Kansas Maternal & Child Health Council (KMCHC)
Wednesday, September 16, 2026 | 10am-2pm
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library

Attendance: Carrie Akin, Kourtney Bettinger, Michelle Black, Braddy Decarlo, Heather Braum, Lisa Chaney, Stacy Clarke, Tisha Coleman, Amy Dean Campmire, Drew Duncan, Vanessa Eberle, Stephen Fawcett, Geno Fernandez, Derik Flerlage, Kelsee Fout, Holly Frye, Jason Geslois, Kirstianna Gerrrero, Kari Harris, Kelly Hayes, Elaine Johannes, Kaitlin Johnson, Olywakemi Onyenagubo, Katie Schoenhoff, Heather Schrotberger, Christy Schunn, Kayla Stangis, Cora Ungerer, Alice Weingartner, Yartaoui Kaoutar, Daina Zolck

KAAP Staff: Karey Padding, Marisa Guerrero, Michelle Horst

Agenda Item	Discussion	Reference
Welcome Remarks Kari Harris, MD, KMCHC Chair	The Meeting was opened with welcome remarks from Dr. Harris.	
Civic Health Overview "Why Civic Health and Community Engagement Matter for Kansas MCH"	Elaine Johannes, Ph.D. Kansas State University Extension Specialist provided opening remarks. Dr. Johannes provided an overview of the importance of civic duty, with an emphasis on knowing where everyone is coming from to effectively inform a path forward. Dr. Johannes outlined the components of civic health; civic infrastructure and civic participation as the foundation. She provided an overview of Kansas's Civic Health Index, 2015-2016. Noting that Kansas was in the lower 10 states of overall civic health. Dr. Johannes provided further information providing a summary of the 2023 county health rankings report. In summary, Dr. Joahnnes spoke about what is needed to improve civic health in Kansas communities. Noting civic spaces to connect, learn and act; fair governance; social networks and shared culture.	Slides 8-10
Interactive Workshop on ""Strengthening Community Engagement in	Dr. Fawcett began the civic health training echoing Dr. Johannes's presentation and emphasizing that people must have healthy settings to have agency to respond to what is happening around them in their communities and outside their communities. These settings must include	Slide references are not available for this presentation.

Maternal and Child Health Efforts" Center for Community Health and Development, University of Kansas – Stephen Fawcett Ph.D.- Senior Advisor, Co-Director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre, Kansas Health Foundation Emeritus Distinguished Professor of the Department of Applied Behavioral Science – Reilly Fitzpatrick MPH, LMSW, Director of Training and Technical Assistance – Pearl Avari Ph.D.- Assistant Research Professor – Christina Holt, M.A.- Interim Director, Co-Director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre	populations affected, employers, parents, children, and teenagers. To improve engagement, trust and a sense of ownership must be present. He further stated that a trusted messenger is crucial when groups are communicating and educating the public. The World Health Organization, WHO, Community Health Engagement Toolkit was utilized to promote and guide discussions within the meeting. The group was divided into their chosen domain groups for the entirety of the meeting. The goals of the meeting were as follows: • Enhance supports to strengthen and sustain community engagement in all phases of the action cycle (e.g., assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation) • Build the capacities of a local (statewide) group of trainers and facilitators to strengthen community engagement in their contexts Tools utilized in the meeting were the WHO Community Engagement Toolkit and Facilitator's Guide. The first area discussed as a whole group and then as domain groups was Community Engagement. The discussion points were: • Who is responsible for addressing—and who is most affected by—the MCH issues that matter in your community? • How should key individuals and organizations be engaged to work together to address shared problems and goals in your context? Each domain group discussed the benefits of improved engagement. • Improved health and development outcomes and strengthen systems • Build trust and ownership, making actions more relevant and sustainable • Promote equity and inclusion, ensuring marginalized voices are heard • Enhance resilience and accountability, with communities co-designing local solutions • Foster multisectoral collaboration and culturally grounded, locally owned actions The core value of engagement is participation with the goal of inclusion through equitable opportunities for all to participate. First Determine why this is an issue that needs improved engagement. Enable action, include clear communication to groups affected, making engagement easier, and keeping data on participation to evaluate your process. Determine the issue you are focusing on; who has the power, who is affected, and who is responsible. Then reach out to these people to initiate engagement.	Interested in using the toolkit to enhance community engagement in your context? communityhealth@ku.edu

