

PARENT RESOURCE

Parent's Guide to Fear-Free Dental Visits™

A Practical Guide for Parents Who Want Their Child to Feel Safe, Confident,
and Comfortable at the Dentist



18 Years
Specialist Pediatric Dentistry

32,000+
Children Treated

By Dr. Mittal's Kids & Family Dental Clinics



WELCOME

Welcome

If you've downloaded this guide, you're already doing something important.

You're not just looking after your child's teeth.

You're shaping how they will feel about healthcare for the rest of their life.

Many adults avoid healthcare because of one negative experience as a child.

The good news?

Most dental fear is preventable.

Why Children Become Afraid of Dentists

Most children are not born afraid of dentists.

Fear usually develops because of:

- Unexpected pain
- Negative stories from others
- Previous difficult experiences
- Fear of the unknown
- Anxiety from parents
- Feeling rushed or unheard

Understanding the cause helps us prevent it.

BEFORE THE VISIT

What Parents Should Say Before a Visit

Helpful Phrases

"We're going to meet a dentist who helps children keep their teeth healthy."

"The dentist will count your teeth and see how they're growing."

"If you have questions, you can ask."

"We'll do this together."

Avoid These Phrases

"Don't worry, it won't hurt."

"Be brave."

"If you come with me to dentist, you'll get a gift."- Bribing

"I hated dentists when I was a child."

"The dentist won't do anything."

Eating chocolate - will take you to dentist & dr will give you injection- threat

Not brushing- will get your teeth removed

These statements often increase anxiety.



PREPARATION PLAN

The 7-Day Confidence Preparation Plan

7 Days Before	• Talk positively about the visit. • Read books about dentists.
5 Days Before	• Let your child play "dentist" at home. (use spoon handle to check tongue, use mobile li • Count teeth together.
3 Days Before	• Watch positive dental videos, Cartoons like Masha or Peppa pig visiting dentist • Avoid scary stories.
1 Day Before	• Keep explanations simple. • Avoid discussing treatment details repeatedly.
On The Day	• Stay calm. • Children often mirror parent emotions.



CHILD-FRIENDLY CARE

What Happens During a Child-Friendly Dental Visit?

A pediatric visit should focus on:

- Building Trust
- Understanding the Child
- Supporting Emotional Safety
- Assessing Oral Health
- Creating a Positive Memory

Treatment is only one part of the experience.

Understanding the Child Confidence Framework™ (CCF™)

At Dr. Mittal's Clinics, we observe:

Anxiety Levels	How comfortable does your child feel?
Cooperation Progression	How easily do they participate?
Emotional Milestones	What signs show increasing confidence?
Preferred Reassurance Methods	Every child responds differently.

**The goal is not perfection.
The goal is progress.**

COMMON QUESTIONS

Common Parent Questions

What if my child cries?

Crying is communication.
It doesn't mean the visit failed.

What if my child won't open their mouth?

Many children need time.
Trust comes before treatment.

Should I stay with my child?

This depends on age, confidence level, and the child's needs.

How often should children visit?

Most children benefit from preventive visits every six months.

**CONFIDENCE**

Signs Your Child Is Building Confidence

After a few visits, many parents notice:

- Less anxiety before appointments
- More curiosity
- Better cooperation
- Improved oral care habits
- Increased trust in healthcare professionals

Confidence often develops gradually.

Raising Children Who Don't Fear Healthcare

The most important outcome is not a filling.

It is not a cleaning.

It is not even a healthy smile.

It is helping a child believe:

"Healthcare is safe."	"I can ask questions."
"People will help me."	"I can do hard things."

Those lessons last far beyond dentistry.

PARENT BEHAVIOUR PROTOCOL™

Parent Behaviour Protocol™ (PBP™)

What Parents Can Do To Help Build Confidence During a Visit

Parents are one of the most important influences on how children experience healthcare. Small actions can make a big difference in helping your child feel capable, confident, and safe.

During The Visit - Do

Allow your child to sit independently in the dental chair whenever possible.

Independence builds confidence. Children often surprise themselves when given the opportunity to do things on their own.

Allow your child to explore the environment.

Walking around, looking at equipment, asking questions, and satisfying curiosity helps reduce fear of the unknown.

Allow your child and the dentist to interact directly.

Trust develops when children feel heard and included. We often learn more when children answer questions themselves.

Stay calm and relaxed.

Children frequently take emotional cues from their parents. Your confidence becomes their confidence.

Trust the process.

Building confidence sometimes takes longer than completing treatment. The relationship comes first.

PARENT BEHAVIOUR PROTOCOL™

During The Visit - Avoid

Holding your child tightly throughout the appointment.

While it feels protective, it can unintentionally signal that there is something to fear.

Showing visible anxiety or distress yourself.

Children are experts at reading facial expressions and body language.

Answering every question on your child's behalf.

Allowing children to communicate directly helps build trust and ownership of the experience.

Repeatedly reassuring with phrases like:

"It's almost over." "Just two more minutes." "Don't worry."

While well-intentioned, these statements can sometimes suggest that the child should simply endure the experience rather than learn they can cope successfully.

Constantly interrupting the interaction between the dental team and your child.

Confidence grows when children experience supportive communication directly.

AFTER THE VISIT

After The Visit

The moments after treatment often have the biggest impact on what your child remembers.

Children tend to become the stories that are repeatedly told about them.

Celebrate Effort, Not Just Outcomes

Instead of focusing only on treatment completion, praise:

- Sitting in the chair independently
- Asking questions
- Following instructions
- Trying something new
- Showing courage even when nervous

Helpful Things To Say

"I was proud of how you handled that."

"You were nervous and still did it."

"You worked together with the dentist."

"You looked after your teeth today."

"That was very responsible."

POSITIVE IDENTITY

Create Positive Family Stories

Tell grandparents about their bravery.

Share their achievement with family members.

Celebrate the sticker, star, balloon, certificate, or high-five they earned.

Allow your child to retell the story in their own words.

The more often children hear positive stories about themselves, the more likely they are to see themselves as confident and capable.

Give Them An Identity To Live Up To

One of the most powerful questions a parent can ask is:

"How did you become so brave?"

Or:

"Can you teach me how you stayed so calm?"

When children hear these questions, they begin to see themselves as someone who is brave, resilient, and capable.

That identity often lasts far longer than any dental treatment.

Because the ultimate goal is not simply a successful appointment.

It is helping your child develop the confidence to face healthcare—and life—with courage.

Next Step

Not Sure How Comfortable Your Child Is With Dental Visits? Take the Child Dental Confidence Assessment™ and receive a personalised recommendation.

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