



OFFICE OF ORAL HEALTH



# COMMUNITY FY24 IMPACT REPORT



# Meet the Office of Oral Health

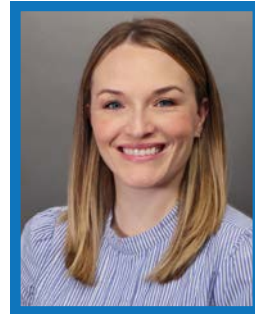


**Rachel Sizemore, DDS, MHSA**

**Director**

Hometown Population: 1,329

Home County: Pope



**Kerry Krell, MPH, MCHES®**

**Program Manager**

Hometown Population: 458

Home County: Stone

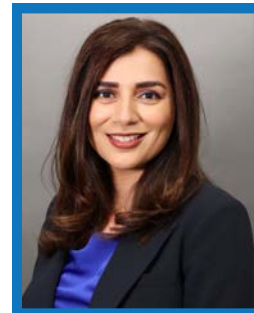


**Cindy Arreola**

**Grant Coordinator**

Hometown Population: 39,495

Home County: Jefferson



**Saima Majid, BDS, MPH**

**Grant Coordinator**

Hometown Population: 202,864

Home County: Pulaski



**Randi Lowe, RDH**

**Smile Ambassador**

Hometown Population: 24,693

Home County: Pope



**Octavia Toombs, MPH**

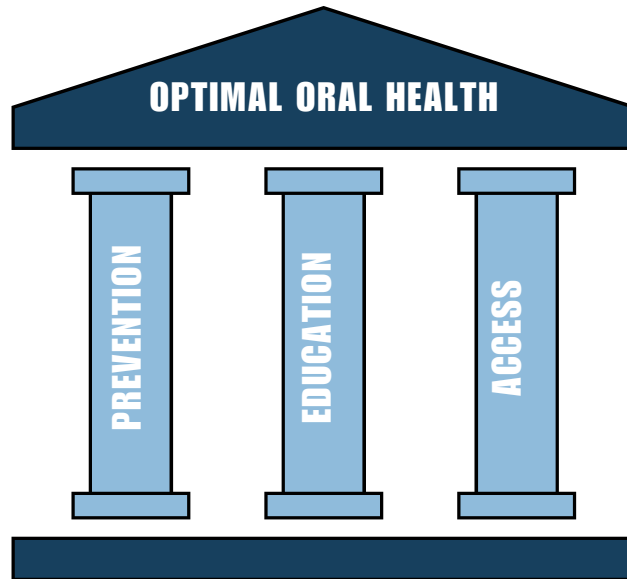
**Epidemiologist**

Hometown Population: 715

Home County: Monroe

# Our Mission

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) Office of Oral Health's (OOH) mission is to promote life-long, optimum oral health for all Arkansans through primary prevention, education, accessible and culturally competent community-based oral health care, and informed policy development.



# Our Perspective

The OOH team believes there is a story behind every smile, and those “smile stories” are the keys to understanding the factors that have helped or inhibited an individual’s journey toward oral health. The OOH features a diverse team whose smile stories are shared among many Arkansans, including the experiences of growing up in rural, tight-knit, but dentally underserved communities; living in urban areas with many choices for dental care; experiencing poverty or poor oral health as a child; and identifying with minority or non-U.S. citizen groups. These experiences are like threads that weave throughout our programming and outreach; they propel us toward the goal of helping all Arkansans attain oral health.

# Highlights & Partnerships

Between July 2023 and June 2024, OOH made statewide impact through health promotion and disease prevention initiatives. Advancements in oral health interventions were championed through collaboration with internal and external partners.

Over **134,000** Arkansans reached with oral health promotion

**\$250,810** in grants awarded to **14** School Districts that house School-Based Health Center Dental Clinics

**62,772** oral health kits distributed

**7,214** preventive dental sealants placed

**\$13,000** in grants awarded to fluoridating water systems

Over **27,000** preventive oral health services provided in Local Health Units



## Sealant Partners

- Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH)
- Small Bites Pediatric Dentistry
- Dental Hygiene Programs
- School Based Health Centers
- Community Dentists



