



ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION

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In honor of National Children's Dental Health Month, the [Kansas Dental Association](#) is holding its annual Drawing Contest, as well as the fifth annual Class Project Contest. All third grade students in Kansas are invited to participate! Third grade students and their teachers have the chance to win \$50, \$100 or even \$500!

Click [here](#) to find out more!

Turnaround Day in Kansas

Last Thursday, February 22nd, was Turnaround Day for the Kansas Legislature. This is the official mid-point in the regular 2018 legislative session and the final day to consider bills from non-exempt committees* in their chamber of origin, House or Senate. While this is an important day to ensure bills coming from health committees are still alive, bills are not officially dead until the legislative session is over. There are also bills from non-exempt committees that leaders want to keep alive for possible action, so they will be "blessed" by referring them to an exempt committee and then re-referring them back to their original committee. Legislators returned today to complete the second half of the legislative session following a couple days off after Turnaround Day. As we work through the remainder of the session, Oral Health Kansas will continue to follow legislation and advocate for policies that increase access to dental providers and a way to



Shop online and help OHK

Amazon is tripling the donation amount to 1.5% when customers make their first eligible smile.amazon.com purchase from March 12 - 31. Shop and help support OHK! Click [here](#) and start shopping!



Sugary Drink Display

March reservations are full! Yes, full. We have people requesting drink displays in advance for their health fair events, offices, schools, etc. Don't wait, put your name on the list now for April!

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

pay for dental services.

One of the bills we will continue advocating for is the expansion of Medicaid through SB 38. SB 38 unanimously passed through the Senate Public Health and Welfare committee on February 19th but has yet to be heard on the Senate floor. As the Majority Leader in the Kansas Senate, Senator Jim Denning sets the debate calendar on the Senate floor and is responsible for this bill's future right now. We need you to call Senator Denning's office and ask that SB 38 -- "Establishing the KanCare Bridge to a Healthy Kansas Program" -- be added to the debate calendar for the full Senate. The Senate is ready for this debate. Call Senator Denning at 785-296-2497 and let the Alliance for a Healthy Kansas know how the call goes [by clicking here!](#)

We will also be following SB 312 - "Licensure of Dental Therapists" - as it enters the House Health and Human Services committee after unanimously passing the Senate Chamber on February 15th!

*Exempt committees include Senate Federal and State Affairs, Senate Ways and Means, Senate Assessment and Taxation, House Calendar and Printing, House Appropriations, and House Taxation.

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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New Communications Toolkit on Oral Health Reform

We are excited to announce the release of [Reframing Oral Health: A Communications Toolkit for Advancing Oral Health Reform](#). This multimedia resource will not only deepen your ability to develop skills that elevate oral health issues, but will also align our voices for greater impact. This toolkit was developed through a collaboration between the FrameWorks Institute and DentaQuest Foundation.

Find this infographic and other tools [here!](#)

IT'S ALL CONNECTED

The health of the mouth influences other aspects of health—and vice versa.

THE MENTAL HEALTH—MOUTH-HEALTH CONNECTION

Any sores or damage to body tissue can hamper mental health and daily life. If there is a painful injury or illness in the mouth, it's likely to get in the way of normal functions like smiling, eating, or talking—and also take a toll on mood.¹

THE FAMILY HEALTH—MOUTH-HEALTH CONNECTION

Babies naturally pick up bacteria from their surroundings that builds the immune system. This includes helpful bacteria, pass on helpful bacteria to babies, but if there is untreated oral disease in the family, infants can be exposed to the germs that cause cavities.²

THE MEDICINE—MOUTH-HEALTH CONNECTION

Some medications—like decongestants, antihistamines, or painkillers—can cause a dry mouth. Because saliva protects the mouth from the harmful bacteria that cause cavities and gum disease, the dry mouth "side effect" is one way that illness in other parts of the body influence oral health.³

THE VITAL ORGAN—MOUTH-HEALTH CONNECTION

Endocarditis, a heart infection, is often caused when bacteria from another part of the body gets into the blood stream and travels to the heart. It is also possible for infections in the mouth to spread to the brain. This is why gum disease is a serious infection that shouldn't be ignored.⁴

THE IMMUNE SYSTEM—MOUTH-HEALTH CONNECTION

Because the mouth is an important part of the immune system, a healthy mouth is important to help the body to protect against disease. Auto-immune diseases, like Celiac disease or lupus, can cause swelling in the mouth. In turn, swollen tissue in the mouth can set off other health problems.⁵

THE DIABETES—MOUTH-HEALTH CONNECTION

Diabetes can harm the mouth, and problems in the mouth make it harder to control diabetes. Uncontrolled blood sugar levels can lead to dry mouth, which disrupts the mouth's natural defenses and makes cavities more likely. That's why oral health care is an important part of diabetes management.⁶

It's all connected!

A practical approach to health includes oral health in planning, policy, and practices.

1 American Pain Society. 2012. "Inability to eat oral health problem." [http://www.pain.org/pain-topics/inability-eat](#). Accessed 10/10/12.
2 Nuffield Institute. 2012. "The Mouth-Body Connection: The Impact of Poor Oral Health on Overall Health."
3 Mayo Clinic. 2011. "Oral Health: A window to your overall health."
4 CDC. 2011. "Gum Disease." [http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/gumdisease.htm](#). Accessed 10/10/12.
5 Journal of the American Dental Association. 2005. "Poor oral hygiene as a risk factor for...
6 American Diabetes Association. 2014. "Gum Disease and Oral Health Problems."



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