	Maintain engagement through the 6R's: Recognize people for their contributions Respect for people's ideas, values, and time Role: Ensure meaningful ways to contribute Relationships: Prioritize connection with others Reward: The benefits of participation should outweigh the costs Results: Share evidence that the group is making a difference	
Dialogue and Sharing of Plans for "Strengthening Community Engagement in MCH in Our Settings"	Discussion was had between all domain groups regarding insights from the afternoon and how each group would utilize the training to inform and improve engagement within their areas of specialty. The Domain groups utilized presentation guidance and a workbook to discuss and plan for improved civic engagement within their communities. Written summaries of domain discussions were not completed at this meeting to allow for a free flow of conversation.	Domain Group Summaries are not available for this meeting.
Member Announcements	<u>Professional Education and Training</u> **Trauma Informed Care Training:** Families, caregivers, healthcare professionals, educators, and support professionals are invited to a free two-part webinar series focused on helping youth and young adults with complex health care needs successfully transition from pediatric to adult healthcare. The sessions will provide practical, trauma-informed strategies and resources to support youth throughout the transition process. Registration is not required. *Part 1 – September 21, 2026 | 12:00–1:00 p.m.* Beyond the Transfer: Using Trauma-Informed Care and Relational Health to Support Successful Healthcare Transitions Stephanie Pratt, LMSW, Children's Mercy Hospital, and Dena Hubbard, MD, FAAP, will discuss trauma-informed care, relational health, and transition readiness. Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/271129746190712?p=W8s3ugeIC5bsZhBGW3 Meeting ID: 271 129 746 190 712 Passcode: 2dE2di2V *Part 2 – September 28, 2026 | 12:00–1:00 p.m.* Transition Tools and Benefits Guide – Oh My! Navigating Systems, Supports, and Adult Services Presenters from Sunflower Health Plan and the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities	

will focus on navigating systems, decision-making supports, benefits, resources, and adult services.

Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/216569161808331?p=Og6Q6qIQaJPxoMJySD
Meeting ID: 216 569 161 808 331
Passcode: 5iA74xs7

KIDS Network Safe Sleep Instructor Certification
Fall SSI Training: September 24-25, 2026
The Kansas Infant Death and SIDS (KIDS) Network offers Safe Sleep Instructor (SSI) Certification to equip professionals with evidence-supported strategies and resources to promote infant safe sleep and help reduce sleep-related infant deaths.
The Bronze Level certification includes a two-day training covering safe sleep recommendations, barriers to safe sleep practices, SIDS/SUID and suffocation risk factors, breastfeeding, tobacco avoidance, and perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. Certified instructors receive materials to provide safe sleep education in their communities and are expected to train at least 10 professionals annually and help facilitate Safe Sleep Community Baby Showers or Crib Clinics. After one year, instructors may pursue Advanced Certification through implementation of the Safe Sleep Star Outpatient Toolkit and/or Cribs for Kids Hospital Certification. These opportunities help clinics and hospitals provide consistent safe sleep education and demonstrate their commitment to reducing sleep-related infant deaths.
Contact Maria Torres at ssidirector@kidsks.org for more information

Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition Trainings

- emPower Talk
  - Join us on October 21st for the next emPOWER Talk with Dr Kathy Leeper and Michelel Fin, IBCLC. These are 30-minute virtual chats happening the 3rd Wednesday of the month 9:00 - 9:30am.
- **Kansas 2026 Breastfeeding Conference**
  - The 2026 Kansas Breastfeeding Conference will kick off on October 15th at the Drury Plaza Hotel in Wichita Kansas. With registration now at just $79 the savings are too good to pass up. Register to attend.
- **Enhanced Lactation Clinic Skills Training**

- Join the coalition on November 13th for a specialized training on lactation in Hutchison, KS. We'll touch on the fundamentals of position and latch, breast pumps, nipple wound assessment and care, and much more. Registration is open and spots are limited!

Progress in Pediatrics Fall 2026 – Now offering CNE credits!
KAAP's premier Progress in Pediatrics Fall 2026 Conference is here! Join us on Friday, October 30th, 2026, at the K-State Student Union in Manhattan, KS for a day of learning and networking with Kansas primary care providers.

Now offering CNE! We have been awarded 6.0 contact hours from the Kansas State Board of Nursing and 6.0 AMA PRA credit hours for CME. Don't wait. Register and save your spot today! Group rates available for groups of 3 or more.

Accreditation Statement
Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics is accredited by the Colorado Medical Society to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

AMA Credit Designation Statement
Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics designates this live activity for a maximum of 6.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

CNE Statement
KAAP is approved as a provider of continuing nursing education by the Kansas State Board of Nursing. This course offering is approved for 6.0 contact hours applicable for APRN, RN, or LPN re-licensure. Kansas State Board of Nursing Provider Number SP1618-0328.