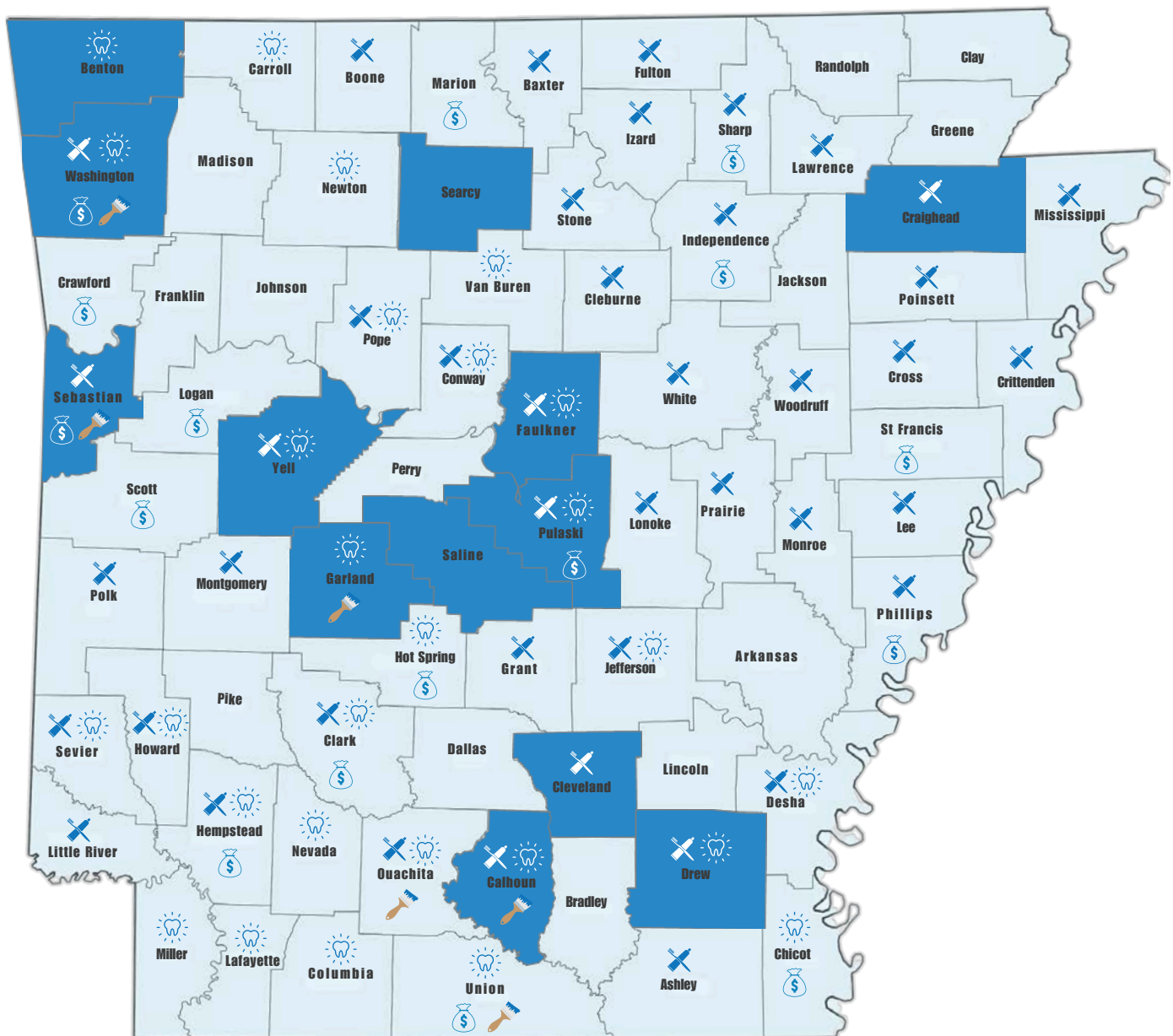
## Arkansas Department of Health

- ADH Community Health Promotion Specialists (CHPS) and Community Health Nurse Specialists (CHNS)
- ADH Engineering
- ADH Local Health Unit (LHU) Staff
- ADH Office of Health Communications



## Oral Health Coalition

# Impact Across 75 Counties



	<b>Distributed in Local Health Units Statewide:</b>		<b>Oral Health Kits</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fluoride Varnish Applications</li> <li>○ Screenings</li> <li>○ Oral Health Kits</li> </ul>		<b>School Sealant Clinics/Screenings</b>
			<b>Grants</b>
	<b>Meetings/Events; Sponsorships/Exhibits</b> (statewide attendees)		<b>Paint-A-Smile Kits</b>

# Prevention

Preventing oral diseases before they start has many benefits. It can prevent pain, infection, and more expensive dental treatments later on. Preventing oral diseases can even help control diseases found in other parts of the body.

