

## **FIRST VISIT TO THE DENTIST**

Our goal is to help your child become a great adult patient who has healthy teeth and mouth and is comfortable in dental offices. Everything we do is to help to achieve this goal.

### **At your child's first visit with us the dentist and hygienist will:**

- Most importantly get your child comfortable with the dental environment
- Ask about your child's medical history
- Inquire about dietary and eating habits
- Assess the need for fluoride supplements
- Evaluate your child's oral hygiene
- Examine the mouth for dental caries or other problems
- Discuss age appropriate oral hygiene techniques

### **Some ways to prepare for your child's first visit:**

- Take time to play "dentist" with your child at home. Pretend that you are counting teeth, then switch roles and let your child play "dentist".
- Read your child a story about going to the dentist. A good one is Alley Alligator's Awesome Smile by Timothy E. McNutt, Sr., DDS.
- Make the dental appointment for a time when your child is well rested. We have found that morning appointments work best for children.
- Inform your dentist about any medical or psychological problems your child may have.
- Openly discuss your questions and concerns.

### **Some first visit DON'TS:**

- Don't convey anxiety about the dental visit to your child.
- Don't worry if your child cries a little during the visit, since this is perfectly normal behavior.
- Don't use negative words like hurt, shot, needle and drill around your child.

Although we are happy to have parents see our work, as we are very proud of it, we find that children's visits go much more smoothly when parents do not accompany them in the dental treatment room. The reason this is true is that it prevents the parents from transferring their fear or anticipation to the child. Also, when the parent is in the treatment room, the child has a hard time figuring out what authority figure to pay attention to, making it much harder for us to get the child to cooperate. It also protects family members from hurting themselves on our equipment. Be assured we will make your child feel very comfortable and are always here with jokes and a hand to hold.

### **Other children books about teeth:**

- The Tooth Book by Dr. Seuss
- Little Rabbit's Loose Tooth by Lucy Bate
- My Tooth is About to Fall Out by Grace Maccarone