

Dental behaviour management problems: the role of the child personal characteristics.

Gustafson A, Broberg A, Bodin L, Berggren U, Arnrup K. Int J Paediatr Dent 2010;20:242-53.

This study aimed to investigate the role of dental fear and other personal characteristics related to behaviour management. A group of 230 children (7.5-19.0 yrs old), referred because of behavioural problems, were compared with 248 subjects in ordinary care. The study group differed from the reference group in all aspects considered. It was concluded that among older children and adolescents dental fear deserves to be re-established as the single most important discriminating variable for behaviour management problems. **Comment:** Paediatric dentists need to remember that dental fear and anxiety are just as important in older patients than their very young children.

Alternatives for Hand Over Mouth Exercise after its elimination from the clinical Guidelines of the American Academy of Paediatric Dentistry.

Oueis HS, Ralstrom, E, Miriyala, V, Molinari G, Casamassimo P. Pediatr Dent 2010;32:223-8.

The study surveyed members of the American Academy of Paediatric Dentistry to assess views on alternative behaviour management techniques in place of Hand Over Mouth Exercise (HOME) after its elimination from the AAPD Guidelines. Of 2,600 paediatric dentists contacted 704 replied. Voice control was the first alternative given; sedation the second. However, 350 (50%) believed that HOME was still an acceptable technique and 290 (41%) that it should still be recognized by the AAPD. In addition only 7% felt that HOME affected access to dental care. **Comment:** This survey indicates that there is still a widely divergent opinion on the use of this controversial technique. But in addition many dentists are seeking alternative behaviour management techniques to replace the use of HOME.

Child dental fear as measured with the dental subscale of CFSS-DS: impact of referral status and type of informant (child versus parent).

Gustafson A, Arnrup K, Broberg A, Bodin L, Berggren U. Community Dent Oral Epidemiol 2010;38:256-266

This study investigated the agreement between self-ratings of CFSS-DS and to explore differentiated cut-off scores, comparing them with those commonly used. Different data collections included 497 children and adolescents referred for specialized paediatric dentistry and a reference group of 499. Patients and their parents filled out the CFSS-DS independently. Cut-off scores were determined using receiver-operating characteristic analysis. The patient-parent agreement was modest, particularly among those referred because of dental behaviour management problems. Cut-off scores, with few exceptions, were clearly below the standards currently used. **Comment:** This important study shows that rating by parents of their child's fear should be questioned particularly in high-fear groups.

Dental avoidance behaviour in parent and child as risk indicators for caries in 5-year-old children.

Wigen T, Skaret E, Wang N. Int J Paediatr Dent 2009;19:431-7.

This study explored associations between avoidance behaviour and dental anxiety in parents and their children. Data was collected from dental records of 523 children-parent dyads. Details were recorded on anxiety, dental attendance and behaviour management problems. Bivariate and multivariate logistic regression was used to identify relationships between variables. The results showed that children having missed one or more appointments (OR 2.4), with behaviour management problems (OR 3.3), dental anxiety (OR 3.1) and parental avoidance of dental care (2.1) were indicators for dental caries. **Comment:** In taking a history of a potential child patient details should be recorded of the parent's own dental history of dental care as a useful predictor of future caries patterns in their child.

Graeme Wright