The OOH emphasizes prevention with programs for Toothbrushing, Fluoride Varnish, and Dental Sealants.

## Toothbrushing

Daily toothbrushing is the single most important oral disease prevention method for people of all ages. The risk of developing cavities and gum disease is significantly reduced by brushing at least twice a day, flossing daily, and maintaining regular dental check-ups.



## Fluoride Varnish

Fluoride varnish is a thin gel that contains minerals that strengthen teeth. Fluoride varnish can prevent, slow, or stop early cavities. It is a safe and easily applied with a small brush, and it can be used up to four (4) times per year.

## Dental Sealants

Dental sealants are thin coatings applied to the chewing surfaces of molar (back) teeth to prevent food and bacteria from getting into the grooves of those teeth. Timely delivery of dental sealants on permanent molars can prevent over 80% of cavities.



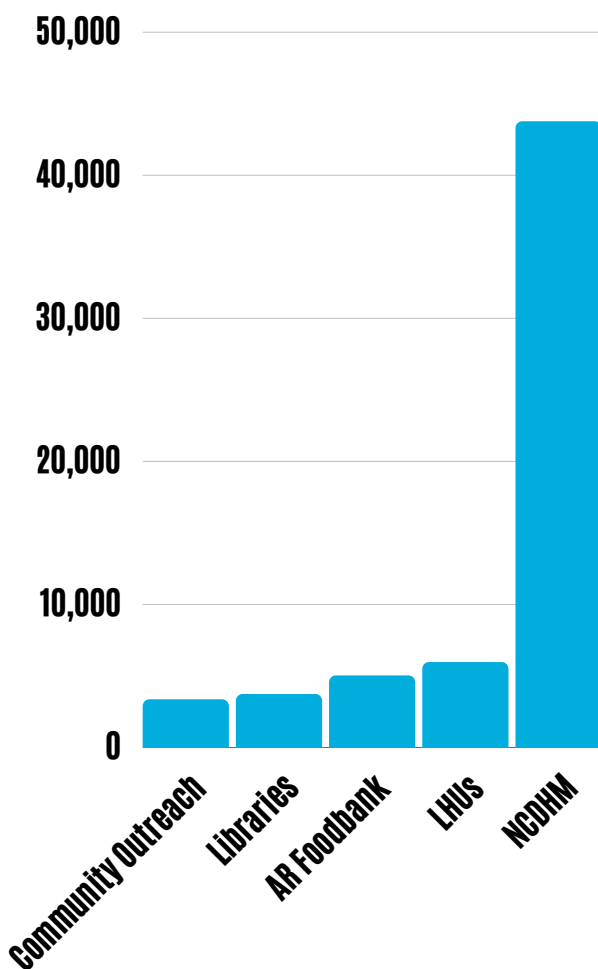
# Toothbrushing

## Classroom Toothbrushing Toolkit

Toothbrushing in the classroom can teach children the skills they need to take care of their own teeth and gums. The OOH developed a Classroom Toothbrushing Toolkit to help school staff who would like to implement daily toothbrushing during the school day.



Scan the QR code for the electronic toolkit



## Oral Health Kits

Year-round, the OOH distributes oral health kits (toothbrushes, toothpaste, and floss) to organizations across the state. Oral health is promoted by these organizations through presentations and community events.

During the National Children’s Dental Health Month (NCDHM) observance in February 2024, ADH Community Health Promotion Specialists (CHPS) and Community Health Nurse Specialists (CHNS) distributed over 45,000 oral health kits to students in Arkansas.



Oral Health Kit donation to the Arkansas Foodbank

# Fluoride Varnish

## Paint-A-Smile

The Paint-A-Smile program trains medical professionals to perform oral risk assessments, oral screenings, education, and fluoride varnish application. Providing these services in medical settings helps close the gaps that exist for children who do not have regular access to comprehensive dental care. In FY24, the OOH provided Paint-A-Smile support to nine (9) medical clinics in Arkansas.

The program goals are to:

- Close the gaps that exist for children who do not have regular access to comprehensive dental care
- Reduce the risk of tooth decay
- Refer children to dental homes
- Educate caregivers about tooth decay and prevention

Private Medical offices in Arkansas are offered training with:

- Fluoride Varnish Starter Kits
- State-specific billing codes
- Lessons learned from other offices



The 2024 HPV Summit was attended by Local Health Unit fluoride varnish champion Elizabeth Wells, RN (right)

## Local Health Units (LHUs)

On average in FY24, over 600 children received fluoride varnish applications in ADH LHUs each month.

