

Behavior Management Cue Card

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Purpose: Quick reference for chairside use to manage anxious or uncooperative pediatric patients effectively.

STAGE 1: PRE-VISIT (Before Appointment)

Techniques:

- Positive imagery and storytelling about dental visits.
- Send short photo or video of a happy dental visit to parents.
- Virtual or direct observation of another child's calm visit.

Cues to Use:

- "Let's see what a brave visit looks like!"
- "This is how we count tiny teeth together."

STAGE 2: IN-CHAIR (During Treatment)

Techniques:

- Ask-Tell-Ask method: engage, explain, and confirm understanding.
- Distraction: cartoons, music, VR, or sensory objects.
- Voice control: calm, confident tone; avoid negative or fear-triggering words.
- Parental presence: decide based on child's comfort level.

Cues to Use:

- "Can I tell you what this brush will do? Does that sound okay?"
- "Would you like to watch cartoons while I clean your teeth?"

STAGE 3: POST-VISIT (After Treatment)

Techniques:

- Positive reinforcement and descriptive praise.
- Memory restructuring: turn a fearful visit into a positive story.
- Small rewards: stickers, digital badges, or verbal praise.

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Cues to Use:

- "You did amazing today! You helped me clean perfectly."
- "Next time will be even faster because you already know what to expect!"

TEAM REMINDERS:

- Layer techniques: combine Tell-Show-Do with one pre-visit and one in-chair strategy.
- Be specific when praising; it boosts cooperation.
- Stay calm and consistent; your tone shapes the child's behavior.
- Document what worked and repeat it next visit.

Goal: Transform anxiety into confidence and build trust for lifelong oral health.