

*Dr. Elizabeth Malette Barber and staff welcome you to our pediatric dental and orthodontic practice. We consider your child's dental health to be of utmost importance. The approach to this care is a team effort—with you, the parents, as involved at home as we are here in the office. To promote this positive experience, we would like you to read the following suggestions and philosophies before bringing your child to the first appointment.*



## Scheduling Appointments

We will do our best to schedule appointments that are convenient for you and appropriate for your child. Young children tend to do best when they are well rested and receptive to new situations, usually in the morning or early afternoon. Appointments in the late afternoon are often reserved for our older patients, especially those in high school.

We make every effort to see our patients at the scheduled time, because we realize that your time is just as valuable as ours. For your part, please call the office if you are going to be late for an appointment. When you must cancel an appointment, give as much advance notice as possible so that another child can be scheduled. Please plan to stay at the office for the duration of your child's appointment.

## At Home

Oral health care should be discussed in a positive manner at home. While some adults may have had negative experiences as a child, we always strive to give your child the best possible experience. Children are very perceptive, so we recommend that parents who have had negative experiences not discuss those details with their children. Words such as “hurt,” “shot,” “scary,” or “drill” adversely condition a child to be anxious or frightened. Instead, speak positively about keeping teeth clean and healthy, learning the best way to brush and floss, and consuming healthy food and drinks that are good for teeth and bodies. A matter-of-fact reminder that everyone in the family has routine dental appointments might also diminish any potential concerns that your child has. Do not use going to the dentist as a threat or punishment.

## At the Office

We occasionally ask that parents remain in the waiting room during the dental appointment. This of course depends on the age, comfort level, and the unique circumstances of each child. Experience has shown that many children tend to interact more positively during appointments if they are able to focus and communicate primarily with the provider. If you do join your child in the treatment room, we ask that you be a silent observer so as not to confuse your child as to whose directions to follow. The rapport between your child and our dental team is essential for developing a positive relationship in the future. We are happy to discuss any questions you may have about this recommendation.

It is not uncommon for a child to react to a new situation with apprehension or concern. We will work slowly and patiently to resolve any fears, to introduce upcoming procedures, and to answer questions. A positive experience for your child is one of our primary objectives.