In addition to fluoride varnish, LHU staff provided oral health education, oral evaluations, oral risk assessments, and referrals to local dentists.

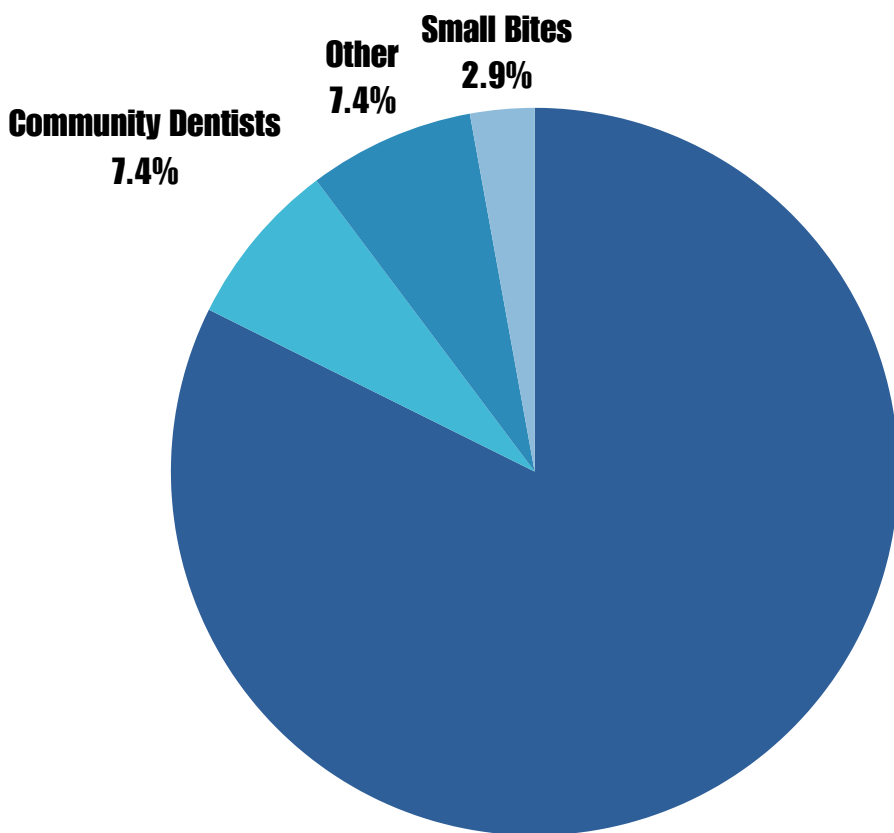
Fluoride Varnish	Oral Evaluations	Risk Assessments	Referrals to a Dentist
7,691	6,742	6,607	6,607



# Dental Sealants

School-based sealant programs are an effective way to reach children with important interventions to prevent cavities.

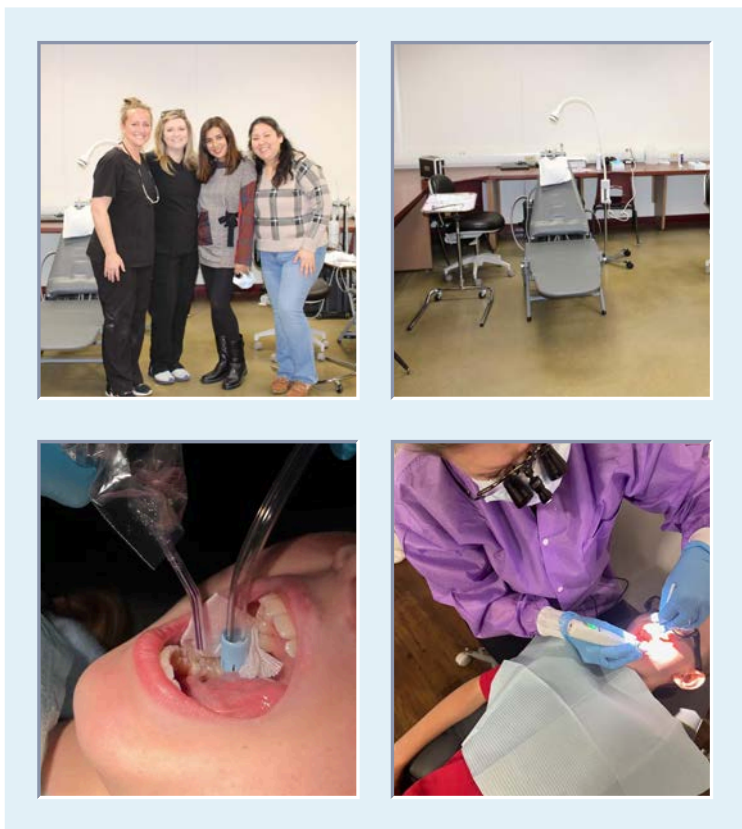
School-based sealant programs provide sealants to children—generally aged 6 to 11—using portable equipment in a school setting.



