



Gerstenmaier
PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY
from day one



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Brushing Your Teeth the RIGHT Way

Having trouble getting your child to cooperate long enough to learn to brush? You're not alone!

Most children are reluctant to take up brushing since it seems like time that could be better spent with toys. So, what's the solution? Make brushing fun! Dental hygiene is critical throughout all stages of life, but especially during childhood since the teeth are still developing.

Explaining all the short-term and long-term benefits to brushing might not keep them in the front of the mirror on a regular basis so instead set a fun routine to brush together each night. That way, all they need to understand for now, is that it's something you do together and an excuse to make silly faces. Children love to imitate, so encourage them to copy your brushing! You could even let her brush your teeth as long as she follows your directions. Don't share toothbrushes (tooth-decay causing bacteria can spread this way), but instead let your child get excited to pick out her own colorful brush. Perhaps every successful night of brushing, no single tooth left out, she adds a sticker to a "No Cavity Kids" book that, when completed, means a special reward for having that sparkly white smile.

Crest and Oral-B offer a free mobile app that features Disney characters and a timer to entertain your child while they brush for the recommended duration! Be sure to ask us which products we recommend for use with the app!



[Oral-B Disney Magic Timer](#)

Make sure to reinforce the following best brushing practices to make sure she's off to the right start:

- Show your child that the correct way to brush is by imitating the wheels of the family car - circles moving from



Congratulations to GPD's No
Cavity Club Winner for January
- Kyrstin!



Don't forget to pick up
Our Story and a
Welcome Brochure!

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left-to-right and back again.

- Brush with them and demonstrate how to reach all the teeth, front to back, top to bottom.
- Setup a clock or stopwatch and make it an exciting countdown as the two of you brush for a full two minutes, just enough time to make sure that all the teeth are clean and nothing is stuck.

Perfection when brushing might be impossible at this stage, but positivity and excitement for brushing should be priceless toward creating a lifelong healthy habit.

How Thumb-Sucking May Affect Your Child's Teeth



While your child may suck his thumb simply from reflex or to soothe, it can negatively affect the alignment of his teeth and the healthy development of his mouth. Thumb sucking that continues past the appearance of your child's primary teeth should be addressed, especially if the child sucks his thumb or a pacifier frequently or intensely. While it's best that you consult either Dr. John or Dr. Jack for instructions specific to your child, the following are some useful tips that may help your child to resist the urge and develop good oral health.

- Your child may be sucking his thumb because he's anxious or restless. Instead of stopping that behavior, try and alleviate whatever is causing him to feel that way.
- Instead of pressuring your child to stop, consistently praise him when he does not.
- Try a band-aid on his thumb to remind him. Let him pick one that has his favorite character or color and let him put it on! The prouder he is to show it off, the less likely he is to let it fall off or be taken off due to a bad habit.

If none of the above seems to be working, don't worry! We'll be happy to help in whatever way we can to reward and motivate your child to move past this troublesome, but normal, stage.

About Our Practice

Gerstenmaier Pediatric Dentistry is a family owned practice located in Akron, Ohio. From day one, we have provided children, adolescents, families and adults with special needs with the right care at the right time -- ensuring positive dental

experiences that last a lifetime and bring bright and happy smiles to every patient.