

Kids Need Chiropractic Too

Peter Fysh, DC

Editor's Note: We're fortunate to welcome a new "DC" columnist, Peter Fysh, D.C., who will write a monthly pediatric column. Dr. Fysh is a transplanted "Aussie" originally from Melbourne in Victoria province, southeast Australia. Dr. Fysh's early schooling included Melbourne's De La Salle College and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. He received his extensive chiropractic training in Melbourne at the Phillip Institute, obtaining a Bachelor of Applied Science in Chiropractic, and two diplomas of Applied Science (Human Biology and Chiropractic).

Dr. Fysh has been a professor at Palmer College of Chiropractic West (PCCW) since 1987 and currently is the chairman of the Department of Practice. He teaches Pediatrics, Chiropractic Science, and Spinal Anatomy. In his four years at Palmer West, he has held numerous positions at the college including chairman of the Task Force on Student Development; president of the Faculty Senate; member of the Academic Cabinet; member of the Committee for CCE Accreditation; member of the Professorial Council; member of the Facilities Planning Committee; and member of the Presidential Search Committee.

Dr. Fysh is actively affiliated with many chiropractic organizations: the Australian Chiropractors Association, ICA, ACA, Pacific Consortium on Chiropractic Research, California Chiropractic Association (CCA), and the Australian Spinal Research Foundation (ASRF).

Dr. Fysh has given dozens of seminar presentations around the country, notably in pediatric clinical diagnosis and management, where his abundant knowledge and clinical experience in pediatrics comes to the forefront.

Among his published articles are "Upper Respiratory Infections in Children: A Chiropractic Approach to Management" (International Review of Chiropractic, March/April 1990); "Computer Applications within Chiropractic Clinics" (Journal of the Australian Chiropractic Association, May, Aug. 1985); and "Computer Based Learning in a Chiropractic College" (Journal of Chiropractic Education, April, 1990).

He currently lives in Sunnyvale, California with his wife Maggie and has three children: Jacqueline, Patrick, and Rebecca.

Don't Forget the Children

Welcome to this new column in Dynamic Chiropractic. I have chosen the title, "Kids Need Chiropractic Too" for this column because to me this expresses one of the most urgent needs facing the chiropractic profession today: educating the public and especially our patients that chiropractic has something special to offer for children in the way of health care.

This need was brought home to me some time ago by one of my patients, and I have never forgotten his rather pointed message. It seems that my patient, let's call him John, while sitting in the clinic reception area waiting to see me for his regular adjustment, happened to see a family of children going into one of the treatment rooms for their regular chiropractic checkup. When it came time for me to see John, I bounced into the treatment room with my traditional Aussie

greeting.

"G'day."

"Hey Doc, I saw some kids come in here before. Don't tell me you treat kids in this clinic too."

I replied, "Of course we do, kids need chiropractic care just as much as adults do."

"What could kids possibly have wrong with them that they would need to see a chiropractor for?" John asked in a concerned yet inquiring tone.

Well, this statement really floored me. How could one of my patients not know that kids need chiropractic too?

The truth of the matter was that in my busy clinic, I had not taken the time to educate my patients about the need to bring their children in for regular spinal checkups. On recollection, most of the children that I was seeing had just seemed to arrive, without any concerted effort or influence on my part. Well, John's question all of a sudden made me feel really badly. I was letting the kids down by not getting the message out that chiropractic was for them too. How many more of my patients had children that I had not seen, I wondered.

It wasn't as if I did not know the benefits that chiropractic had to offer children. After all, I had three little "ankle biters" of my own whose health problems had responded dramatically to chiropractic care. Jacqueline's growing pains, Patrick's asthma, and Rebecca's tonsillitis had all been rapidly corrected by our first chiropractor, my mentor, who later inspired me to attend chiropractic college. Now here I was letting the team down. I decided from that day not to let the kids miss out any longer.

From that day on, I would consistently ask my patients as they were leaving the treatment room after their adjustments, "How long is it since your children have been adjusted?" Now most of the time I knew the answer to this question before I had even asked it.

"Adjustment? Our kids have never had an adjustment," they would say.

Well, that was all the encouragement I needed. I would launch straight into my minilecture on chiropractic pediatric care.

"You don't mean to tell me that you have never had their spine checked? Do you take them to the dentist," I would ask.

"Well, of course," the parents would usually reply. "We don't want their teeth to drop out."

"Well, how about bringing them into the clinic?" I would reply. "I can check to see if they have any spinal subluxations, which may be producing early spinal degeneration. On the way out, when you are scheduling your next visit, why don't you make an appointment to bring your kids in so that I can check their spinal development?" Well, usually these patients got the message right away.

You see, from my experience, kids who have regular chiropractic care really just don't get sick very often, and if they do it is usually with a fairly minor problem.

My education in chiropractic pediatrics has been significantly influenced by the parents of the children that I have treated. These parents frequently tell me that since their children have been having regular chiropractic care, they keep significantly better health and don't lose nearly as much time off school.

As chiropractic doctors, we hear this type of response from parents all the time. We know the dramatic results that we get with kids, but we are usually too busy to stop and educate even our patients, let alone the public, about what we have to offer.

This must all change, if we want to continue bringing the benefits of chiropractic to the kids of the world. We can start to make a change through this column. Doctors, this column is your forum. Each month we will publish significant case reports of the regular and sometimes dramatic results we see when we provide chiropractic care for kids. I hope that you all share your interesting cases by forwarding them to me in care of Dynamic Chiropractic. It is only by letting the public know that we really do have something to offer kids that pediatric chiropractic care will be accepted as an important part of a child's health care program, just as necessary as the dental checkup, and sometimes a way to dramatically improve a child's health.

Peter N. Fysh, D.C.
Sunnyvale, California

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