**Arkansas Children's Hospital**  
**82.3%**

In Spring 2024, the OOH launched an internal dental sealant program and provided services in 3 Arkansas schools.

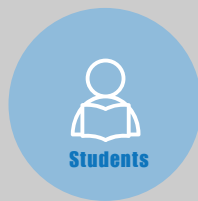
Throughout FY24, more than 7,000 sealants were provided to children attending schools in at least 27 Arkansas counties. The graphic above shows the percentage of sealants provided by various sealant partners.



# Education

Education leads to informed decision-making about personal oral health and hygiene habits.

The OOH provides education on the prevention and treatment of oral diseases, as well as the mouth-body connection, to a wide variety of Arkansans through media, exhibits and presentations, and community outreach.



Prevention

Treatment

Mouth-Body  
Connection

## Education provided through:

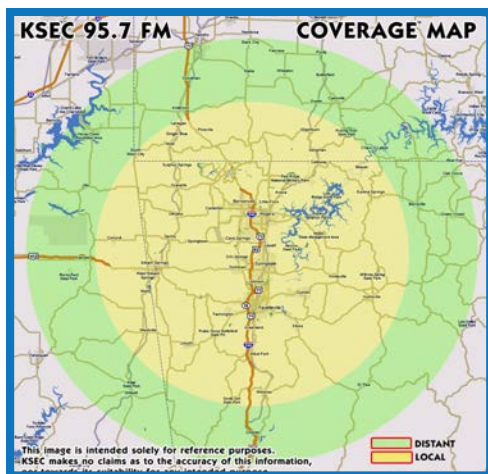
Articles  
Presentations  
Exhibits & Sponsorships  
Community Health Fairs  
Resource Discussions  
Television Interview & Broadcast  
Radio Interview & Broadcast  
Social Media Campaigns

# Media

## Social Media

Throughout FY24, the OOH developed social media messaging on oral disease prevention and health promotion. These messages reached numerous Arkansans with important information.

Link Clicks	Impressions	Page Engagements
5,711	987,075	5,704



## Radio

In June 2024, the OOH spoke on the importance of oral health in collaboration with La Zeta Radio Station.

The interview, done in Spanish, reached the Hispanic population in Northwest Arkansas and beyond, as depicted in the map on the left.

## Television

During the observance of National Children’s Dental Health Month in February 2024, the OOH spoke with KARK and THV11 on the importance of establishing healthy oral hygiene habits in childhood.

## Print

In FY24, the OOH developed articles on oral health topics for publications such as the Healthcare Journal of Arkansas and the Arkansas State Dental Association Journal.

# Exhibits & Presentations

## Exhibits

In FY24, the OOH exhibited key oral health messages and helpful tools at events tailored for health influencers, such as providers, school nurses, teachers, and water operators.

These included exhibits for:

- Arkansas Academy of Physician Assistants
- Arkansas Nurse Practitioner Association
- Arkansas School Nurses Association
- School-Based Health Alliance of Arkansas
- Arkansas Water Conference

## Presentations

In FY24, the OOH presented oral health information and data for groups including:

- Arkansas School Nurses
- Family Medicine Resident Physicians
- Arkansas Minority Health Commission
- Arkansas County Health Officers
- Arkansas Board of Health
- Arkansas Medical, Dental & Pharmaceutical Association
- Delta Dental of Arkansas Foundation Board of Directors



**2024 Arkansas Nurse Practitioner Association Conference**



**2024 Arkansas Water Conference**



**2024 Arkansas Minority Health Commission Minority Health Summit**

# Community Outreach



**Seis Puentes (Six Bridges)  
Health Initiative Collaboration**

## Community Member Connections

In FY24, the OOH participated in:

- Philander Smith University's Annual Health and Wellness Fair
- Hogskin Holiday's Annual Health Fair
- UAMS Head Start Mass Enrollment Day
- Special Olympics Spring and Summer Games



**Oral health presentation by Smile  
Ambassador**

In FY24, the OOH collaborated with:

- El Centro Hispano's La Cuna program
- Seis Puentes
- Life Choices
- River City Ministry
- Delta Dental of Arkansas Foundation

## My Smile Matters

In honor of Dental Hygiene Month in October 2023, the OOH asked fellow ADH colleagues to tell us what they value about their smiles.



