

Lifetime Care vs. Care for a Lifetime

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Let's face it, there are certain things almost no one likes to do: take out the trash, pay income taxes, go to the dentist, etc. Most of us have a certain attitude about these things, and it would take an awful lot to change our minds.

But the same doesn't necessarily hold true for children. Their minds are a blank slate, ready to record millions of new experiences. Everything holds a certain novelty. Within the essence of this novelty is an opportunity ... an opportunity to shape attitudes for a lifetime.

My two children (David, age 6; and Deborah, age 4) did not enjoy their first dental appointment. The staff people scared them. They didn't know what was happening. And even though Deborah and David only saw the hygienist, it was clear that they never wanted to go to another dental appointment as long as they lived.

Recognizing that this first visit was lacking in many areas, my wife sought a referral, and not from other health care providers. She talked to the real authorities: other mothers of small children.

Eventually, she got the name of "Dr. Josh."

A little better prepared for what could happen, she and the children arrived early for their appointment with Dr. Josh. (Fortunately for me, I was out of town at a chiropractic meeting at the time.) Immediately, the children were greeted by the receptionist and invited to wait in the "play room." This was definitely a good start, as it was equipped with everything they needed to make the minutes go by quickly.

A few minutes later, David was called in to have his teeth X-rayed. My wife and Deborah were invited in as well. Before the dental assistant did anything, she explained to David (in language he could understand) what was going to happen when they "took pictures of his teeth," and why that was important. The X-ray was set up so that "Goofy" appeared to be the one taking the X-rays.

Next, Deborah and David got to watch a short, well-produced video about their first visit to the dentist (as told by a big green dinosaur). The information was in their language and made them feel comfortable with the new experience.

After the video, they each had their teeth cleaned. Again, the experience was designed to keep them well-informed and give them a very comfortable feeling. Both children learned the importance of clean teeth in a way that inspired them to make this their goal. This hygienist definitely knew how to put the "care" in her dental care.

Next came their time to meet Dr. Josh.

Upon meeting them, Dr. Josh immediately knelt down so that he could talk to them literally on their level. He talked to the children directly, giving them his full attention.

Dr. Josh taught them how to brush and floss. He gave them new toothbrushes and five-minute

hourglass timers. The kids felt included; they saw their role in the health of their teeth. They knew what to do and why it was important. And they enjoyed the appointment so much, they didn't want to leave.

The next week, Dr. Josh's office called. Deborah was the winner of the "no cavities for the month" award. She was invited to come in and pick out a stuffed animal.

Instead of being frightened, my children will go see their dentist anytime with absolutely no apprehension. Unlike me, they actually look forward to their next dental visit.

They have taken to brushing their teeth (with their new toothbrushes) every morning and every night. They set the timer and do it. I don't even need to be in the room.

Does Dr. Josh believe in lifetime dental care? While I didn't talk to him, I am almost certain the answer is yes. But more importantly is what my children believe. Based upon their experience, they want dental care for life.

They got the message on their first visit with Dr. Josh. This was no accident. It is very evident that Dr. Josh had a well-executed plan.

From a patient perspective, chiropractic has many advantages over dentistry:

- no drugs;
- doesn't involve your mouth;
- relieves pain rather than (potentially) causes it;
- doesn't use scary instruments.

Even so, Dr. Josh overcame all that by making it his mission to do so.

Just think of what could happen in the next 10-20 years if every doctor of chiropractic in the world treated their young patients with the same kind of enthusiasm Dr. Josh treats his patients.

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