



Office Policy on Behavior Management & Child-Centered Care

Our office is committed to providing a positive, trusting, and caring dental experience for every child. We believe that how a child feels at the dental office matters as much as the treatment itself. The way a child is treated today shapes how they will feel about their oral health for the rest of their life.

This policy explains our approach to caring for your child and what you can expect from our team. We share it with all parents and guardians so that we can work together as partners in your child's care.

Our Commitment to Your Child

We do not force, restrain, or hold down children for dental treatment. In this office, treatment is never carried out against a child's will or by overpowering their resistance. We believe forced treatment can be frightening, can damage a child's trust, and can create lasting dental anxiety.

Instead, we focus on building cooperation through patience, communication, and proven behaviour-guidance techniques. We complete the procedures a child is able to cooperate with, and we work gradually toward the care they need at a pace that respects their comfort and readiness.

Behaviour Management Techniques We Use

Our team is trained in gentle, evidence-based behavior-guidance methods designed to help children feel safe and in control, including:

- **Tell-Show-Do:** We explain each step in child-friendly language, show the instruments and how they work, and only then begin — so there are no surprises.
- **Positive reinforcement:** We praise and encourage cooperative behavior to build a child's confidence.
- **Distraction and a calm environment:** We use a friendly, unhurried setting to reduce anxiety.
- **Voice control and modelling:** We use a reassuring tone and let children watch successful, calm visits.

- **Breaks and pacing:** We pause when a child needs to rest and break treatment into manageable steps.
- **Desensitization visits:** When helpful, we schedule short “happy visits” to build familiarity and trust over time.

When a Child Cannot Cooperate

Some children, because of their age, anxiety, or temperament, are not yet ready to cooperate with certain procedures. That is completely normal, and we will never punish or shame a child for it. When this happens, we will:

1. Complete whatever portion of the treatment the child can comfortably tolerate that day;
2. Reschedule the remaining care to allow more time, more familiarity, or a different approach;
3. Discuss alternative options with you, which may include additional desensitization visits, or in some cases referral for sedation or treatment under general anesthesia with an appropriate specialist;
4. Always keep you informed and involved in deciding the next step.

The Role of Parents & Guardians

You are an essential partner in your child’s care. To help your child have the best possible experience, we ask you:

- Speak positively about the dentist at home and avoid words like “hurt,” “pain,” “shot,” or “needle”;
- Allow our team to lead the communication with your child during the visit, as this helps build their direct trust in us;
- Share any anxieties, special needs, or past dental experiences so we can tailor our approach;
- Understand that progress may take more than one visit, and that going at your child’s pace is a sign of good care, not a delay.

Emergencies

In a true dental emergency — such as significant pain, infection, or trauma — our priority is your child’s health and safety. We will always discuss the situation and the recommended approach with you before proceeding, and we will pursue the safest, most appropriate option for urgent care.

Acknowledgement

I have read and understand this office’s approach to behavior management and child-centered care. I understand that this office does not force treatment, and that care will be completed at a pace my child can cooperate with.

Parent / Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

This policy may be updated periodically. Please ask our team if you have any questions — we are always happy to talk through how we care for your child.