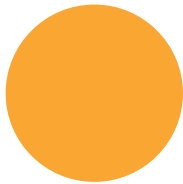


Taking your child to the dentist's: Parents' bit of the job





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Healthy teeth and smooth, pain-free dental experiences are things all parents wish for their children. A friendly, long-term relationship with the dentist is the key to achieving that. Here are some useful pieces of advice in order to help your child cope easier with dentist-related challenges.





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dear parents

Support your child in a correct manner

Before going to the dentist, remind your child how strong he/she is. Instead of giving vague reassuring (like "it's going to be fine" or "don't worry, nobody's going to hurt you"), choose to remind your child about his/her power to face challenges.

Ex.: "You are a very strong kid. You even learned how to ride a bike! Going to the dentist's is much easier than riding a bike. YES, let's remember to tell the doctor you can now ride your bike!" This will help the child trust him/herself and embrace the experience with less anxiety.



Don't worry, you'll be fine!



You're a very strong kid!



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dear parents

Illusion of control may help, but not always...

Avoid offering options when those are not real. Instead of asking: "Are you ready for your dental visit?", it may be a better idea to say casually "It's time we go and have your teeth checked". This helps the child feel confident and avoids decision-related confusion.



Are you ready for your
dental visit??



It's time we go and have your
teeth checked



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dear parents

Distract your child's attention – “Focus on plus”

A very good strategy before visiting the dentist is to use distraction/attention refocus instead of apologizing for the inconvenience the dental visit may produce.

You can ask the child what he/she would like to do after the dental visit or remind him/her of his/her favourite activities.

Ex.: You can ask: “When we're done with the dental visit, shall we go to the aquarium? I know how much you love fish...” This way you help the child focus on a nice perspective instead of anticipating potential discomfort.



**I'm so sorry, I know you're afraid,
but we must go to the dentist's!**



**Where would you like to go after
we're done at the dentist's?**



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dear parents

Be empathic, not dramatic

Even if you feel the need to express your empathy (like for example when your child is about to lose his/her first deciduous tooth), it's always better to express your support in a way that does not risk to increase the child's stress and anxiety.

You can induce a fun, relaxing atmosphere by turning the dental visit into a game. Thus, the child will focus on playing instead of anticipating discomfort.



I know you are afraid, it shall hurt a bit, but we need to see the dentist and have the tooth pulled out!



Let's go and show the dentist how your tooth is dancing!



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dear parents

Provide clear instructions

Before or during the dental visit, explain your kid what he/she needs to do in a clear manner, carefully choosing your words. The child will find it much easier to sit still if clearly instructed on what to do rather than on what NOT to do, without threatening or negative implications.

Straight, plain and easily understandable instructions will help the child know exactly what to do, giving him/her a calm, easier experience.



Anything you do, just DON'T MOVE! If you move, the doctor might hurt you!



Sit still, keep your hands on your lap. And please pay attention to the doctor.



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dear parents

Choose to be a silent observer: present + confident = silent

During the treatment session, be a silent observer and refrain from imposing special requests to the medical staff.

Your calm attitude shall reassure your child, who shall feel relaxed and more confident.



**My child reacts better if you tell
him/her exactly what you are going
to do, we never lie to him/her!!!**



**I totally trust the doctor and let
him/her do the job.**



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Happy Teeth Team



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Project 2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000155608



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Co-funded by
the European Union



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OSPEDALE PEDIATRICO

Project

2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000155608



Erasmus +

Editing:

Kruger Brent Printing House



KRÜGER-BRENT

Printing House Ltd.