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Strong Start,

Bright Future

BY ARLENE W. LEIB



The Community Outreach Department of pediatric dental practice **Doc Bresler's Cavity Busters** helps kids learn early good oral health habits that can last a lifetime.

Did you know that tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease? Even so, cavities are preventable. Research shows that children who suffer poor oral health miss more school and receive lower grades than children with healthy mouths.

Knowing these statistics, pediatric dentists and owners of Doc Bresler's Cavity Busters, Drs. Josh, Jason, and Rachel Bresler continue the legacy of their father, Dr. David Bresler, who started the practice in 1982. Dr. Rachel Bresler says, "We grew up watching our dad love taking care of kids and their teeth, making a difference in their lives, and having a positive impact on society. Pediatric dentistry gives us all the opportunity to do that."

Providing excellent dental care is one thing, and simultaneously the practice's mission statement includes the importance of prioritizing education. Dr. Jason Bresler says, "You don't know what there is to know, until you know it. Knowledge should be free. Learning about what causes cavities, and bringing preventative education into schools can help kids grow healthy teeth and oral health attitudes, and positive habits into adulthood."

To these points, Cavity Busters created a Community Outreach Department years ago with an early childhood dental educational program that teaches children about their own teeth (ownership leads to responsible behavior), oral health habits, how not to be afraid of the dentist, and that checkups can

be fun. Experienced dental educators visit preschools, kindergartens, daycares, and elementary schools teaching age and time-appropriate interactive lessons about brushing, flossing, and healthy foods, with "warm and fuzzy" props. Learning in a classroom setting with friends and fun questions and answers encourages better information retention. After each lesson, children take home a goody bag with a new toothbrush, fun materials, and items for parents and guardians. Kids enjoy going home and teaching everyone in the family the "right way" to brush and floss.

Outside of classroom education, Cavity Busters also focuses on team development, a movement involving all offices where staff participate in skills-building and team activities that are not only fun, but also help them work together to successfully achieve optimum patient comfort and engagement, while providing "kid-gentle" education. Positivity becomes contagious in child-friendly environments with highly professional and compassionate care providers, helping better familiarize children with expectations, oral hygiene, and preventative care, which Dr. Rachel Bresler says can help settle children's fears about regular dental office visits. She says, "Making children's visits easier may include desensitization visits, giving dental tools funny names, and offering stickers and other prizes as rewards for positive visit outcomes."

Dr. Josh Bresler says, "We patiently allow each child to acclimate to the unknown environment and proceed carefully. Establishing

a trusting relationship helps kids better accept that their twice-yearly checkup visits become part of their 'normal lives.' "

Through Community Outreach and Team Development, Cavity Busters has found a recipe for pediatric dental success, teaching that it's never too early to look out for your child's oral health, or too late to make a difference.

The three siblings offer a few helpful tips. Dr. Jason Bresler: "The recommendation from the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry is to have your baby's first appointment within six months of the eruption of their first tooth, certainly before they turn one year old, then every six months after. Dr. Rachel Bresler: "If you're doing middle-of-the-night feedings, keep a baby washcloth handy to wipe the teeth and gums clean from any liquids." Dr. Josh Bresler: "As soon as teeth erupt, start gentle brushing with a tiny amount of toothpaste. As your kids grow, brush and floss as a routine, and before bed is the most important time."

Good habits start early and can last forever. ■

Parents, guardians, and teachers can visit cavitybusters.com for free educational information about keeping children's teeth healthy and strong. To inquire about the early childhood oral education program, contact community@cavitybusters.com. Doc Bresler's Cavity Busters has office locations in Doylestown, Roxborough, Dresher, Northeast Philadelphia, Jenkintown, Newtown Square, South Philadelphia, and Lower Northeast Philadelphia. For an appointment, call (215) 543-5555.