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Cowley County Dentist Recognized

Dr. Nick Rogers Honored for His Efforts to Improve Oral Health

TOPEKA – At its recent annual conference, Oral Health Kansas, the statewide oral health coalition of approximately 200 individuals and organizations, recognized an area dentist for his efforts to improve children's oral health.

Dr. Nick Rogers of Arkansas City was honored with the organization's annual *Excellence in Oral Health* award as an Outstanding Community Leader. Several years ago, Dr. Rogers began to notice that the number of three year olds entering his practice with extreme decay was increasing drastically, and he wanted to do something to stop the disturbing trend. He called a group of community members together to discuss the problem, and with his continued leadership, the result was a parent education campaign called Tiny Teeth. According to the Legacy Foundation, who funds the program along with the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund of Hutchinson, the program has saved Cowley County about \$85,000 per year in treatment costs and has even more importantly, saved a lot of children from needless pain and suffering.

According to Pamela Moore, Executive Director of the Legacy Foundation, Dr. Rogers is a true example of an oral health champion. She said, "Dr. Rogers gave of his time and expertise and his influence with other medical and dental providers to help Tiny Teeth become successful. He stepped out of his dental office to lead a community-wide effort that truly makes a difference for children in Cowley County."

Tiny Teeth materials are designed to be accurate and easy to use. Materials provide information for parents of newborns about oral hygiene and nutrition and are designed to integrate into existing programs. Involving multiple agencies means parents hear a consistent message about oral care for their families from every agency with whom they interact.



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Teresa Schwab, Executive Director of Oral Health Kansas, said "Dr. Rogers is an example of a dentist that truly makes a difference. Treating patients is one thing, but stepping out to solve the larger problem takes leadership to a whole new level. Oral health is something that many of us take for granted, but Dr. Rogers understands that for many Kansans, dental care is unfortunately considered a luxury. Oral disease is almost entirely preventable, which is why programs like these are so important."

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Founded in 2003 as the statewide oral health coalition, Oral Health Kansas coordinates state-level policy initiatives focused on oral health prevention, access to dental care, oral health workforce, oral health status and leadership. The coalition's policy efforts focus on the most vulnerable Kansans, including children, pregnant women, individuals with disabilities, the elderly, those living in poverty and those living in rural areas of the state. Oral Health Kansas is a membership organization with over 200 members representing a diverse, multidisciplinary group of individuals and organizations, all working together to improve oral health in Kansas.

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