

## **USEFUL INFORMATION ON HOW TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR HIS/HER FIRST DENTAL TREATMENT APPOINTMENT**

The hardest thing about getting treatment at the dentist, especially for young children, is managing fear and anxiety. Usually, this has to do with fear of the unknown. At Great Beginnings Pediatric Dentistry, we practice proven methods that make for a positive treatment experience.

Because we know that your child's first dental appointment can be difficult, we've put together a few things to help make the experience go as smoothly as possible. Our approach combines:

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

No matter what your experience has been in your dental history, it is important to stay calm and positive when it comes to answering your child's questions regarding his/her treatment. Children feed off their parents' emotions, so you set the tone before we even get a chance to begin treatment with your child.

Although some children do better without parents present in the room during treatment, we are open to having you stay with your child. If you choose to be present, we ask that you follow these rules:

- 🦷 Only ONE ADULT is allowed to accompany the child into the treatment room. Too many people/distractions, make it difficult for your child to focus or hear our instructions and guidance.
- 🦷 Parent MUST remain seated in the assigned chair at all times.
- 🦷 Be supportive of our kid-friendly vocabulary.
- 🦷 Please be a silent observer. This will allow us to maintain communication with your child. Children will normally listen to parents instead of us.
- 🦷 Please refrain from standing next to the dental chair during treatment. We ask parents to respect our personal and working space.
- 🦷 If at any point your child becomes uncooperative and Dr. Laura feels that treatment must be discontinued, she will do this when is safe to do so.
- 🦷 We will never hold your child down or restrain your child in order to perform treatment. Dr. Ybarra does not believe in this type of behavior management. Exception may be gently restraining your child for minimum amount of time if treatment must be discontinued, or in case of emergency treatment that must be done.

*Please be advised that Treatment will be immediately discontinued if the accompanying parent refuses to follow these simple instructions during dental treatment. Exceptions according to your child's specific needs will be discussed prior to his/her appointment.*

## KID-FRIENDLY VOCABULARY

In order to improve the chances of your child having a negative experience, we are selective with our use of words. Please support us by not using negative words.

- 🦷 We commonly say “NO 4 LETTER WORDS ARE ALLOWED”. Examples of these are “hurt, pain, shot, etc.” These words dramatically decrease our chance of a successful appointment. “NO” WORDS also include:
  - “Needle” or “shot”
  - “Hurt” or “won’t hurt”
  - “Don’t be afraid!”
  - “Mommy or Daddy will stay with you!”
- 🦷 We choose our words carefully when talking to kids about dentistry. Some substitutions we recommend are:
  - “Sugar bug” instead of “cavity”
  - “Sleepy juice” or “magic juice” instead of “shot”
  - “Mister Bumpy” and “Mister Whistle” instead of “drill”
  - “Mister Thirsty” instead of “suction”
  - “Pushing,” “tickles,” or “something uncomfortable” instead of “pain”

Using specific and direct language is very helpful to a child who fears the unknown. It may help to tell him that he’ll sit in the dentist’s chair, that he might hear some new sounds, and that the dentist might put his teeth to sleep with sleepy juice. Explain to him that his mouth might feel big and goofy for a little while afterwards but that feeling will eventually wear off.

## TELL/SHOW/DO DEMONSTRATIONS

We tell our patients what we are doing, and do so in an honest, matter of fact way. Children do much better with explanation followed by immediately doing what is shown to them. They worry if too much preparation goes into an appointment. We follow the principals of Tell/Show/Do. The TELL phase involves an age appropriate explanation of the procedure. The SHOW phase is used to demonstrate a procedure up to the point where the instrument is performed. The DO phase is then initiated and the treatment is performed. Like mentioned above, we use age appropriate terms to describe our procedures.

## USE OF NITROUS OXIDE (LAUGHING GAS):

In our office, we use nitrous oxide sedation in most of our treatment appointments. MOST parents choose to go this route because nitrous makes the appointment much easier for the child. Nitrous oxide is very safe. Nitrous oxide/oxygen is perhaps the safest sedative in dentistry. It is non-addictive. It is mild, easily taken, and then quickly eliminated by the body. Your child remains fully conscious and keeps all-natural reflexes when breathing nitrous oxide/oxygen.

Prior to your appointment:

- 🦷 Please inform us of any change to your child's health
- 🦷 Please inform our staff about any respiratory condition that makes breathing through the nose difficult for your child. It may limit the effectiveness of nitrous oxide/oxygen.
- 🦷 Please inform us if your child is taking any medication on the day of the appointment.

🦷 We ask that your child does not eat or drink anything 4 hours prior to his/her appointment. We prefer morning appointments because we know kids get hungry!

Thank you for working with our team to make the best experience possible for your child's dental treatment appointment. We look forward to serving you and your family!

Sincerely,  
Dr. Laura  
and  
The Staff

at Great Beginnings Pediatric Dentistry

