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### **NEW PATIENT INFORMATION FOR OUR PARENTS**

Dear Parent,

We welcome you and your child to our practice. We appreciate the opportunity to apply our care, skill and judgment to your child's total dental needs. Recognizing that our office represents a new experience for you and your child, we offer the following information about our office.

Along with the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and the American Academy of Pediatrics, we recommend that the first dental examination be by 12 months of age. Many problems, which might develop otherwise, may be prevented. A thorough prevention program is the most important reason to begin pediatric care. Cavities at an early age is not uncommon, and the earlier the dental visit, the earlier prevention can begin. In much the same way your Pediatrician is trying to give your child the best possible start physically in life, we feel the same way about the oral cavity. Early examination and counseling is the best way to ensure your child gets the best possible dental start which will hopefully carry them into adulthood.

"Baby teeth" (primary teeth) are just as important as permanent teeth for chewing, speaking, and appearance. In addition, the primary teeth hold the space in the jaws for the permanent teeth. Both primary and permanent teeth help give the face its shape and form. These teeth can develop decay and infection in the same manner as adult teeth resulting in pain. If lost prematurely, nearby teeth can tip or move into the vacant space. This can cause space problems for the adult teeth, which may require orthodontic treatment to correct. So, let's keep those "baby teeth" healthy!

#### **Before the first visit**

If necessary, discuss the positive aspects of dentistry with your child. Convey good feelings about dental visits. Expect your child to react well and enjoy the first visit to our office and chances are he/she will do exactly that. Here is some additional advice:

#### **Do's:**

- ✓ On the day of the visit, say only that "we are going to see the dentist and they are going to count your teeth and clean them". If other questions arise, tell your child you do not have the answers, but to ask us. This way, inadvertent comments that may provoke fear or anxiety in your child may be avoided.
- ✓ Tell us about your child before the appointment, including any special needs or medical issues.

#### **Don'ts:**

- X Don't make any promises about what the dentist "will" or "will not" do.

- X Encourage your child to hear stories, good or bad, about the experiences others have had with their dentist. What might be a “good” story to one child may build anxiety or fear for another.
- X Communicate your own fears to your child.
- X Use bribery or threats to encourage good behavior.
- X Use negative words such as “hurt”, “shot”, “pull”, “drill” or “cavity” in front of your child
- X Don’t threaten your child with the work that we may or may not have to do for any reason.

### **Medical History Form:**

Please complete the enclosed medical history form and bring it with you for the first appointment. For your child’s safety and in order to provide them with optimum treatment we will ask that you fill out a new medical history form biannually. If you need additional forms please go to our website *smiles4kids.com*.

### **Your Child’s Visit**

Your child’s first visit will consist of an examination, and only if necessary, *digital* (X-rays) images taken. A cleaning and if appropriate a topical fluoride treatment will be accomplished. Consultation with the Doctor, oral hygiene instructions and any subsequent necessary visits will be discussed.

Although you may try to help your child with their dental experience, it would be in their best interest if you allow the doctor to guide your child. When there is more than one person speaking at a time often children become confused, and it is not unusual for the parent to inadvertently agitate or promote anxiety. We are specially trained to avoid those words and actions that may upset your child. Having more than one person in the room could be detrimental in that it increases the chances of words and actions being used which could be counterproductive and interfere with the positive behavior that all of us desire. It is for this reason for future appointments we find it advantageous for many of our parents to remain in the waiting area so that we can do what we have been trained to do. Our objective is to gain your child’s confidence and overcome any apprehension.

For the safety and privacy of all patients, other adults or children not seen at this appointment should remain in the reception room. Children in the reception room will need a supervisory adult with them.

Please do not be upset if your child cries. Children are often afraid of anything new and strange, and crying is a normal reaction to fear of the unknown. Our training helps us to address your children’s fears in such a way as to guide their behavior in a constructive direction. As your child’s familiarity with our office and procedures increases, their experiences will become more positive. An accounting of services to be rendered and the costs involved will be given to you should your child need to return for treatment.

### **Scheduling Guidelines**

We are aware of school policies, which make it more difficult for children to be out of school for any reason. However, medical and dental appointments are *EXCUSED ABSENCES* with a doctor’s school pass and signature stating the child was in the office.

Although we would like to see all school-age patients after school, this is not always possible. Therefore, to make certain everyone has a fair share of after school appointments, the following guidelines have been set. Please help us help your child.

