

Visiting the Dentist: Tips and Tricks

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For a child, going to the dentist can be scary and overwhelming for their sensory system. A dental clinic has big chairs, bright lights, and lots of small tools that make noises just to name a few. Here are some tips and tricks to help your child during their dental visit.

Before the Visit:

- Find a dentist that has experience with children or specializes in pediatric dentistry.
- Ask to tour the clinic and see if your child can explore the equipment, meet the staff, and have a “practice run” so they know what to expect. During this tour, take pictures of the lobby, room, chair, equipment, dentist, etc.
- Create a social story or photo book to review with your child prior to their dental visit. This can help them to prepare and learn what to expect prior to their appointment.
- Request the same hygienist and dentist each time you set up the dental appointment.
- Provide oral pressure such as massage or use of a vibrating toothbrush before the visit to stimulate and prepare the mouth.

During the Visit:

- Have your child bring a preferred toy or stuffed animal to hold during their visit.
- Give your child simple verbal preparations before each step.
- Give visual demonstrations on what to expect or have your child watch in a mirror if they want.
- Use the x-ray blanket to provide calming deep pressure during the visit.
- Have your child wear sunglasses to block the bright lights.
- Offer your child calming music to listen to.
- Set a timer for each step so your child knows when it will be done.

If you have any questions or concerns about oral sensitivities or calming techniques give us a call at 952-223-2506.

