

# TOOLS AND RESOURCES

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FOR DENTAL CARE  
ACCESS

Interhab Training  
February 26, 2026



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# Why Oral Health Matters



Healthy teeth help with:

Eating

Talking

Feeling Good

Staying Healthy

# Poor Oral Health Affects Daily Life



# Challenges at Home



Hard to move  
hands or arms

Don't like the  
feeling of  
brushing

Hard to tell  
others  
what hurts

Strong gag  
reflex

# Challenges in the Dental Office



Lack of  
provider training

Scheduling  
and  
support

Physical  
accessibility

Not many  
dentists who  
take Medicaid

# My Dental Care Passport



## MYDENTALCARE PASSPORT

**For users:** This passport is unique to you. Please fill out all information that you think is important.  
[You can find the Passport User Guide here.](#)



**For my dental team:** This is key reading for all staff working with me. It gives important information about how I can be supported when visiting your clinic. This passport should be kept visible and used when I visit your clinic. You can find the Passport User Guide here.



**My name is:** \_\_\_\_\_  
I like to be called: \_\_\_\_\_

**My preferred pronouns are:**  
 He  She  They

**I am my own guardian:**  
 Yes  No

**Please check the box that applies:**  
 I completed this form myself  
 I completed this form with help from someone else

**This is the best person to contact for more information about me:**  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**What type of disability do I have?**  
Please list all disabilities: \_\_\_\_\_

## SENSITIVITIES

There are some things at the dental office that cannot be taken away. However, there are things that you and the dental office can do to help make your dental visit more relaxing. Please add any information about what makes you feel upset or relaxed at the dental office below.

**These are some things that can upset me:**  
Please check all that apply. Please describe your needs.

Smell: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: d

Sounds: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: p

Sight: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: li

Positions: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: c

Closeness: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: p

Touch or Temp: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: g

Texture: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: g

Pressure: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: s

Taste: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: g

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**These are some things that I like:**  
Please check all that apply.

Sounds: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: e  
favorite music,

Sight: \_\_\_\_\_  
For example: d  
to block out lig

**The most important thing I want the dental team to know about me is:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**On most days, I would describe myself as:**

Please check all that apply.

Happy  Quiet  Nervous  Sleepy

Loud  Angry  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**My interests are:**

Please share any hobbies or interests so your dental team can get to know you better.

\_\_\_\_\_

## COMMUNICATION AND BEHAVIOR

**Ways that I prefer to communicate with people:**

Please check all that apply.

Talk to me directly, even if I bring someone with me.

Use plain language.

Give me time to process the questions.

I have a speech impairment and can be difficult to understand.

It takes time to form my words so please be patient.

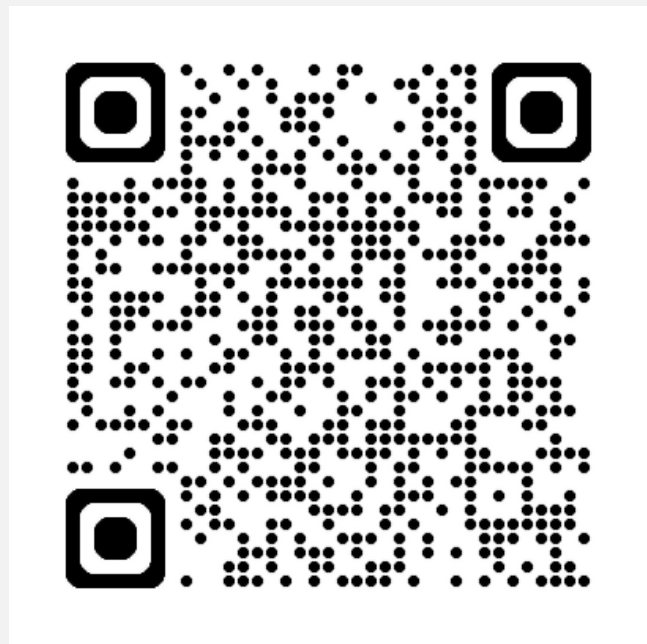
I am non-speaking, but I am communicating with you in other ways.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**I communicate using:**

For example: speech, preferred language, sign language, communication devices or aids, pictures, non-speaking sounds. Please state if extra time or support is needed.

\_\_\_\_\_



## MYDENTALCARE PASSPORT

— GUIDING EVERY VISIT —

### TIPS FOR PASSPORT USERS, FAMILIES & CAREGIVERS

#### WHAT IS IT?

- My Dental Care Passport, also known as The Passport, allows you to tell dental teams about yourself before you enter the office. The Passport will give prompts on topics like past dental visits, communication, likes, dislikes, how you move, and so on.

#### WHO CAN USE IT?

- It was created for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Passport can be used by both children and adults who face challenges when visiting the dentist.

#### WHY WOULD YOU USE IT?

- It is critical to visit the dentist to make sure your teeth and mouth are healthy. Dental teams who know you well can make your next trip to the office as successful as possible.

