

YOUR TEETH YOU ARE IN CONTROL

Message to your Dentist

It is common for children to sometimes feel a bit nervous about going to the dentist but there are many things that you can do (and your dentist can do) to help you to feel less worried. On this sheet you are being asked to tell the dentist how you feel so that they can make sure they support you in the best way possible. Please fill in the boxes below and take this form to show to your dentist.

This is how worried I feel about going to my appointment on a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is not being scared at all).

These are the things I am worried about:

This is how painful I think it might be on a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is not painful at all)

This is what I'd like to happen

This is what I don't want to happen

Below are some of the things which children have told us they find helpful when they visit the dentist. Please tick the things which you think might help you feel more in control and relaxed during your appointment:

Things I could do:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play music or an audiobook | <input type="checkbox"/> Play a mind game in my head |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Imagine somewhere great | <input type="checkbox"/> Breathe and relax |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Squeeze a stress ball | <input type="checkbox"/> Do some maths in my head |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other..... | |

Things I want the dental team to do:

- Talk to me or explain or show me what you are doing
- Tell me how long it will actually take
- Other

When you come in for your appointment you will be asked to agree a stop signal with your dentist. This way if you want your dentist to stop at any point, you can let them know. This might be something like lifting up your left hand when you feel like a rest or you need to swallow. Have a think about what you would like your stop signal to be before your appointment.

Treat yourself!

It is a good idea to plan something nice for after your dental visit so that you have something to look forward to and so that you can reward yourself for doing so well. Have a chat with your parents and agree on something you could do after the visit.

A treat might be to:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| • Play your favourite game for an extra hour that evening | • Choose your next meal |
| • Watch your favourite TV programme | • Download a new app |
| • Stay up a little later tonight | • Buy some music |

Not sweets or fizzy drinks 😊

Choose something that will make you feel good. You deserve it!

My reward will be:

Don't forget to take this message with you to your dentist next time you go. You can write a new message each time you visit if you want.

Please visit the following website for lots of useful information and resources, which can help young people who are worried about visiting the dentist and their parents/carers:

www.lltff.com/dental

PARENT'S GUIDE

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD FEEL HAPPIER ABOUT VISITING THE DENTIST

1. Show your child positive ways of coping when you visit the dentist together

Try to relax, avoid saying anything negative which could increase your child's fear.

2. Understand and recognise your child's needs

Try to recognise why and when your child is feeling worried so you can support them.

3. Have patience

Children can sense if their parents are frustrated or angry with them and this can make them worse. Keeping calm will help your child feel happier and more in control of the situation

4. Promote new skills and teamwork

Parents, children and dentists all need to work together to ensure that the child has a positive dental experience.

5. Offer practical and emotional support

Encourage your child to think about the different tools they can use to help them cope (e.g. play music, squeeze a stress ball, agree with the dentist a stop signal)

6. Reward and praise their efforts

Children really respond to encouragement, praise and rewards. Young people need rewards rather than bribes. Rewards are where you give positive outcomes for positive behaviour. They are planned and help children work towards goals for their visit to the dentist

7. Talk about it

Children want to know that they can ask their parents questions about visiting the dentist and share their worries. Be honest. Don't try and keep their appointment or what they will be having done a secret. Remind them of previous dental visits when they coped well and overcame their fears.

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