

Great Tips for Your Kids First Dentist Visit

Written by Rachel Roland

Rachel Roland is a mom on a mission - exploring beautiful Arizona (and beyond!) with her two little companions, Jeremiah and Sarah, in search of the best restaurants, attractions, and products for you and your children. See what she has in store for your family today!



Going to the dentist is intimidating for nearly everyone - from the smallest to the biggest, but it really, truly doesn't have to be for your children. I spoke with local dentist, [Eric E. Ellis DMD](#), and asked for his tips about helping your children through that first intimidating dental visit. In full disclosure, Dr. Ellis is our children's dentist, and he's fantastic with kids - Jeremiah and Sarah give him hugs when we leave! He's actually the person who noticed Sarah's tonsils and how swollen they were - not her pediatrician.



When should a child first visit the dentist?

Overall, it is advised by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry that you plan to schedule your first appointment with a dentist upon the eruption of the first tooth or no later than your child's first birthday. At my office, we agree with this advice and recommendation.

What will my child's first dentist visit be like?

At most pediatric dental offices, you can expect that your first visit is going to be pleasant and most of all fun for your child. A positive first visit to the dentist helps your child form a trusting bond with our dentists and staff. This in turn makes return visits to the dentist carefree for your child.

Please reassure your child that it is okay to share any fear they might have with their dentist. Also, remind your child that our team will be explaining everything carefully and comprehensively and that it is okay to ask any questions they might have!

Your first visit to the dentist also typically entails little treatment and is generally a short visit. Sometimes our team will ask you as the parent to join your child in the dental chair and possibly hold your child during examination. This allows for your child to feel a bit more comforted and safe. It also allows our dentists to best do their assessment of your child's oral health.



What can parents do to prepare their children for their dental visits?

We also ask that parents do not make a big deal out of their child's first visit to the dentist. It is best to avoid using words like "drill" or "needle" as these can create needless anxiety for your child. Pediatric dentists are skilled and experienced in treating children with fear; and we strive to clearly give details to your child as to the procedures they can expect to evade any future un-constructive attitudes towards dentistry.

At home, practicing opening and closing, saying "AHHH" is always helpful. Many of my patients feel comfort in bringing a special toy to hold or

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movie to watch on our ceiling-mounted television screens. This can help in aiding to your child's experience at the dentist. You can expect most pediatric offices to have environmental staples like child appropriate books and toys, balloons and, of course, a prize box.



Since you caught Sarah's swollen tonsils (that were causing sleep apnea), do normally watch for other medial issues?

Overall, we will review the significance of keeping up a good dental wellness plan with you and your child to make certain a healthy and beautiful smile for your child's life. We will also document your child's medical and dental history, and perform a total wide-ranging examination and talk about any conclusions with you.

As a father of four year old twins who have overcome many health challenges, and being trained in a hospital setting that focused on treating the patient and not just the patient's mouth, which gives me a unique perspective. Many instances, as pediatric dentists, we get a great vantage point of our patient's tonsils. I often discuss tonsillar size with parents and suggest follow up with their pediatricians and ear, nose and throat specialists. Oral sores from common childhood virus and oral manifestations of cancer are also checked on all our patients.

Dr. Ellis practices at Every Kid's Dentist at 5045 W Baseline Rd in Laveen (Phone: 602-605-8045) and at the Norterra location, 2217 West Happy Valley Rd (Phone: 623-434-0543)

- thanks for taking the time to chat with me! I hope you found some great tips here - and you can [join the discussion with other parents](#) on Facebook if you have your own to contribute.



Photo courtesy [Red Phoenix Photography](#)

I'm Rachel - a mom, wife, and 'green' blogger at [Small Steps On Our Journey](#). If you want me to come visit your place of business, have any questions on this article or suggestions for a future article, you can email me at rroland@azfoothills.com, tweet me at [@rachelroland](#), or connect with me on [Facebook](#).

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