# ACCESS

Access to quality oral health care helps people prioritize oral health.

Having access to oral health care involves having the funds to cover the cost of care, having a provider nearby, and having a provider who can provide the type(s) of services needed.

The OOH promotes access by providing training to oral health providers, sharing resources with clinics that provide services in underserved populations, and opening pathways to Dental Hygiene Collaborative Care.

## Training

In FY24, the OOH provided and supported training for dental providers on topics like antibiotic stewardship/patient safety, dental care for pregnant women, HPV vaccination for oropharyngeal cancer prevention, and state-of-the-art practices in pediatric dentistry.

## Resources

In FY24, the OOH provided resources to School-Based Health Center Dental Clinics. School-based health care improves access by meeting children where they are—on school campuses.

## Dental Hygiene Collaborative Care (DHCC)

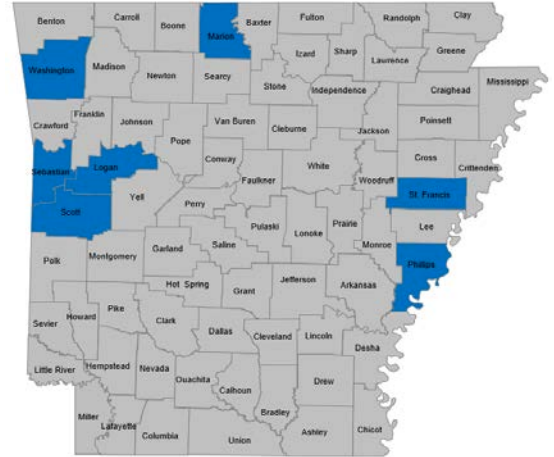
Arkansas-licensed dentists and dental hygienists who wish to provide services in public settings, such as schools and long-term care facilities, may enter into a collaborative care agreement that allows dental hygienists to provide preventive services without a dentist on site. The OOH aids in reviewing and approving DHCC permit applications to enhance this initiative to expand access to dental services by allowing individuals from a practice to be in multiple places at once to provide essential care.

# Training, Resources & DHCC

## Pediatric Mini-Residency Training

In Fall 2023, Arkansas dentists were offered the opportunity to apply for funding to attend a continuing education course in Pediatric Dentistry. Five dentists from across the state were selected to attend the Pediatric Mini Residency course offered at the University of Minnesota College of Dentistry in Minneapolis.

The goal of the project was to increase the number of Arkansas children with access to appropriate preventive and restorative dental treatment close to home.



**Counties benefiting from increased access to pediatric dental services**

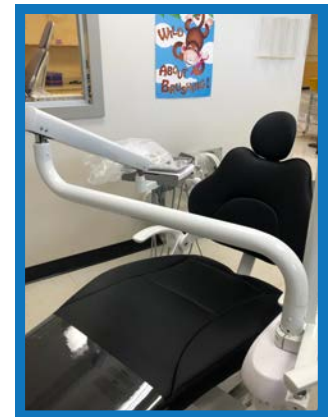
## Resources



**Panoramic X-ray machine purchased with funding provided to School District**

In FY24, the OOH provided \$250,810 in funding to school districts housing School-Based Health Center Dental Clinics in exchange for sealant placement data. School districts could elect to use that funding to further support dental clinic operations.

The OOH also provided a new dental chair to Future Smiles Dental Clinic, a school-based dental clinic in the Little Rock School District.



**Dental chair donated to Future Smiles Dental Clinic**

## Dental Hygiene Collaborative Care (DHCC)

In October 2023, the OOH presented oral health surveillance data to the Arkansas State Board of Health, which resulted in a unanimous approval of measures to extend access to oral health services for children attending Arkansas schools through the use of DHCC permits.



## **OFFICE OF ORAL HEALTH**

**Arkansas Department of Health**

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