## MYDENTALCARE PASSPORT

**For users:** This passport is unique to you. Please fill out all information that you think is important.  
[You can find the Passport User Guide here.](#)

**For my dental team:** This is key reading for all staff working with me. It gives important information about how I can be supported when visiting your clinic. This passport should be kept visible and used when you talk to me or have a question about me. [You can find the Dental Team Passport User Guide here.](#)

### ABOUT ME

**My name is:** \_\_\_\_\_  
I like to be called: \_\_\_\_\_

**My preferred pronouns are:**  
 He  She  They

**I am my own guardian:**  
 Yes  No

**Please check the box that applies:**  
 I completed this form myself  
 I completed this form with help from someone else

**This is the best person to contact for more information about me:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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AVAILABLE IN BOTH ENGLISH AND SPANISH AT:  
[WWW.PATHWAYSTOORALHEALTH.COM/MY-DENTAL-CARE-PASSPORT/](http://WWW.PATHWAYSTOORALHEALTH.COM/MY-DENTAL-CARE-PASSPORT/)



# Finding the Right Dentist



## Finding Appropriate Dental Care

Finding the right dentist can make all the difference in receiving great care that works for you. Here's how to locate a provider who meets your needs:

+ **Check out this webpage for ideas on finding dental providers who accept Medicaid (KanCare) insurance**

+ **Specialized Care for People with Disabilities: Look for providers with experience treating individuals with disabilities. Here are some questions you might ask when looking for a good fit for you.**

+ **Sedation Dental Services:**



# Dentist Who Accept Medicaid



## How to find dentists accepting KanCare (Medicaid)

- For help finding a dentist who accepts KanCare for children, use the Find a Dentist for Your Kid search tool on the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services website at this link: [www.insurekidsnow.gov/coverage/find-a-dentist/index.html](http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/coverage/find-a-dentist/index.html)
- Call the phone number on your health insurance card to find out how to find a dentist near you who takes your insurance.
- Be sure to let your dentist know that you're enrolled in KanCare or give them the name of your health plan when you make an appointment for care.
- If you're having trouble getting an appointment to see a dental care provider, call the Kansas Medical Assistance Program Customer Service Center at 1-800-766-9012 or your health plan's member services department for help.

### UNITED HEALTHCARE

- <https://www.uhc.com/find-a-doctor>
- Click on "Find a Doctor"
- Click on "Find a Dentist"
- Select Medicaid Plans
- You can then search for a dentist based on your location, Dentist Name or Practice Name.
- Customer Assist: 877-542-9238

### SUNFLOWER

- <https://www.sunflowerhealthplan.com/find-a-doctor.html>
- Enter in your location using your zip code or physical address.
- Choose Your Network
- Customer Assist: 877-644-4623

### HEALTHY BLUE




- <https://www.healthybluekansas.com/medicaid/kancare>
- Go to "Find Care" on the right top of the website
- You can then search for a dentist based on your location
- Please remember to review the "Network" column and make sure your dentist is listed in your plan.
- Customer Assist: 844-621-4575. Healthy Blue uses SkyGen for their dental services. You can call the number on your card as well.

To learn more about KanCare (Medicaid) or to enroll for coverage, visit [here](#).

## Value Added Benefits for 2025

Look at the highlighted benefits below to compare plans. All physical, mental, and substance abuse services are the same in each MCO. The table below shows extra benefits you can receive in KanCare. Please contact your MCO by phone or the MCO website for additional details related to the value added benefits.

Acronyms included: MCO = Managed Care Organization, HCBS=Home and Community Based Services, LTSS=Long Term Supports & Services, I/DD=Intellectually/Developmentally Disabled, FE=Frail Elderly, PD=Physical Disability, BI=Brain Injury and CMS=Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

|                                | <br>1-833-838-2593 (TTY 711)  | <br>1-877-644-4623 (TTY 711)  | <br>1-877-542-9238 (TTY 711)  |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Dental</b>                  |  |  | Any member ages 21 and over are eligible for added dental benefits for specialty services not covered under KanCare, up to \$500 per year.   |
| <b>Vision / Mobile Clinics</b> |  |  | Adult members (age 21 and over) can get an additional \$60 once a year, to upgrade their frames.   |
| <b>Meals/ Farmers Markets</b>  | Members over 18 with a behavioral health diagnosis can receive up to a \$75 Healthy Grocery Store gift card or wholesale membership access for healthy and nutritious food options. Max one gift card, 3 boxes of fresh produce or one wholesale membership per household. | Home-delivered meals for FE waiver members returning home from a nursing home or inpatient stay. Covers up to two meals per day for up to seven days. KanCare covers this service for PD and BI waiver members.<br><br>Members can receive a \$10 voucher to buy fresh produce at special Farmers Market events. \$10 voucher is per member and not capped by household. | Members can get 14 meals (two meals/day for seven days) from Mom's Meals if discharged from a hospital, skilled nursing facility, or rehab facility and have mobility needs, no family support to assist with food access, and/or be at risk for readmission due to nutritional issues. Benefit available within 30 days of discharge with no age requirement.<br><br>Adult members with chronic conditions or mobility issues, or who are enrolled in care management or whole person case, or are pregnant, or in behavioral health programs, can get a Walmart+ membership through OnePass™. Membership includes: Same day grocery delivery (12-mile radius of a Walmart), shipping with no minimum, video streaming Paramount+ subscription, fuel savings at selected gas stations. Members can go to <a href="http://youronepass.com">youronepass.com</a> to access or call member services for help. |

# Finding the Right Dentist



## FINDING THE RIGHT DENTAL OFFICE

Here are some questions to consider when looking for the perfect fit for a person with disabilities

DENTAL OFFICE NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Hello. I am looking for a dental home that can meet the needs of a person with disabilities. Are you the right person to speak to about this?

