicaid Expansion

Last Wednesday, Oral Health Kansas joined the Senate Public Health and Welfare committee for a hearing on SB 38, which would provide health coverage for the Medicaid gap population. OHK joined over 140 organizations in submitting written testimony in support of the bill. SB 38 passed out of the committee this week and is now awaiting debate on the Senate floor.

SB 316 - Medicaid Coverage for Tobacco Cessation SB 316, which would increase the number of quit attempts allowed by Medicaid recipients each year, passed out of the Senate Public Health and Welfare committee early this week. Currently, Medicaid recipients who smoke are only allotted one quit attempt per year. However, research shows majority of smokers require multiple quit attempts to successfully kick the habit. SB 316 is currently awaiting debate on the Senate floor.

schools, etc. Don't wait, put your name on the list now! Need one for just one day?

The sugary drink display has 10 popular beverages and shows how much sugar is in each. We also include some of our [Tips and Tricks](#) fact sheets and brush your teeth mirror clings! The **display is free** to use for up to a month, and we reimburse postage! Need it for just a one day event? That's ok too!



Send your reservation request ahead of time to ensure you will have one on hold! [Email us!](#)



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If you have any questions, email [Christi Nance](#), OHK Policy Director or call her at 785-235-6039.

Access To Dental Care Brings More Than Just A Smile

This week, [the New York Times highlighted how dental inequality is hurting Americans](#). Not only does lack of dental care impact people's health, but it has negative economic implications as well. Individuals with bad teeth can often feel stigmatized, both in social settings and in finding employment. Not only is this the case in America as whole, but especially here in Kansas. Kansas residents who rely on Medicaid for their health coverage currently only have access to preventive dental exams and emergency tooth extractions. For those of us lucky enough to have dental insurance, we know that even with our bi-annual dental cleanings, we are still vulnerable to dental pain and cavities. For individuals on KanCare, their current options are pain medication or emergency extraction.

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Our Policy Director, Christi Nance, recently addressed this with the Robert G. (Bob) Bethell Joint Committee on Home and Community Based Services and KanCare Oversight Committee, where she testified for the inclusion of comprehensive dental benefits in KanCare2.0. She pointed out that dental services give people self-esteem, help them get and keep jobs and ensure they stay healthy in the face of chronic diseases. Oral Health Kansas encourages the committee to move forward with the recommendation for the inclusion of comprehensive dental benefits.

According to the [Center for Health Care Strategies](#), as of January 2018, only 17 state Medicaid programs offered comprehensive adult dental benefits, and only 14 of those did so for the population eligible for Medicaid expansion. Kansas provides limited dental benefits to those eligible for KanCare.