



# ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION

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## National Public Health Week

On April 4, President Obama issued a [proclamation](#) for April 4-10, 2016 to be [National Public Health Week](#) (NPHW). This week organizations and individuals participated in events to highlight issues that are important in making our nation healthier. What can we do to make this the healthiest nation by 2030?

During NPHW week, promote the importance of oral health. To find resources, visit our [website](#).

## KPHA Prioritizes community water fluoridation

[The Kansas Public Health Association](#) (KPHA) has released their [2016 advocacy priorities](#). Among the priorities is educating leaders on the public health benefits of community water fluoridation.



Water fluoridation offers the most equitable and cost-effective way to protect dental health across socially and economically diverse communities. Although the scientific evidence base supports water fluoridation as the foundation for improving oral health by minimizing the prevalence and severity



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## Meet with your legislator

The [Kansas Legislature](#) has been on break and will reconvene on April 27th. During their break, legislators set up meetings in their districts and communities to meet with their constituents or attend town hall meetings. This is a great time to take this opportunity to meet with them about issues you are concerned about. Learn more about [Oral Health Kansas' advocacy priorities](#) on our website. [Find](#) an event in your area.



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## Free cleaning and sealants for kids

The students and faculty at Manhattan Area Technical College on April 9. Will be doing free cleanings and sealants **on kids** from 10am to 2 pm. **It is first come first serve.** If you have questions, please contact Shawn Oprisiu, BSRDH, at 785-320-4514.

of tooth decay, many communities in Kansas have not yet adopted water fluoridation. The following are [steps](#) KPHA will use to improve community water fluoridation:

- Support new and maintain existing local policies which direct municipal water operators to adjust the fluoride levels in community water systems to the optimal levels to prevent tooth decay
- Support state and local investment in adequate public health and municipal infrastructure to ensure safe and effective water fluoridation practices. These investments include modern fluoride delivery and monitoring equipment, training for water operators and municipal decision makers, and state health department technical and financial assistance
- Support state and local policies requiring public notification if community water fluoridation is interrupted or stopped for any reason.

Visit the [Fluoride in Kansas](#) website to find out the facts about fluoride in our state.



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## What do you want to know?

We enjoy getting feedback from our readers! Is there a topic you are interested in or would like to know more about? Or is there something we could change about our newsletter that could help improve it? [Email us](#) with your thoughts!



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## Sugary Drink Display

We have open slots in May to reserve a sugary drink display! The drink display has been used as an educational resource at schools, dental offices and fairs, to show parents and kiddos how much sugar is in popular drinks.

Shipping costs are reimbursed when you return it to us. [Email us](#) to reserve a spot!



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## Oral health and minorities

April is [National Minority Health Month](#). This month the theme is "Accelerating Health Equity for the Nation". Our communities, our circumstances and environments are factors that determine our health and give us the ability to achieve overall good health. According to the [US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health](#), dissimilarities in the health status and well-being of communities, also known as health disparities, affect all Americans.

This month highlights and helps raise awareness of the unparalleled efforts underway across health, education, justice, housing, transportation and employment, among sectors, to address the environmental, social and economic conditions known as social determinants of health. These conditions affect daily living in the places that people live, work, learn, and play and have significant impact on the health outcomes of individuals and their communities, and the prosperity of our nation.



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These factors affect minorities and their oral health. [Statistics](#) show oral health disparities in minorities continue to grow:

- Non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians and Alaska Natives generally have the poorest oral health of any racial and ethnic groups in the United States
- Blacks, non-Hispanics, and Mexican Americans aged 35-44 years experience untreated tooth decay nearly twice as much as white, non-Hispanics.

One of the ways to eliminate oral health disparities is learning how to talk to communities, being mindful of families from different backgrounds and knowledgeable of cultures.



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