

Starting the New Year With a Commitment for Your Family Practice

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Each year we start our personal and practice life with a few goals, commitments and projects. Perhaps I can add a few ideas to your list for your family practice.

Start with a staff meeting dedicated to improving your services for the children and parents of your practice. You might decide to start the meeting with a mini spinal care class to explain to the staff why you see children in the practice. Cover the causes of trauma to the pediatric spine and how early detection and prevention are vital to wellness. Show a pediatric and geriatric x-ray. Explain the difference of a near normal spine and one that is in a phase 2 or 3 spinal degeneration due to neglect of the vertebral subluxation. Does your staff know that it takes decades of vertebral subluxation to deteriorate the spine? Your staff should be knowledgeable about the dental model of wellness, and know that early detection and ongoing wellness evaluations are the keys to prevention.

Review your educational material and determine if it is current, professional in its content and accurate. There are many such pamphlets available for the family chiropractic practice. If you are not sure how to select or eliminate a piece of literature, ask yourself this one simple question: Would I stand by the information in the pamphlet if someone in the media questioned its content? To display outdated or poor literature dishonors our profession and the families we serve.

At a staff meeting, develop a six-month or annual plan of special events for the family practice. Schedule a children's party, reserve a movie theater and show a feature film (and it's not too early to plan a party for the next Harry Potter film to be released later this year), or make plans for back-to-school posture evaluations.

Ask your staff to clip informative health or wellness articles from a variety of newspapers and magazines, then copy and place them at your front desk or in your adjustment rooms as a "Wellness for the Week" handout.

Create a list of websites that will keep you and your parents current on the latest research that addresses a variety of health issues or answers difficult questions from a wellness mode. For example, regarding vaccinations issues, you would refer your patients to www.909shot.org; for chiropractic research and current pediatric literature, you could refer them to www.4icpa.org.

Ask your staff to participate in a book club (this does not have to be monthly). Present a list of books you feel would expand their knowledge on chiropractic, wellness, and issues you believe represent your practice beliefs. Implement a special staff meeting to discuss the book and its significance to health, the patients' personal lives, and how you could integrate this new knowledge into your practice. Reward your staff at the end of the year with a gift, personal day off, or gift certificate for their contributions.

Generate a children's mailing list in your practice. Write a quarterly newsletter targeted for children. Other than articles on chiropractic, it could include sports health, safety, nutrition, a

guest article from a child patient, or announcing a special event in your office. This newsletter could also be emailed to the kids.

Make a commitment to attend one pediatric chiropractic seminar this year. Take a pediatric adjusting course or take your staff to an educational program to expand your knowledge and enthusiasm to see more children. Our goal is creating a generation of healthier children; let your practice play a part.

Also, please support those organizations that take chiropractic to the community or public. Oklahaven and Kentuckiana donate chiropractic care to those in need. Support research for children.

Contact Life Chiropractic College West and see how you can support Dr. Gregory Plaughter's research on the quality of life for asthmatic children with vertebral subluxation.

With the support of a great staff, this year could be one of quality service to your families and personal and professional fulfillment.

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