



## 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](#).

Click here to sign up for our [Weekly Wednesday Update](#).

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## Legislative Study Of Dental Needs

This week, the House Appropriations Committee approved a legislative study of dental needs in the state. The proposed study will examine the “availability and accessibility of dental care to adults who are underserved, living in poverty, and senior citizens of Kansas. The study will identify existing services, gaps and/or barriers to accessing existing services and

recommendations for steps to improve accessibility of dental services for these populations.”

Oral Health Kansas is excited about this study and looks forward to being a part of the process. The populations identified are some of the most dentally underserved Kansans, and this new study can highlight the needs and the potential solutions. The Senate will need to agree to the study before it is officially approved, but we are cautiously optimistic about the opportunity the study presents in 2021.



## OHK Presents To Dental Hygiene Students

Oral Health Kansas was pleased to provide a presentation about advocacy to the senior dental hygiene students at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith this week. Former OHK board member and Dental Champion Dr. Bonnie Branson asked us to help share insight about dental professionals helping to advocate for policy changes to improve access to oral health for underserved populations. We enjoy meeting dental and dental hygiene students and sharing stories about unmet dental needs, policy options, and how to get involved.



## Oral Health Disparities And Minorities

[All 4 Oral Health](#) recently shared in their blog, [The Race to Health Equity, Oral Health Disparities Persist Among Racial & Ethnic Minorities](#), the struggles minorities face with accessing health services. Studies have found that people from racial/ethnic minority groups are less likely to have health insurance than their white counterparts. In fact, a [2020 report by the Kansas Health Institute](#) found that Hispanic Kansans are twice as likely to lack dental insurance. People from racial and ethnic minorities also are less likely to access health services and are more prone to chronic health problems. They also encounter higher costs of health care and have an extensive history of racial stereotyping, coupled with experiences that have built mistrust, prevent racial/ethnic minority individuals from achieving better health outcomes within their communities.

The blog explains the concerns for oral health as a silo instead of being included in overall health. It also stresses the importance for oral health curricula, simulation and clinical experiences to incorporate social determinants of health in patient interactions by

addressing economic disadvantages, insurance complications, experiences of discrimination and environmental barriers to care among vulnerable populations. Read the blog [here](#).



## Try Brush, Book, Bed As Bedtime Routine

[Brush, Book, Bed \(BBB\)](#) is a program of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and a fun way to help your child have a bedtime routine that includes brushing teeth and reading a book. It's also a good way for parents to bond with their children while winding down their night. Choose a book that is easy to follow along. You might also look for books on oral health. For example, [Potter the Otter Visits the Dentist](#) or [Hazel Does Not Like To Brush Her Teeth](#) are two fun books on oral health.

### Follow these easy steps:

1. Help children brush their teeth
2. Read a favorite book (or two!)
3. Then get to bed at a regular time each night.



## Upcoming Events

- The DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement and the American Public Health Association (APHA) will present a webinar on social determinants of oral health (SDOH), February 25, 12 pm CST. Register [here](#).
- An interactive training on telemedicine for Kansas families who have children with disabilities and/or special health care needs. Two dates are March 16 and April 15. Click [here](#) for more information.
- The Future of Rural Healthcare in Kansas listening tours. Hosted by United Methodist Health Ministry Fund, Kansas Health Foundation and Kansas Hospital Association. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Accelerating Health Equity, March 16-18, 2021, hosted by AHA Community Health Improvement (ACHI) and the Institute for Diversity and Health Equity (IFDHE). Click [here](#) to register.



Meet Steve Hunt, staff member Kathy Hunt's husband. We asked Steve if he could help us "move a few things" to our new office suite last month. He moved several big items on his own, while we were busy packing up our office. We are so thankful for his hard work and appreciate everything he did to help us get ready for our move.



## Sugary Drink Display Sanitation

**Out of an abundance of caution, we are suspending use of the Sugary Drink Display until further notice.**



During this time, hand washing and social distancing is on everyone's mind. We want everyone to have the comfort of knowing we sanitize our sugary drink displays. They are wiped down and cleaned off after they have been returned.

### Follow Us



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