

How Parents Can Assist During Dental Appointments

Parents can assist the dentist during the dental appointment by:

1. Helping to seat their children
2. Helping to hold their children in the chair

Instructions to the parent:

1. Several days before the appointment, tell your child casually that you both will be visiting the dentist. Don't force the issue; don't be over sympathetic to the child or display any fear or misgiving in your voice.
2. Please do not voice your own personal fears in front of the child as this often causes fear in your child.
3. Explain about dental visits in a positive matter-of-fact manner, telling the child that the dentist is a nice, helpful person.
4. Don't bribe your child into going to the dentist because this will alarm your child in thinking that there must be danger ahead.
5. Don't use dentistry as a threat of punishment for your child. Always be positive.
6. Don't promise your child that the dentist will or will not do certain things. The dentist should not be placed in a compromising situation where he/she is limited in what he/she can do for your child.
7. Don't promise your child the dentist will not hurt him/her Lying only leads to disappointment and mistrust.
8. Don't ask your child if he/she wants the treatment. (For example, don't say, "Do you want to have your cavities filled?")
9. Once you are at the dental office, please follow the dentist's instructions closely. IF you do as the dentist asks, then your child will follow you example.
10. When the hygienist/dentist starts a dental procedure on your child, please do not grab the provider's hand under any circumstances. If you want the provider to stop, request this by saying, "Hygienist/Doctor, please stop."
11. Trust the dentist to make competent decisions about your child's treatment. Ask questions if you do not understand but don't be suspicious that complicated treatment is just a money-making gimmick. Most dentist are conscientious health care providers who have taken an oath to do only what's best for their patients.
12. Bring your child to the dental clinic for regular check-ups every six months