

Visiting the dentist: Caring for a child with autism - Smile Solutions

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Visiting the dentist: Caring for a child with autism Caring for children with autism at the dentist Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurological disorder that appears during the first three years of life. It is a developmental disorder defined behaviourally as a syndrome causing abnormal development of social skills, limitations in interactive language and sensorimotor defects. Autism is a life long condition, which may be influenced by environmental and genetic factors. However the true cause is unknown. The dental management of autistic children can be a challenge for the dental professional due to the child's impaired communication, behaviour being either erratic or unpredictable as well as possible hypersensitivity to smells, sights and sounds. Therefore, it is important to understand that children with autism may not be able to function or communicate in socially appropriate ways. Due to this I would like to cover some simple strategies to ease the dental experience for autistic children. Children with autism need steadiness and continuity in their environment. This is why a slow exposure of the dental clinic and staff is recommended. It is best to make the first appointment a short and positive experience, during which questions can be asked and all the necessary dental equipment can be introduced and explored carefully. Likewise, more frequent visits to the dental setting will give the child and dental team increased opportunities to learn about one another and to provide preventative support. The dental practitioner should familiarise themselves with the different communication aids that the child may be using. Photographs or images can be put together in the form of a storyline so that the child is prepared for the dental visit. This will help reduce any build up of anxiety by making events more predictable. Similarly, some patients' behaviour may improve if they bring comfort items such as a stuffed animal or blanket with them to the appointment. As well as asking the caregiver to sit nearby or to hold the child's hand. Oral health problems in autism and strategies for care People with autism experience few unusual oral health conditions, although commonly prescribed medications and damaging oral habits may cause problems to the individual. Damaging oral habits include bruxism, biting on lips or chewing on objects such as pens. In this case the dental professional should recommend the use of a dental guard to prevent self-injurious behaviour, as well as bruxism. The likelihood of dental decay increases in patients who have sticky or sweet foods, and difficulty brushing and flossing. This is why children and caregivers should be advised about correct daily oral hygiene routines as early as possible. Likewise, preventative measures such as additional fluorides, sealants, drinking water throughout the day and taking sugar-free medicines where

appropriate are best recommended. I would like to conclude that extraordinary children, particularly with autism, require the support of a dental team that truly cares about them as an individual. By adopting these strategies we can provide the best care to autistic children, which will make a significant difference to their lives. Articles from Smile Solutions View Blogs Specialist Care Smile Solutions 18 Aug 2026 Endodontist vs Dentist for Root Canal: Why It Makes a Difference Read More General Smile Solutions 10 Aug 2026 Mouth Breathing: The Silent Habit That's Changing Your Face and Your Health Read More General Smile Solutions 3 Aug 2026 How Much Does a Dental Crown Cost in Melbourne? Materials Compared Read More Specialist Care Smile Solutions 18 Aug 2026 Endodontist vs Dentist for Root Canal: Why It Makes a Difference Read More General Smile Solutions 10 Aug 2026 Mouth Breathing: The Silent Habit That's Changing Your Face and Your Health Read More General Smile Solutions 3 Aug 2026 How Much Does a Dental Crown Cost in Melbourne? Materials Compared Read More Specialist Care Smile Solutions 18 Aug 2026 Endodontist vs Dentist for Root Canal: Why It Makes a Difference Read More General Smile Solutions 10 Aug 2026 Mouth Breathing: The Silent Habit That's Changing Your Face and Your Health Read More General Smile Solutions 3 Aug 2026 How Much Does a Dental Crown Cost in Melbourne? Materials Compared Read More View Blog Call Us 13 13 96 Location Level 1, 220 Collins Street Manchester Unity Building, Melbourne VIC 3000 Hours Of Service Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 6.00pm Saturday: 8.30am – 1.30pm Sunday: By Appointment Our Services General Dentistry Cosmetic Dentistry Orthodontics Specialist Care Dental Implants Children's Dentistry Emergency Dentistry Why Choose Us Our Team Media Awards Careers Technology Location Holistic Dentistry Quick Links Contact Us Articles Packages & Offers Dental Payment Plans Understanding Your Treatment Sitemap Privacy Policy Copyright © Smile Solutions. All Rights Reserved. This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google Privacy Policy and Terms of Service apply. Close Our Services General Dentistry Dental Cleans and Hygienists Wisdom Teeth Emergency Dentistry Root Canal Tooth Fillings Chipped or Cracked Teeth Snoring & Sleep Apnoea TMD & Teeth Grinding Sport Mouthguards Dental Anxiety Cosmetic Dentistry Porcelain Veneers & Crowns Same Day Porcelain Veneers™ Composite Bonding Professional Teeth Whitening CEREC Restorations Invisalign® No Braces All-on-4® Dental Implants Gummy Smile Complimentary Cosmetic Consultation Orthodontics Invisalign No Braces Orthodontic Braces Children's Braces and Invisalign Jaw Surgery Dental Implants All-on-4® Dental Implants Conventional & Immediate Implants Dental Bridges Bone Grafting For Implants Dentures Specialist Care Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons Prosthodontists Orthodontists Periodontists Endodontists Paediatric Dentists Complex Dentistry Children's Dentistry First Visit To The Dentist Children's Dental Emergencies Children's Braces and Invisalign Child Dental Benefit Schedule Kids Teeth Cleaning Tips Why Choose Us Our Team Our Location Technology Awards Holistic Dentistry Before After Gallery Payment Plans Packages & Offers Contact Us Call Us 13 13 96 Close Smile Solutions AI Assistant ■ Hello! I'm here to help you with questions about Smile Solutions. How can I assist you today? Popular questions: What services does Smile Solutions offer? How can I contact Smile Solutions What are your business hours? ■■ × 0 /1000 Contact Us Call Us 13 13 96 Location Level 1, 220 Collins Street Manchester Unity Building, Melbourne VIC 3000 Hours Of Service Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 6.00pm Saturday: 8.30am – 1.30pm Sunday: By Appointment Close Book Now