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Best of the
Shore
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**Also
Inside:**
Top dentists,
Philly's shining
stars, and more

A man with a beard and short hair, wearing a blue blazer over a white shirt and blue jeans, stands smiling in the center of a stone archway. The archway is part of a larger building with stone walls and multiple arches. The ground is paved with cobblestones. The lighting is bright, suggesting daytime.

Dr. Todd Welsh,
Board-Certified Digital
Orthodontist and
founder of **Bucks County
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by **Matt Cosentino**
photos by **Alison Dunlap**

Architect of the PERFECT SMILE

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In many medical offices, patients have an experience that goes something like this: The clinician provides a diagnosis, a quick explanation, and the patient leaves overwhelmed with more questions than answers. They often then turn to Google, WebMD, or other sources that are unable to provide any measure of informed guidance.

At Bucks County Orthodontics (BCO) in Doylestown, Todd M. Welsh, D.M.D., makes sure that scenario never happens. Dr. Welsh educates each patient about their unique situation and provides a thorough explanation of their options. His goal: to help patients cut through the noise so they can choose the treatment option that will give them their optimal outcome with the most convenience and the best value.

The field of Orthodontics has undergone dramatic changes in recent decades; patients of all ages now have more treatment options than ever. As a result, there's a much greater need for the expertise of someone like Dr. Welsh, who has not only been in practice for nearly 20 years, but also serves as a clinical instructor educating the next generation of Orthodontists at the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine. This expertise is a large part of the difference patients feel at BCO.

"The BCO Difference" is felt right away with an all-encompassing consultation that includes a low-dose 3D CBCT X-ray, a 3D smile image, Dr. Welsh's comprehensive exam, thorough diagnosis, custom treatment plan options, customized advanced treatment modalities, and flexible zero-percent-interest payment plans. All of that is complimentary, because Dr. Welsh believes that patients should have all necessary information upfront

before spending their hard-earned money on treatment.

Dr. Welsh considers an accurate diagnosis to be the most important element of a patient's treatment plan: "It's the foundation upon which everything else is built." He focuses on educating his patients so that they can make the best decision for themselves and their families.

"The most important part is knowing the WHY behind my recommendations," he says. "My goal is to provide personalized treatment that our patients have never experienced before that sets them up for lasting success."

Dr. Welsh's background helped him to become one of the first doctors in the country to offer revolutionary LightForce 3D-printed fully custom clear braces in 2019. This digital system allows him to engineer exact movement with brackets that are customized to each tooth, leading to shorter treatment times, greater patient comfort, fewer office visits, and increased efficiency. BCO currently has more than 550 patients who have been treated with LightForce braces. Furthermore, Dr. Welsh has become so proficient with this advanced technology that he teaches the LightForce system to Orthodontists across North America. He also offers clear aligners such as Invisalign and Angel Aligners, and Dental Monitoring, which allows for fewer in-office visits.

"It really comes down to what works best for each patient's best outcome, lifestyle, and habits. We walk our patients through their treatment plans and the pros and cons of all treatment options to help them easily arrive at a decision that works for their lifestyle."

He also meets with every patient personally, at every visit during treatment, to ensure a consistently high level of care they are unlikely to find in less specialized environments. Whichever option each patient chooses, the real benefit comes from the extensive knowledge and experience of Dr. Welsh, a Board-Certified Digital Orthodontist who graduated with honors from the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine. After all, the tools to transform a patient's smile, no matter how revolutionary, are only as good as the specialist who wields them.

It is a common misconception that Orthodontists treat only adolescents. Adults account for approximately a third of BCO's patients. Dr. Welsh treats patients that need mild corrections to the most complex cases involving interdisciplinary coordination and surgical Orthodontics. These complex cases are his specialty. He is regularly referred complex cases by Prosthodontists and Oral Surgeons for his clinical acumen and craniofacial expertise.

For adult patients who only want smaller aesthetic fixes, Dr. Welsh offers his "Smile Refresh Program" at a comparable rate to



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**—Dr. Todd Welsh,
Bucks County Orthodontics**

at-home aligners with a Board-Certified Orthodontist diagnosing, monitoring, and overseeing their case. He affirms, "No matter how simple or complex the treatment plan, I am here for my patients to craft their best smile, bite, and facial aesthetics."

Dr. Welsh also provides Early Orthodontic Treatment for his younger patients, if necessary. In order to assess growth and development, Dr. Welsh recommends parents bring their children in for a first visit between the ages of 7 and 8. By age 7, each child has enough permanent teeth that an Orthodontist can spot any developing issues before they become a bigger problem.

If a patient needs growth modification, Dr. Welsh explains "the WHY" to his patient families utilizing X-ray measurements and 3D smile models. If patients don't need early treatment, they go into the complimentary "BCO Kids Club" where Dr. Welsh monitors growth until all of the patient's adult teeth come in. All of that is complimentary at his BCO office.

"I have a very conservative approach to Orthodontics. I treat what's necessary, when necessary. Early Treatment, if indicated, starts at the proper time and braces/aligner treatment starts when all adult teeth have come in."

There have also been significant advancements and gains in clinical knowledge in the field of Orthodontics over the last few decades.

"When I was growing up, you went to

the Orthodontist at 13, they gave you metal braces, lined up your teeth, gave you a good bite, and that was it. We know a lot more now than we knew 30 or 40 years ago. Things are constantly evolving, and we now know how valuable it is to make your underlying skeletal structure more compatible for long-term results."

With so many options available, being educated and informed is paramount. Patients must review the qualifications of their doctor, because every Orthodontist is a dentist, but only 6 percent of dentists are Orthodontists. Orthodontic treatment requires a considerable amount of technical skill and advanced training. Patients need to ask for qualifications—if the doctor went to Orthodontic Specialty School or if they just "provide Orthodontics." It's also important to see the Orthodontist's actual patient results. Dr. Welsh states, "There are so many things to consider when choosing the doctor to treat your one and only smile."

The quantity of patients coming into an Orthodontist's office after first trying at-home aligners or treatment with their dentist is on the rise. "It's upsetting because now these patients are doing and paying for treatment ... twice." Dr. Welsh continues, "It often comes down to lack of an accurate diagnosis. These patients might have somewhat straighter teeth, but now they may also have open or misaligned bites, gum recession, and other issues that were not addressed during treatment."

Dr. Welsh assesses all the following when diagnosing and treating his patients—his "Characteristics of a BCO SMILE"—wide arch width, a smile that follows the lip line, gum tissues that are symmetrical, a smile that flows from front to back, proper lip support, properly shaped teeth, optimal profile aesthetics, maximum airway potential, and an optimized bite for lasting, stable results. Dr. Welsh asserts that "A highly skilled Orthodontist considers your profile, tooth show, gum line, and more. Bad Orthodontics can affect all of these, negatively. Excellent Orthodontics can optimize your ideal smile, facial aesthetics, and overall dental health."

As much as Dr. Welsh enjoys diagnostics, technological advancements, and opportunities to educate his patients, residents, and peers, he finds nothing more rewarding than seeing patients enjoy the benefits of a beautiful smile. "My favorite moments are seeing my patients' joy and self-confidence when I reveal their brand-new smiles. I've been doing this for a long time, and those moments never get old." ■

**Bucks County Orthodontics
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