Can your office provide dental care for the special needs population?

My child has XYZ issues/disabilities, do you know if your dental team is familiar with this? Would it be helpful for me to send information regarding my child's issues/disabilities?

Does your office accept Medicaid/KanCare? I have (United, Sunflower, Healthy Blue insurance)

Does your office have distraction strategies they use during dental treatment? (TV, music, handheld items, etc.)

My child responds better in a quiet environment or at certain times of the day. Are appointment times flexible?

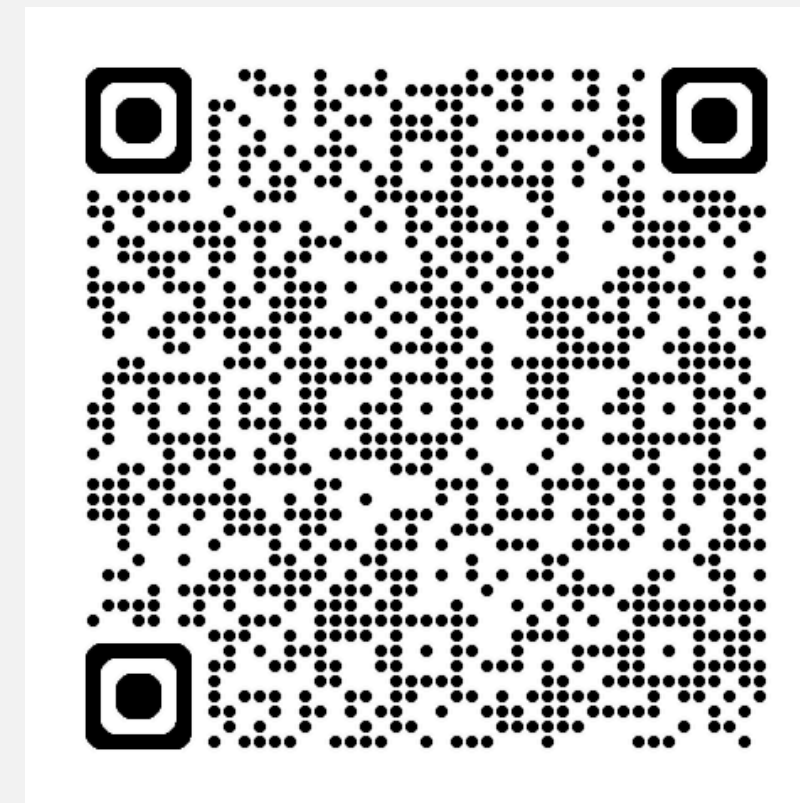
Is your office and equipment wheelchair accessible? Can your dental team assist with the transfer from wheelchair to dental chair?

Can I bring my child into the office prior to the appointment to meet the dental team?

Do you have any videos, brochures, or books that may help in advance of the visit?

Is it possible to complete and submit all needed paperwork before the day of the appointment?

Notes:



# Sedation Dental Services



## KC Children's Surgery Center

Open every Friday

Serve all ages with intellectual developmental disabilities, including community members who pass a screening

Residents of KNI are first priority

There is no fee

Services provided: exams, cleanings, fillings

NO dentures or other appliances

Sedation services are now available through Blue Cloud PSC that bills separately, but their services are covered by insurance (including Medicaid)

Wait list: usually about two months, but shorter for emergencies

Contact: Debbie Mesecher at **785-296-2345**  
**Deborah.Mesecher@ks.gov**

## KC Children's Surgery Center

Ambulatory Surgery Center specializing in same-day, outpatient dental procedures under general sedation

Children 18 months to 18 years

Adults with special needs up to age 60

Medicaid Accepted, payment plans offered

Se Habla Espanol

Patient must meet medical requirements (BMI under 40%, cardiac and/or neuro clearance)

Phone: 816- 235-3455

Visit: <https://bluecloudpsc.com/location/kc-childrens-surgery-center/>, select the "Refer a Patient" tab

If self-referral, please use "Self-Referral KS" on Dental Office line item on the submission form

