



## 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](#).

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### American Public Health Association Calls For Action

This week, the [American Public Health Association \(APHA\) executive director urges](#) Americans to stand up and not stay silent anymore. The recent heart-wrenching death of George Floyd has shown us all that racism is a longstanding systemic

structure in this country that must be dismantled through honest conversations, policy changes, and practices. "Racism attacks people's physical and mental health. And racism is

an ongoing public health crisis that needs our attention now!"

Tune in to APHA's upcoming webinar series [Advancing Racial Equity](#), which will take an in-depth look at racism as a driving force of the social determinants of health and equity. And learn more about the connection between racism and health on [APHA's Racism and Health topics page](#).



## National Oral Health Conference Virtual Sessions

Over the next four weeks, Oral Health Kansas staff will be attending the virtual National Oral Health Conference. This is typically the largest national public oral health conference, but like all other events this year it had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will share a few of the things we are learning over the next few weeks.

Below are summaries from two of the sessions OHK staff attended:

### **Surgeon General's Priorities to Improve the Nation's Health & Oral Health**

RADM Timothy Ricks, Chief Dental Officer of the U.S. Public Health Service provided an update about oral health disparities in the United States and some of the issues that will influence oral health in the next two decades. During his presentation, he reminded conference attendees that the Surgeon General gave the following charge for the development of the second report on oral health, "The report will describe and evaluate oral health and the interaction between oral health and general health throughout the life span, considering advances in science, healthcare integration, and social influences to articulate promising new directions for improving oral health and oral health equity across communities." Dr. Ricks noted that the second Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health will be released late this year or early in 2021.

### **Changing Behaviors by Changing Policies: Tobacco Use and Sugar Consumption**

This session took a look at U.S. trends in cigarette smoking, various tobacco policies enacted, and their impact on smoking prevalence. It was discovered that educational approaches alone were not associated with consistent decline in smoking. The most successful sustained impact occurs with comprehensive tobacco control measures including:

- Restrictions on advertising and promotion
- Effective counter-advertising
- Environmental changes

- Increased pricing through excise taxes
- Product regulations

Similar to the tobacco policy controversy, the sugar industry has had significant influence on the dental caries issue over the past 40 years by debating statistics, sponsoring conflicting studies, influencing committees, and tying their position to crucial societal values. All of these have resulted in delayed policy action on sugar reduction.

The correlations drawn between tobacco and sugar industry giants during this session were fascinating and can offer us all some lessons that can be applied as we explore ways to reduce sugar consumption and improve oral and overall health.



## Candidates Set For 2020 Races

In Kansas, one of the biggest races this year is for the U.S. Senate seat currently held by Pat Roberts, who is retiring. The primary will occur on August 4, 2020. The general election will occur on November 3, 2020. With the concern for COVID-19, fewer people may vote in person this year, and voters will have the option of requesting a mail in ballot through advance voting. Voters can

request an advance ballot through their county election officer. To view a full list of the 2020 primary candidates for local, state, and federal races, [click here](#).

Thank you to former board member and Dental Champions Alumni, Amber Sellers, for creating a [list of important dates](#) to remember during the primary and general elections.



This week we are celebrating our partner Christie Appelhanz. She serves as the Executive Director at the Children's Alliance of Kansas. We have had the chance to work with Christie throughout her five years at this child welfare organization and previously in her work at Kansas Action for Children. This summer

she will transition to a new role as the Region VII Administrator for Children and Families.

We have been grateful for her support of children's oral health for many years and know that we will continue to count her as an ally as she moves into federal government service. Best of luck, Christie



Picture courtesy of Children's Alliance of Kansas



## Sugary Drink Display Sanitation

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.



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

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