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## **Coalitions Advocate for 245 million Americans**

## **Kansas Hygienist Making a Difference for Kids With Disabilities**

July is National Cleft and Craniofacial Awareness and Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness and better our understanding of birth defects of the head and face. Kansas' own Kathleen Elder, RDH, ECP II, COM, specializes in caring for children with cleft lip and cleft palette (CLCP).

Kathleen's specialization sprung from her recognition of a void in Kansas' oral health workforce. Her advanced certification in Oralfacial Myology-the study and treatment of behaviors created by incorrect habits involving the tongue and lips-helps her meet the needs children with CLCP and their families.

During her visits with parents and children, Kathleen provides dental services to CLCP patients and educates their parents about how to help them with regular oral hygiene and palate development at home. For instance, she teaches parents to practice "tongues up, lips closed" with their kids, to encourage muscle development in the mouth. Kathleen said, "I am able to provide care with a comprehensive outlook on the needs of these children. They need oral stimulation [for palette development] and the parents are so receptive to the education."

Kathleen provides these services monthly at KDHE's Specialty Clinics, located at the KU Medical Center in Kansas City, Kansas as part of an integrated health care team, which



Oral Health Kansas is one of 37 state members of the [American Network of Oral Health Coalitions](#) (ANOHC). Together, ANOHC members are advocating for oral health for over 245 million Americans. That is 78% of the nation's population!

## Save the Date...

The 2014 Oral Health Kansas Conference will be November 6-8 at Wichita State University. This year's conference theme is Oral Health Across the Lifespan.

## New Oral Health Ad Campaign

The CDC has launched a new campaign centered on the link between smoking and oral health. Click here for more information. Also watch for features on this material in our upcoming issues.

addresses the specialized needs of CLCP patients. Kathleen attributes the successful addition of oral health services to Vicki Miller, the hospital's coordinator of Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, who encouraged her to become part of the team. Says Kathleen, "She has been so helpful in this process and pushed me to do this work."



## New Conference Sponsor: Bureau of Oral Health



The Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Bureau of Oral Health has announced they will serve as the principal sponsor of the 2014 Oral Health Kansas Conference, which will be held from November 6-8 at Wichita State University.

The Bureau of Oral Health joins the Delta Dental of Kansas Foundation, which will be an event sponsor of the conference.

The 2014 Conference theme is oral health across the lifespan and will include a series of thought-provoking sessions about improving oral health for Kansans of all ages, including one session featuring a panel of dental professionals sharing best practices from rural areas. The conference also will debut of the 2015-2017 State Oral Health Plan in a new web-based format.

The Oral Health Kansas conference attracts a cross-section of people dedicated to improving oral health: dentists, dental hygienists, public health officials, health administrators, health educators, community advocates for children, elders, and people with disabilities, as well as state government officials and association executives. This is an ideal opportunity showcase your support for the Kansas oral health community.

Join the Bureau of Oral Health and learn more about [Sponsorship](#) and [Exhibitor](#) opportunities today. For more information, please contact Oral Health Kansas at 785-235-6039 or [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org).

## TIPS FROM FORMER SMOKERS

Join Our Mailing List!

## Traveling Sugary Drink Display

Reserve our traveling Sugary Drink Display for your business or event! Displays are available from June onward and reservations are made for one month at a time. Return postage is covered by Oral Health Kansas. [E-mail Sarah here](#) if you would like to make a reservation.



If you have an idea, story or suggestion for a Oral Health Kansas Weekly Wednesday Update please contact us at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org).

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