## Adult Sedation Dentistry

**KNI Dental Clinic (Kansas Neurological Institute)**

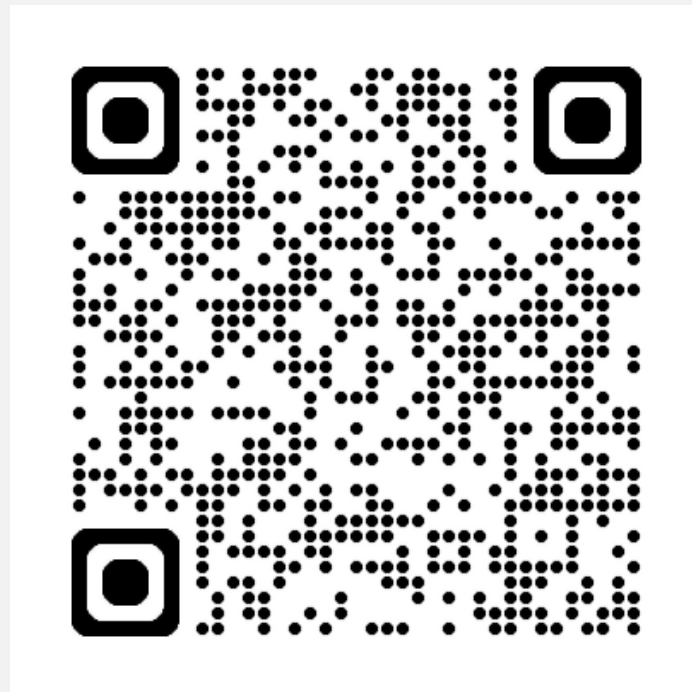
**KC Children's Surgery Center**

## Children's Sedation Dentistry

**KC Children's Surgery Center**

**KNI Dental Clinic (Kansas Neurological Institute)**

# Finding the Right Dentist



[www.oralhealthkansas.org/findingdentist](http://www.oralhealthkansas.org/findingdentist)

Here are some ideas to try:  
Click on the symbol or name for more information



**Community Dental Clinics**  
Community dental clinics are low-cost dental offices. These clinics can offer dental care for people with KanCare (Medicaid), private insurance, or no insurance at all. If you don't have insurance, these clinics will charge you less money based on your income.



**Dentists accepting KanCare (Medicaid)**  
KanCare (Medicaid) covers dental care for children and adults. Most dental care is covered for children, and services like fillings, crowns, dentures, and gum disease treatment are covered for adults.



**Kansas Mission of Mercy**  
The Kansas Mission of Mercy (KMMOM) is a special dental clinic that happens once a year in a different city in Kansas. This clinic is free and lasts for two days. Adults and children can get their teeth filled, cleaned, or pulled if needed. You don't need to meet any citizenship or income requirements. You can show up and get help on a first-come, first-served basis. If you or someone you know needs dental care, you can find more information on KMMOM website. They will update the website with more details, including the next date and location.

**???** Finding a dental office that is best for you and your child can be hard. This document lists 12 questions that can help. [Questions to Ask When Looking for a Dental Office](#)

## Other Dental Resources

Click on the tabs below for information about other programs for which you may be eligible.

### Adult

- Access KC
- Colby Community College Dental Hygiene Services
- Concorde Career Institute (Dental Hygiene Program) - Kansas City, Missouri
- Flint Hills Technical College (Dental Hygiene Program) - Emporia
- Kansas Donated Dental Services (DDS)
- Health Access Program - Shawnee County
- The HNC Living Foundation (located in Overland Park)
- Johnson County Community College Dental Hygiene Clinic
- Project Access in Sedgwick County
- Smiles for Success
- State Primary Care Association
- University of Missouri KC (UMKC) School of Dentistry
- Wichita State University - Dental Hygiene Clinic (Wichita)
- Salina Tech Dental Hygiene Clinic

### Adult Sedation Dentistry

- KNI Dental Clinic (Kansas Neurological Institute)
- KC Children's Surgery Center

### Children

- Access KC
- Health Access Program
- The HNC Living Foundation
- Johnson County Community College Dental Hygiene Clinic
- Project Access in Sedgwick County
- Smiles Change Lives
- State Primary Care Association - Community Care Network of Kansas
- University of Missouri KC (UMKC) School of Dentistry
- Wichita State University - Dental Hygiene Clinic (Wichita)
- Salina Tech Dental Hygiene Clinic

### Children's Sedation Dentistry

- KC Children's Surgery Center
- KNI Dental Clinic (Kansas Neurological Institute)

