

# BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Children all react differently to dental treatment. Many can cope with treatment and follow verbal requests. Some, especially young children, require specialized techniques to help them to cooperate and cope with dental treatment.

The following are techniques that your child's doctor and the staff may use to help your child to have a successful dental visit.

- These techniques are *based on scientific principles from the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry.*
- Goals: *Establish Communication, Decrease Anxiety, Deliver Quality Dental Care and Build a Trusting Relationship Between Child and Dentist*

## TYPES OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

- **Voice control:** Controlled change of voice volume, tone or pace to influence and direct the patient's behavior. A firm tone and urgent manner may be used.  
OBJECTIVES: gain attention and cooperation, avert negative or avoidance behavior, establish appropriate adult and child roles.
- **Non-Verbal Communication:** Guidance of behavior through appropriate contact, posture, and facial expression.

(VOICE CONTROL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION OFTEN USED TOGETHER)

- **Tell-Show-Do:** Explaining, showing and demonstrating a procedure about to be performed before its actual use to decrease a child's anxiety about it by giving them the control that comes with knowing what is going to happen.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Giving positive verbal feedback or other positive cues or rewards to increase the occurrence of positive and cooperative behaviors.
- **Distraction:** Directing the patient's attention away from what he/she may perceive as unpleasant. The goal is to increase comfort and to avoid negative behavior. (such as a movie to watch).
- **Parental presence or absence:** This technique involves using the presence or absence of the parent in the room to gain cooperation and compliance. Typically the parent is asked to leave the room to give the child a reason to cooperate (to have parent come back in) and /or to enhance the communication between dentist and child. If a child's attention is diverted from essential directions from the doctor by attention to the parent, the parent may be asked to leave the room so that the child and doctor may concentrate on each other. Children may try to induce parent to "rescue" them from the dental treatment. This puts the emphasis on the struggle between parent and child NOT on the procedure and the directions of the dentist to the child where it must be. It also puts parents in an uncomfortable and unfair situation. If this is happening Dr. Wade may stop the process by having the parent step out.

**It is absolutely necessary that your child be in close communication with Dr. Wade. While we welcome you in the treatment room with your child, we ask that you remain mostly out of your child's sight and not talk to your child to allow Dr. Wade and your child to work as a team.**