



ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION

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Seeking exhibitors for conference

OHK's [annual conference](#) is November 3-5 in Overland Park. This year's theme is "Igniting Collective Impact: Inspiring Communities." The conference this year will engage oral health advocates and practitioners in conversations about the collective approaches we all can take to inspire communities to make big differences in improving the oral health of their residents.

Exhibitors will participate on November 4 as well as have an opportunity to attend the day's conference! If interested email [Sonia](#).

OHK receives Aleshire Grant from Washburn University Leadership students

This week we had the privilege to host [United Way of Greater Topeka](#) leaders and Washburn University students for a grant presentation. OHK was awarded a grant from the Joe and Janet Aleshire Venture Grant program. The Aleshire grant is designed to acquaint students with philanthropic opportunities while providing funding for programs that address early childhood development. OHK was one of the lucky organizations to be awarded. With this grant, we will launch the "Book, Brush, Bed" project, which is an innovative new program from [American Academy of Pediatrics](#). The goal is to increase the number of families that integrate tooth brushing and reading into children's bedtime routine. It is designed to help kids improve their oral health and reading skills. We will launch the project in Topeka through Parents and Teachers and USD 501.



Join Twitter storm tomorrow for "Soda-free August"

August has been named "soda-free month" to remind us of the sugar that is hidden in sodas. According to the [Department of Nutrition at Harvard School of Public Health](#), a typical 20-ounce soda contains 15 to 18 teaspoons of sugar and upwards of 240 calories. A 64-ounce fountain cola drink could have up to 700 calories.

On Thursday, July 28, (1 to 2pm CDT) OHK will join a Twitter Storm to promote Soda-Free August. Remind parents to make it a #SodaFreeAugust for kids because their risk of dental cavities is shaped significantly by what they eat/drink. [Here](#) are more tweets you can share on July 28!



Why its important to be a registered voter

The best people to help underrepresented communities engage in the democratic

WIBW [shared a video](#) of the students presenting a second Aleshire award. We would like to thank United Way of Greater Topeka and Washburn University for this opportunity! We are eager to get started!



Washburn University Leadership Institute students



Shawnee County Coalition leaders and Washburn University students

OHK Co-Sponsors Legislative Candidates Forum

Last night, Oral Health Kansas joined with 11 other community organizations to

process are those trusted service providers already serving them, and that is why Oral Health Kansas wants to make sure you know how to vote during this election season. The Kansas primary is next week on August 2.

If you don't know where your polling place is, you can visit the Secretary of State's website at: <https://myvoteinfo.voteks.org>.

Voting is also good for your health! [Researchers](#) say expressing your right to vote may help promote good mental health and, in turn, good physical health, but some people will likely benefit from voting more than others. Talk to your kids about voting and the benefits so they are readily prepared when its time to register.



KanCare expansion forum tonight!

The [Alliance for a Healthy Kansas](#) continues to host community events across Kansas to learn about what KanCare expansion would mean to Kansans. There is one tonight!

When: July 27, 2016, 6:30pm
Where: Colonial Church in Prairie Village

sponsor a very successful candidate forum in Topeka. Over 100 voters attended the forum at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, eager to listen to candidates for the State Senate and State House of Representatives. The forum topics were: 1.) State budget and tax policy 2.) Judicial selection process 3.) KanCare/Medicaid expansion. Although all Shawnee County legislative candidates with a primary election opponent were invited, not all attended. Voters heard from candidates running to represent the 20th State Senate District and the House's 50th, 52nd, 56th and 58th Districts.

When Chris Huntsman, District 50 candidate, was asked about the backlog of Medicaid applications, her response was clear. The problems started when the Medicaid system was moved to KanCare, although the state is currently working on the issue. She said "it's a shame when people are denied medical care."

Another topic addressed by Vic Miller District 58 candidate, was expanding Medicaid in Kansas. "This is a ridiculous question," Miller said. "We have hospitals going under because we have stubbornness. We need to expand Medicaid. It is not debatable."

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) and the state budget also were mentioned several times during the forum moderated by Topeka Capitol-Journal publisher Zach Ahrens.

7039 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66208



Talking points for candidates

Advocacy in the area of public policy is a central component of Oral Health Kansas's mission. This year, all forty Kansas State Senators and all 125 House of Representatives members will be up for election. When you have the opportunity at candidate forums or when a candidate knocks on your door, consider discussing one or both of the following issues:

State Budget

Ongoing budget cuts are having a detrimental impact on Kansans of all ages. Devastating cuts have hit Medicaid rates for dental and medical providers, schools, health departments, highways, services for the elderly, and higher education.

Are there areas of the state budget that you perceive as off limits to more cuts?

Medicaid Adult Dental Services

Oral Health is a critical component of one's overall health. Through the ACA and the Children's Health Insurance Program, most children have access to some dental service coverage. No such assistance is available to adults.

Do you support including comprehensive dental coverage in Medicaid/KanCare services for adults?

Check out the [Topeka Capital Journal](#) and [WIBW](#) for more candidate response. Both were at the forum covering the story.

The other 11 forum sponsors were: Community Action Inc., ERC Resource and Referral Inc., Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, InterHab, United Way of Greater Topeka, Community Resource Council, Fast Forward, Heartland Visioning, League of Women Voters of Topeka and Shawnee County, Topeka Bar Association and YWCA of Northeast Kansas.



Federal officials hear KanCare concerns

In Salina on July 26th, the KanCare Advocates Network (KAN) hosted the second open forum for advocates, consumers and service providers to voice ongoing concerns to federal officials about the KanCare (Kansas Medicaid) program. Over 100 Kansans were on hand to share concerns with



Sugary Drink Display

Get your drink display reserved for the month of August! Show parents and kids the amount of sugar in each beverage so they can participate in #Soda Free August.

Our drink display has 10 beverages that will show you how much sugar is in each! The drink display is free, and shipping costs are reimbursed when you return it to us. [Email us](#) to reserve a spot!




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representatives from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS).

Courageous and heartfelt stories were shared by people of all ages and backgrounds about issues ranging from access to care to services eliminated due to budget cuts. Providers especially expressed concern for what the near future will hold if nothing is done to mitigate the problems associated with delays in reimbursements, claims denials, rate cuts, and months-long delays in approving Kansans' Medicaid applications. Oral Health Kansas board member, John Fales, DDS, provided [written testimony](#) to CMS in which he declared, "Cutting reimbursement rates for KanCare dental benefits is a recipe for disaster for those covered by this program." He explained that states that pay a reasonable rate to Medicaid providers are able to serve all the children eligible for Medicaid dental services, but that this is not the case in Kansas.

Providers, consumers and advocates asked CMS officials to hold state officials accountable for ensuring that all Kansans who are covered by KanCare are able to access affordable care in a timely manner in order to stay healthy. Additional feedback about KanCare, including dental services, can be shared directly with state officials at kancarerenewal@kdheks.gov.

If you have stories you would like to share with CMS, please contact Oral Health Kansas staff: info@oralhealthkansas.org, who can share those stories with federal

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officials. Read more about the forum from the [KHI News Service](#).



picture courtesy of
Jonathan Shorman/The Capital Journal

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