# We Care and Connect

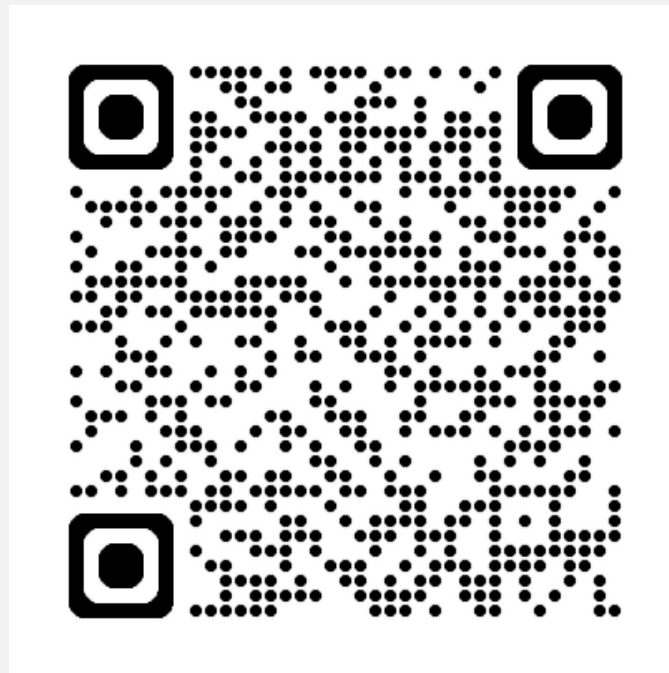


## Directory

Use the [category list](#) to jump to a specific service, or the search form below to search by name, by distance to your location, or filter by town. All fields are optional.

SEARCH BY...