Data and Information

Kelsee Fout to Serve as Maternal Child Health Director
Kelsee Fout, will be taking over as Kansas Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Director with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Bureau of Family Health.
Kelsee brings extensive experience in maternal and child health to the role. She currently serves as KDHE's Maternal and Child Behavioral Health Director and has led Kansas' psychiatric access

programs, Kansas Connecting Communities and KSKidsMAP, while supporting behavioral health initiatives within the Title V Maternal and Child Health program.
Kelsee has also been an active member of KMCHC and a familiar partner to many across Kansas' maternal and child health system. We look forward to continuing to work with her in this new leadership role and congratulate her on this transition!

September 17: National Physician Suicide Awareness Day
National Physician Suicide Awareness Day is observed September 17 to raise awareness of physician suicide, reduce stigma surrounding mental health, and encourage healthcare organizations and colleagues to support physicians before distress becomes a crisis.
This year, take a moment to check in with the physicians and healthcare professionals in your network, share available mental health and suicide prevention resources, and help foster a culture where seeking support is encouraged.
If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, call or text **988** for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

Kansas SNAP Enrollment Drops as New Requirements Take Effect
More than 32,000 Kansans have lost SNAP food assistance as new federal and state requirements have taken effect, according to an August KCTV5 report citing the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) and anti-hunger organizations. Nearly 7,000 Kansans lost benefits in July 2026 alone, while more than 13,600 children have lost SNAP since September 2025.
The decline follows changes under federal H.R. 1 and Kansas HB 2731, which expanded work requirements and added new eligibility verification and data-matching requirements. DCF told KCTV5 that the decline is likely related to increased administrative burdens created by the federal and state changes, although the agency has not yet completed a comprehensive analysis of the specific causes of the caseload decline.
Anti-hunger organizations, including Kansas Appleseed and Harvesters, expressed concern that increased paperwork and communication challenges may result in eligible families losing benefits. DCF also reported that it had requested additional funding to manage the increased workload but did not receive it during the 2026 legislative session. -**See opportunity to provide written testimony below.**

Rural Clinics: Help Shape Mental Health Resources for Kansas Healthcare Professionals

The Kansas Mental Health Consultation and Resource Network (MHCRN) is seeking rural clinics and healthcare organizations to participate in a statewide effort to better understand the mental health needs and challenges healthcare professionals are seeing in their communities. Participating sites will take part in a brief 20–30-minute conversation to share their experiences and identify the types of training, resources, tools, and support that would be most valuable to their healthcare teams. Feedback from these conversations will help MHCRN identify priorities and guide the development of future resources and programming for healthcare professionals across Kansas.

As a thank-you for participating, sites will also receive **free mental health educational resources and materials** to use and share within their clinic.

Rural clinics and healthcare organizations interested in participating are encouraged to contact **Kelsee Fout** to schedule a brief visit.

Opportunities

Public Assistance Testimony Opportunity

The Special Committee on Application and Eligibility for Public Assistance Programs is accepting written-only testimony regarding Medicaid/CHIP, SNAP, Child Care Assistance, and TANF.

This is an opportunity for individuals and organizations with experience helping Kansas families access public assistance programs to share what they have observed during the application and renewal processes, including the impact of state and federal policy changes and administrative barriers on children and families.

KMCHC members and partners who work directly with families are encouraged to consider submitting testimony and to share this opportunity with others who may have relevant experiences to contribute.

Submission deadline: Wednesday, September 23 at 5:00 p.m.

Format: PDF document

Submit to: Elizabeth Cohn at Elizabeth.Cohn@klrd.ks.gov

Your story puts a human face on the data and helps committee members understand the real impact of administrative barriers.

Head Start Proposed Rule: Public Comment Opportunity

The Kansas Head Start Association (KHSA) is sharing information about a proposed federal rule that would make significant changes to the Head Start Program Performance Standards. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services published the proposed rule, *Reducing Federal Burden for Head Start Programs*, on August 7, 2026.

According to KHSA, the proposal would eliminate approximately 90% of the existing Head Start Program Performance Standards. KHSA has raised concerns about how these changes could affect allowable uses of federal funding, consistency and quality of services across communities, and Head Start's comprehensive model connecting children and families with health, mental health, developmental, housing, and other supports.
The proposal is currently open for public comment through October 6, 2026. Individuals and organizations may submit their own comments and/or participate in available organizational sign-on efforts. KHSA plans to submit comments outlining its concerns about the potential impacts on Kansas Head Start programs, children, and families.
For more information, including detailed impacts for Kansas Head Start programs, children, and families, reach out to Heather Schrotberger, Executive Director, hschrotberger@ksheadstart.org

Funding Opportunity: Health Forward Civic Engagement and Advocacy Coalitions
Health Forward is hosting a virtual pre-application conference for its Civic Engagement and Advocacy Coalitions funding opportunity. Organizations interested in applying are encouraged to attend to learn more about the funding opportunity and ask questions before submitting an application.
The session will cover Health Forward's funding priorities, the application process and important changes for this year, goals and anticipated impact for funded projects, and the types of activities that may be supported.
The session will be recorded and available for those unable to attend live.
Register here.

