

## Tips for Success

**Always stay positive and discuss dental health in a positive way with your child.**

Dentistry can be stressful. Staying positive helps direct your child's emotional energy towards the good that comes from visiting the dentist. We can easily forget that the dentist more often helps to prevent discomfort and pain with regular check-ups and early diagnosis.

**Refrain from using words such as, "hurt, shot, needle, and pain."** These words invoke negative emotions that can create a level of anxiety in a child that makes it difficult for them to trust the dentist. Remember, children do not have the coping skill adults do. As pediatric dentists we attempt to create a positive atmosphere, where the child feels supported and safe. Using terms that create a negative impression of either the dentist or office will affect the child's perception thus compromising their ability to relax. You can visit our website and download our [Kid Talk: Pediatric Dentistry Vocabulary Sheet](#) to review how we describe the instruments and procedures to our patients.

**Role Play.** For younger children role-playing is extremely helpful in alleviating fear and introducing a new experience. A week before their appointment role-play what is going to happen. For example: Pick a chair that can serve as the dental chair and pretend with your child that they are going to visit the dentist. Take them through the major parts of the experience. You can even use a battery-powered toothbrush to introduce the child to the handpiece the hygienist uses to clean teeth. Do this a few days in a row before bringing your child and you will be amazed how well they do. It is important to start a few days, to a week before the appointment. That way if your child shows any resistance you will have a few days to work with them. Routine helps to foster familiarity which in turn decreases fear. If you have any questions about the upcoming appointment please give our office a call so we can help you prepare for your child's visit.

**Pick a Parent** - Kids will behave differently depending on which parent they are with. Additionally, during stressful times having both parents present often does not help, as most anxiety in children increases with the more voices they hear. Think about it, a situation must not be good if both mom and dad are trying to comfort me! We allow one parent back in the room with the child during treatment. On special occasions we will

permit two, but this is at the discretion of the doctor. It is important that the child listens and responds to the doctor. When too many people are in the room this often does not happen and treatment is unable to be completed. The parent, with whom the child will behave the best, should be the one to accompany the child. This does not always mean the parent whom the child will more likely agree with, but the parent whom the child will respond to if there would be defiant behavior or the child does not want to cooperate. This is why we allow parents in the room. You are their constant, their source of assurance and stability. To bring any negative emotions, or past experiences into your child's encounter can *negatively* affect the outcome. Your support for your child during the appointment is both helpful and encouraged. Remember, dentistry is micro-surgery in the mouth, and children at times require direction and discipline to ensure cooperation. It is my job to coach your child through the experience, and your job to enforce the rules if necessary.

**Trust the TEAM** -We are here to help you, help your child receive dental care in a safe and fun way. We have helped thousands of kids have a positive experience at our dental office. Sometimes as parents we can let our own emotions and fears cloud our judgment. Dentistry can be at times uncomfortable and it is up to the dental team to help you, help your child understand how to psychologically cope and handle those moments. We have been trained, and have countless hours of experience, utilizing techniques to accomplish this. There is always a reason behind our methods. Everything we do and say is focused on helping coach the child through treatment. We want your child to have a positive experience, however sometimes children do not want to help. If it becomes necessary to complete treatment for an uncooperative child, we will do so in a caring and safe way, with your permission.

Our door and TEAM are always available to discuss any of the topics mentioned above. Please do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's needs.

*Thank you for trusting us with your child's oral health!*