List  Map



<https://heartland.help/directory/>

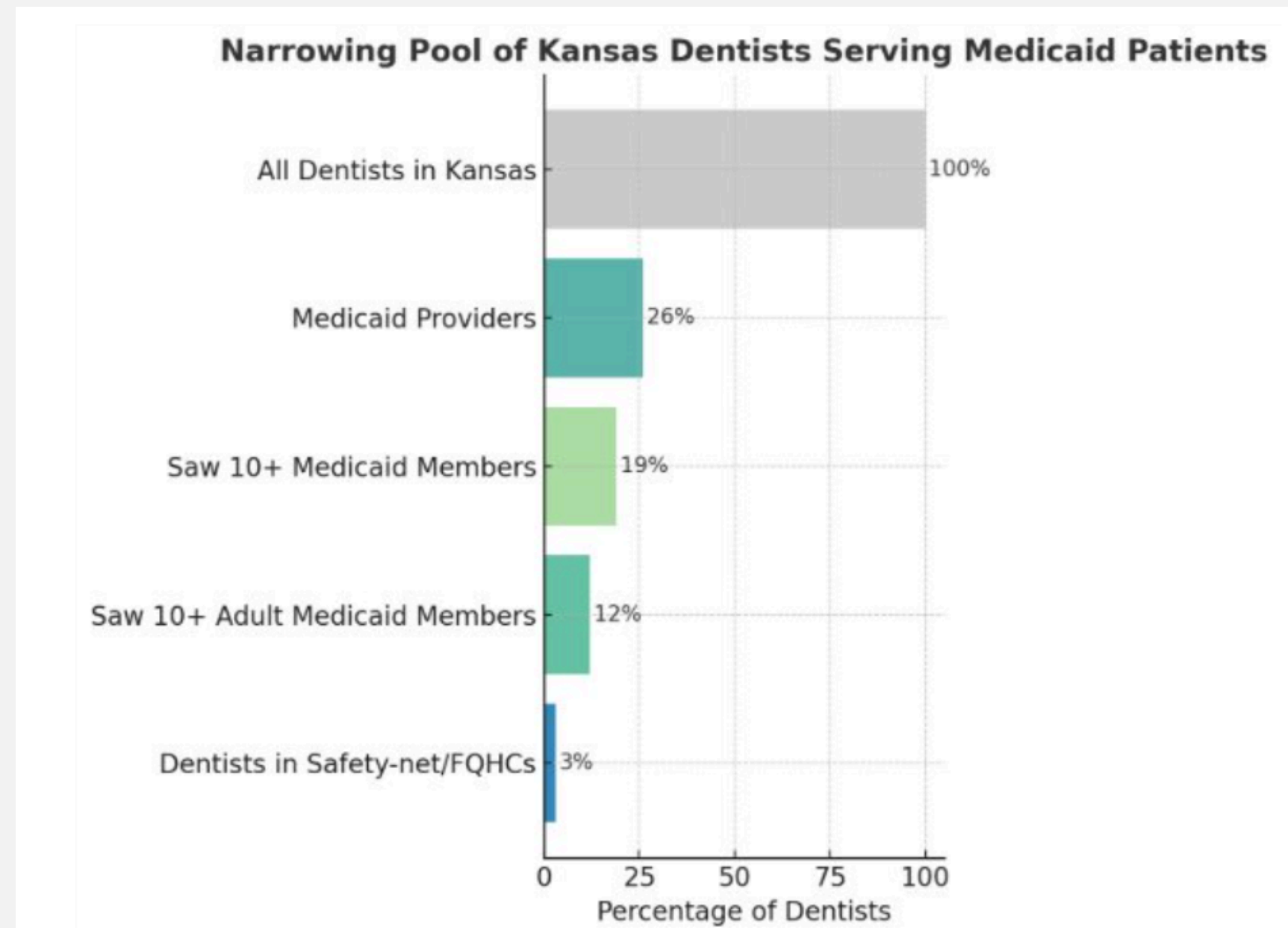
## Dental services

- [ABC Dental](#)  
1619 W US Highway 24, Independence, Missouri
- [Adventure Dental And Vision Kansas City](#)  
3716 State Ave. Suite B, Kansas City, Kansas  
Other locations:
  - [Adventure Dental And Vision Wichita](#)  
1901 W 21st St, Wichita, Kansas
  - [Adventure Dental And Vision Topeka](#)  
400 SW 29th St, Topeka, Kansas
- [Albert Mendez, DDS](#)  
1510 N. Broadway St., Pittsburg, Kansas
- [Blue Cloud Dentistry: KC Children's Surgery Center.](#)  
7848 State Ave, Kansas City, Kansas
- [Crown Town Dental](#)  
6302 Monrovia St, Shawnee, Kansas
- [Deer Creek Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery](#)  
12800 Metcalf Avenue, Suite 2, Overland Park, Kansas
- [Dental Hygiene Clinic Johnson County Community College](#)  
12345 College Blvd, Overland Park, Kansas
- [Doug Fain, DDS](#)  
20168 W. 153rd St., Olathe, Kansas
- [Enable Dental: Kansas/Missouri](#)  
11961 Johnson Dr., Shawnee, Kansas
- [Fales Pediatric Dentistry](#)  
13496 S. Arapaho Dr., Olathe, Kansas
- [Gilroy Dental](#)  
11826 W 135th Street, Overland Park, Kansas

# You Make a Difference



# 2024 Medicaid Provider Network



# Dentist Conversation Toolkit



## Your Voice Matters

**Welcome**

We're glad you're here! Many Kansans with Medicaid—especially people with disabilities—still struggle to find a dentist. This toolkit gives you simple ways to talk with dentists about accepting Medicaid and caring for people with disabilities. You don't need to be an expert! By speaking up, you can help more people get the dental care they need.

**How to Use This Toolkit**

- Learn:** Review the fact sheet included in this toolkit. It is designed for you to share with dentists. It explains the challenges people with disabilities face and why accepting Medicaid matters.
- Reach Out:** Use the sample email or phone script to connect with dentists. Make it personal by adding your own story or the experience of someone you know.
- Have a conversation:** When meeting with dentists, their staff, or others in your community, use the conversation talking points provided. They'll help you stay clear and focused.
- Spread the Word:** Share the included social media posts and graphics to raise awareness and build support for better access to dental care.
- Connect:** Help dental offices find more resources and support:
  - Oral Health Kansas: [www.oralhealthkansas.org](http://www.oralhealthkansas.org) | [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org)
  - Pathways to Oral Health: <https://pathwaystooralhealth.org/dental-providers/>
    - Information on Medicaid reimbursement and provider enrollment
    - Training and resources for caring for people with disabilities
    - How to benefit your office by using the My Dental Care Passport

**In a hurry? Start by giving the fact sheet to your dentist or posting a graphic on social media.**

*By sharing your voice and encouraging others to do the same you're helping open doors for better oral health for all—regardless of ability. Share your story today! Every voice matters.*

## Sharing Your Message: How to Talk with Dentists and Your Community

You don't need to be an expert to make a difference. Anyone in your community can be an advocate for better oral health. Every email, text, phone call, or conversation helps dentists understand why accepting Medicaid and welcoming people with disabilities is so important. Here are some examples of ways to share your message with confidence.

**Sample Email |**  
 Subject: Helping Improve Dental Access in Our Community  
 Hello [Dentist's Name or Office Manager],  
 My name is [Your Name], and I live in [Your Community]. Many families here rely on Medicaid but struggle to find a dentist who accepts it, and people with disabilities face even greater barriers. Would your office consider becoming a Medicaid provider or welcoming more patients with disabilities? Kansas Medicaid has recently improved rates and coverage. I've attached a short fact sheet from Oral Health Kansas with details, and they can connect your office with resources and training to help. Thank you for considering this important step to strengthen our community.

Sincerely,  
 [Your Name and contact information]

*\*Optional if this is your own dentist: I'm a patient at your office and wanted to share information that I believe could make a big impact for families in our community. Tip: Share your personal story about why this matters to you or someone you know.*

**Sample Text Message |**  
 Hi [Dentist's Name], this is [Your Name] from [Your Community].  
 Many families here rely on Medicaid and struggle to find dentists who accept it, especially people with disabilities. Would your office consider becoming a Medicaid provider or welcoming more patients with disabilities? Oral Health Kansas has resources to make it easier—happy to share a short fact sheet if you'd like to learn more!

**Sample Phone Script |**  
 Hello, my name is [Your Name]. I'm calling because many families in our community rely on Medicaid and have a hard time finding dental care. People with disabilities especially struggle to find a dentist who can meet their needs.  
 I'd love to share a short fact sheet from Oral Health Kansas that explains more. Could I drop it off or email it to the office manager or dentist?  
 Thank you for your time and for considering ways to support families in our community.  
*\*Optional if this is your own dentist: As someone who really values the care your office provides, I wanted to share a concern I see in our community.*

## Be the Dentist Your Neighbors Can Count On

**Oral Health in Kansas**

Everyweek, Kansasfamilieswith Medicaid coverage call dental offices seeking care—often without success.