1. Certain children under five years of age will be scheduled only between the hours of 8:00am and 1:00pm. This leaves after school hours open for older children. When your five-year old enter grades 1 through 12, he/she too will have access to after school appointments.

2. *Selective* operative appointments for school-age children will be available after 3:00 pm. As much work as possible will be performed during each appointment. Operative work are procedures requiring fillings, sealants or cosmetic restorations.
3. Six-month oral examination and cleaning appointments for school-age children will alternate between school and after school hours. This means you may be asked to bring your child during school hours only one time per year.
4. Coming late for an appointment may require rescheduling so we do not keep other patients waiting. Please call if you are going to be late and we will try to work you back into the schedule if it is possible.
5. If you fail to come or cancel for an after school appointment, the missed appointment will be scheduled during school time so that we may maintain the pattern of every other appointment being after school.

If you cannot keep an appointment, give us 24 hours notice. This courtesy makes it possible to give your appointment time to another patient who needs to see the doctors.

Our verification phone calls are courtesies. Keeping the scheduled appointment time is your obligation. Please be considerate to the other families who would have requested the time that you reserved. If an appointment needs to be changes or cancelled, please call us in at least 24 hours in advance in order to avoid a broken appointment charge.

### **“Children’s Time”**

Our objective is to always get patients in at the time scheduled. As parents, you are well aware that children do not always allow us to achieve the goals planned for them as intended. In Pediatric Dentistry those obstacles are much more magnified by virtue of the nature of the work. Our office operates on “children’s time”. This means that some of our patients may unpredictably need extra time to be made more comfortable and less apprehensive. As much as we try to stay on schedule, “children’s time” will invariably cause some delays. Because of this, we do apologize for running behind, occasionally. Be reassured that we are taking care of your child in the same kind and caring manner.

### **Infectious Disease Control**

When you visit our office, you will observe the many measures practiced by the doctors and staff to ensure the security of your child’s health. We take pride in the fact that we exceed the standards of sterilization guidelines established by the CDC.

### **Emergency Care**

We are the only pediatric dental office to offer a 24-hour service, 7 days a week emergency service. If an emergency does arise when the office is closed, your call will be forwarded to one of the doctors who will respond within a short period of time.

In the event of an emergency during office hours, there will be a designated “emergency doctor” for a particular day. This allows us to examine and treat your child in a timely manner. Because we see children for frequent unscheduled pain or accident appointments, there may be on occasion a delay in those appointments that are regularly scheduled. Please accept our apologies ahead of time should such a delay occur during your child’s appointment and understand that if it were your child, you would want them seem immediately as well.

### **Recare and Operative Visits**

We hope that you share in our belief that regular preventive dental health care is a sound investment. While the responsibility for returning for this treatment rests with you, we will provide the service of contacting you when it is time to return. At the time of your recall visit,

please advise the office of any changes in address, telephone number, health or medications your child may be taking.

If a caretaker brings your child please provide the permission for us to do all that is necessary for a particular visit. Please provide them with the pertinent history changes and permission to take digital images, if necessary. Please give us the authority to use those tools e.g. nitrous oxide, and local anesthesia in order for us to treat your child.

Should you have specific instructions or requests provide them in writing. If there are any questions concerning the visit, feel free to contact our office. Please call after 6pm to speak with the Doctors so that the necessary time will be available for an uninterrupted discussion.

### **Which Doctor will I be seeing?**

Many of the children see all the doctors. This is beneficial in that it enables you and your child to feel comfortable with them if one is unavailable and will help to expedite treatment. It will also help your scheduling of appointments. Although many of our patients are very satisfied with each member of our group, we will be more than happy to fulfill your request to see a specific doctor. Because certain days and hours are reserved by many of our parents in advance we would appreciate flexibility on your part in that request. If your child requires immediate attention, it may be in their best interest to see the doctor who can accomplish treatment in the most expeditious manner.

### **Payment**

Please be aware that the parent bringing the child to our office is legally responsible for payment of all charges. We cannot send statements to others

Payment is requested at each appointment as service is rendered and can be made by cash, check, MasterCard, or Visa. Insurance is considered a method of reimbursement for fees paid and is not a substitute for payment. The receipt form we give you contains all the information necessary for the insurance company to process your claim.

### **Smiles4kids.com**

Visit our website for additional information regarding our office and the dental health of your child. The website features information regarding dental images (x-rays), sealants, emergency care, and more. We look forward to seeing you soon!