

49 News: ABC Topeka

Kansas making strides in oral health

Story by Fally Afani Ruzik ([Contact](#))

3:34 p.m. Wednesday, January 14, 2009

When it comes to oral health, Kansas is making great strides.

That's the word from Oral Health Kansas. They made that announcement at the annual meeting of the American Dental Association's overall Oral Health. In 2003, they had a "D+."

They pointed out the progress the state has made in the past five years, in its oral health plan.

But many areas, like access to care and state policies, still need work.

"The areas where we still need to improve are increasing the number of dental services covered by Medicaid reimbursements, trying to get dentists into rural areas, to support about 14 counties currently that do not have a dentist in their count," said Fally Afani Ruzik, director of Oral Health Kansas.

She also said right now only 62 percent of the state has community water fluoridation, an effective way of reducing dental decay.

Oral Health Kansas said they've come up with some initiatives to improve oral health.

That includes 8 dental hubs and 9 safety-net dental clinics receiving funding from the state in 10 Kansas counties.

You can find a breakdown of the Kansas Oral Health report card [here](#)