- More than 400,000 Kansans rely on Medicaid (KanCare) insurance.
- Adults with disabilities face the greatest barriers to dental care, and poor oral health can have a profound impact on their overall health.

**Why Your Participation Matters in Kansas**

**Only one in four Kansas dentists accept Medicaid—and even fewer regularly treat adults with disabilities.** Just 3% of dentists work in safety net clinics, leaving thousands of families without options for care.

**How You Can Make a Difference in Your Community**

- Enroll as a Medicaid provider. Enrollment is simple, adults now have dental coverage, and reimbursement rates are improving.
- Support your team to build confidence in caring for people with disabilities.** Resources are available to help every step of the way.
- Use the My Dental Care Passport. This tool helps patients with disabilities share important mobility challenges, communication preferences, sensitivities, and successful adaptations so care is smoother for everyone.

**Support for Dentists is Available**

You don't have to do this alone. Free resources are available to make treating Medicaid patients and people with disabilities easier and more successful:  
<https://pathwaystooralhealth.org/dental-providers/>

Information on Medicaid reimbursement and provider enrollment  
 Training and resources for treating patients with disabilities  
 How to benefit your office by using the My Dental Care Passport

**Together, We Can Improve Oral Health in Kansas**

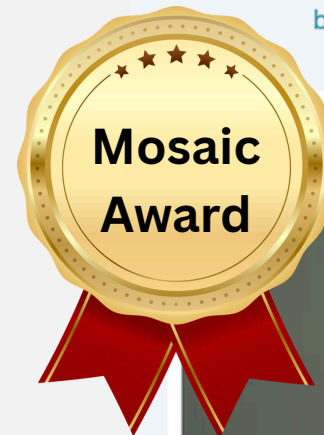
By opening your doors, you can make a life-changing difference for neighbors in your own community who have nowhere else to turn.

# Videos



## Confidence in Every Smile Video Series

Welcome to *Confidence in Every Smile* – An award winning video series designed to make brushing and flossing easier for people living with physical or intellectual disabilities. Each video shares practical tips, creative tools, and encouragement so everyone can care for their teeth with confidence. From handling toothbrushes and toothpaste, to managing gagging or flossing with limited mobility, to brushing comfortably when you can't stand at the sink, these videos help you discover what works best for you.



Confidence in Every Smile 7 Videos






- ▶ Welcome to Confidence in Ev
- ▶ Helpful Tips for Better Toothbr
- ▶ Brushing With Movement Ch
- ▶ Toothpaste Tools That Work -
- ▶ Brushing Tips That Reduce G
- ▶ Flossing Help for Limited Mok
- ▶ Brushing Your Teeth While Se






### ABOUT THIS VIDEO

Taking care of your teeth isn't always simple, especially if you live with disabilities. That's why we created "Confidence in Every Smile: Practical Oral Health Tips for People with Disabilities", a video series designed to make brushing and flossing easier with real tips, tools, and encouragement. Everyone deserves a healthy smile, and with the right support, you can find what works best for you.

# Resources



| Adaptive Devices for Toothbrushes   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Name  | Description   |   |   | Sample Seller  |
| 1. GripEazy Expand  | Expands size of toothbrush handle for enhanced grip                                 |   |   | <a href="https://orabrite.net">https://orabrite.net</a>  |
| 2. GripEazy Extend  | Extends reach of brush for those with range of motion limitations                   |   |   | <a href="https://orabrite.net">https://orabrite.net</a>  |
| 3. Foam handles   | Instantly creates a larger gripping surface   |   |   | <a href="http://www.caregiverproducts.com">www.caregiverproducts.com</a><br><a href="http://www.wrightstuff.biz">www.wrightstuff.biz</a> |
| 4. Weighted Holder  | Large diameter handle holds toothbrush and adds weight to ease use                  |   |   | <a href="http://www.caregiverproducts.com">www.caregiverproducts.com</a><br><a href="http://www.wrightstuff.biz">www.wrightstuff.biz</a> |
| 5. Utensil holder   | Webbed hand strap to hold utensil or toothbrush                                     |   |   | <a href="http://www.caregiverproducts.com">www.caregiverproducts.com</a><br><a href="http://www.wrightstuff.biz">www.wrightstuff.biz</a> |
| 1.  | 2.  | 3.  | 4.  | 5.   |
|  |  |  |  |   |

| Specialty Toothbrushes  |  |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| Name  | Description  | Sample Seller   |   |   |
| 1. Collis Curve   | Bristles reach inside, outside and biting surfaces at the same time  | <a href="http://www.kleenteeth.com">www.kleenteeth.com</a>                            |   |   |
| 2. Surround   | 3 bristle pads to efficiently clean all surfaces at the same time  | <a href="https://specializedcare.com">https://specializedcare.com</a>                 |   |   |
| 3. DexTBrush  | Reaches all surfaces of teeth and includes tongue cleaner  | <a href="http://www.amazon.com">www.amazon.com</a>                                    |   |   |
| 4. Toothbrush with suction  | Connects directly to standard suction tubing to more easily suck out the spit and other solutions from mouth | <a href="http://www.rehabmart.com">www.rehabmart.com</a>                              |   |   |
| 5. Power toothbrush   | Wide variety of features and cost  | discount stores<br>pharmacies   |   |   |
| 1.  | 2.   | 3.  | 4.  | 5.  |
|  |                         |  |  |  |

## CHANGING IT UP:

How to modify your brushing routine when your body just won't cooperate

With physical limitations, taking proper care of your teeth can sometimes feel like it is not worth the effort. But wait... did you know that problems in your mouth can lead to health issues ranging from annoying to serious? And that people with disabilities are more likely to experience dental problems? Luckily, brushing your teeth daily can help you stay healthy. When body movements are limited, toothbrushing can be tough. That's why we put together these ideas to help.