Families Together Inc with Help Me Grow Kansas Needs the Voices of Kansas Families
Parents and caregivers are invited to share their experiences, ideas, and perspectives about caring for their children and working with healthcare professionals. Participants will take part in guided discussions and activities designed to help improve resources, supports, and services for Kansas families. Parents and caregivers who participate will receive a $50 stipend.
Please share this opportunity with families who may be interested in lending their voice and helping shape family-centered care in Kansas.
Events will be in Chanute, 10/12/2026 and in Topeka 11/2/2026 from 5:30-7pm.
Please note: Childcare is not provided. Participant information will remain private, and demographic information will only be shared in aggregate without identifying individuals.

Disabilty Mentoring Day

The Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy (KYEA) is bringing back Shawnee County Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, from 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library.
This free, interactive event is designed for youth and young adults with disabilities, ages 14–25, who want to build skills and confidence for employment. Participants will hear from an employment panel of people with disabilities, learn important workplace and communication skills, receive help with resumes, practice interviewing one-on-one with professionals, and connect with local employment resources.
Please share this opportunity with eligible youth, families, and organizations in your networks.
Registration deadline: October 5, 2026
Event: October 13, 2026 | 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Location: Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th St., Topeka
Register: https://forms.gle/wMssjMQMGMMHVfLG9
For questions, contact Kirstianna Guerrero at 785-380-8164 or kirstiannag@kyea.org.

Funding Opportunity: CPR Training & AED Grants
The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is accepting applications for a new state-funded grant program to expand access to CPR training and automated external defibrillators (AEDs) across Kansas, with an emphasis on improving access in rural communities.
A total of $750,000 is available across three funding opportunities: $125,000 for CPR/AED training for public and nonpublic school districts; $500,000 for AED purchase and maintenance for school districts; and $125,000 for AED purchase and maintenance for eligible religious or charitable organizations, libraries, and tribal entities.
Eligible applicants must have a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) registered and approved by KDHE. CPR and first-aid training expenses are limited to public and nonpublic school districts, while other eligible organizations may apply for AED purchase and maintenance funding.
Application review begins October 1, 2026, and awards will be made through a competitive process until available funding is expended. The final application deadline is April 30, 2027, at 12:00 p.m.
Questions can be directed to the KDHE CPR and AED Grant Program at KDHE.CERP@ks.gov.

KU Postpartum Research Study
A University of Kansas research team is recruiting participants for a study focused on improving racial equity and representation in eating disorder screening and postpartum mental health research. The study is seeking Black individuals who are within one year postpartum from

anywhere in the United States. Participants do not need to have eating or body image concerns to participate.
The research team previously conducted interviews with Black pregnant and postpartum individuals about their experiences with eating, body image, and racism. Those experiences were used to develop potential new screening questions. The current phase will test these questions with a larger group, with the goal of developing screening approaches that better reflect the experiences of Black individuals.
Participation involves completing a one-time online survey that takes approximately 40 minutes. Participants who complete the survey will receive a $50 cash card in appreciation for their time.
Eligibility: Black individuals within one year postpartum
Location: Participants may live anywhere in the U.S.
Time commitment: Approximately 40 minutes, online
Participant incentive: $50 cash card
https://redcap.link/ed.representation

Events

KC Digital Drive is hosting a **Maternal Health Data Regional Summit** on October 21st with an online prep event on October 1st. This one-day free event focuses on HHS Region VII (Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri), the two-year maternal episode of care and EHR vendor data liquidity. Why are we still faxing and mailing critical pregnancy records in this day and age?

One of the three use cases is the OB risk assessment and notice of pregnancy form, in support of the KSMCHC Women/Maternal group project.

No faxing. Data Liquidity. Independent Health Record Accounts for all! Better maternal outcomes and ***zero preventable maternal mortality.***

Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition Awards
Nominate a rising star, seasoned leader, or a fantastic coalition for our annual awards!

This project is supported in part by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment with funding through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number #B04MC32543 and Title V Maternal and Child Health Services.