# Training Video



## Brushing the Teeth of Others

Help caregivers build confidence and compassion.

This training video shows practical ways to make brushing someone else's teeth easier, safer, and more comfortable—while supporting dignity and better oral health. Perfect for trainers teaching caregivers who support people with disabilities.








# Resources



## Trainer Resources

Reinforce learning with our free Training Guide and three Supplemental Handouts:

-  Daily Oral Hygiene Training Guide
-  A Healthy Mouth Means a Healthier Body
-  Daily Oral Hygiene Routine
-  Daily Oral Hygiene Checklist
-  Toothbrush Resistance Guide

**About the Project:** *Brushing the Teeth of Others* is part of **Pathways to Oral Health**, a project of **Oral Health Kansas**, dedicated to improving oral health for people with physical and intellectual disabilities.

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## When a Person Resists Toothbrushing



**Remember:** You are brushing **WITH** them not **FOR** them.

### Quick Tips:

- Stay calm
- Offer choices
- Be flexible
- Praise every success

### 1. Start with Yourself

- Take a deep breath
- Stay calm — it supports trust
- Be patient and kind

### 2. Offer Choices

- Toothbrush: green or blue
- Type: small, electric, or 3-sided
- Toothpaste: mint or bubblegum

### 3. If They Push You Away

- Stop brushing — don't force it
- Step back and breathe
- Try again at a calmer time that day

### 4. Try a New Location

- Bedroom chair
- Couch while watching TV
- Kitchen or bathtub

### 5. Use Distractions

- Short video or song
- Fidget or comfort item

### 6. Create a Calm Setting

- Soft music or favorite song
- Speak slowly and gently
- Keep lights low if possible
- Same helper builds trust

### 7. Change Your Approach

- Brush from the side or behind
- Use a mirror

### 8. If They Bite or Won't Open

- Foam mouth rest to protect fingers
- Use calming talk, music, or touch

### 9. If They Gag

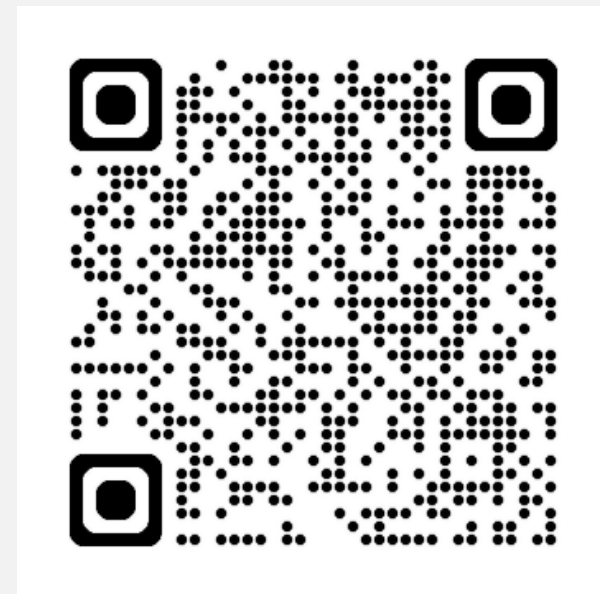
- Start with front teeth only
- Lean forward so saliva drains
- Take breaks, encourage deep breaths
- Ask dentist if gagging continues

### 10. Praise and Encourage

- "Good job!" even for a few teeth
- Small reward (song, sticker, show)

There will be easy moments and challenging ones—**keep going!**

# Resources



## BEHAVIOR SPEAKS: IS IT A TOOTHACHE?

Helping caregivers identify early dental health warning signs in individuals with disabilities



- Change in Eating or Oral Habits**
  - Refusing to eat, chew, or brush
  - Prefers soft foods
  - Chews only on one side
  - Drools, grinds teeth, spits
- Change in Behavior**
  - Increased irritability
  - Aggression or self-injury
  - Become quiet
- Visible or Physical Signs**
  - Swollen or bleeding gums
  - Loose or discolored teeth
  - Mouth sores or persistent bad breath
  - Touches face or points to mouth
  - Crying, say "OUCH" while brushing

Find a dentist who cares about your needs. Visit: <https://pathwaystooralhealth.org/individuals/>



PATHWAYS TO  
ORAL HEALTH  
— A PART OF REAL HEALTH CARE —



# Questions

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