



I was really interested to re-visit the Dental Spa in Queen's Road which I covered in an earlier issue of Regency soon after they opened two years ago. The Director is Christina Chatfield, who is passionate about oral hygiene and who opened her clinic to ensure that excellent treatments were easily accessible to everyone. She is a dental hygienist with over 25 years experience in practice and within blue chip health companies, so I particularly wanted to know why she had felt the need to launch Spa Kids earlier this year.

The main reason I discovered is the sad and shocking fact that in the UK today around 40% of all 5 year olds have experienced some form of tooth decay and that dental disease is one of the main reasons why children have to receive a general anaesthetic. This is the result of either a poor diet or the fact that children have never been shown how to clean their teeth properly or a combination of these two reasons. It also does not help that apparently many dentists rarely refer children for hygienist treatment, but rather give the standard 10 minute checkup, then undertake any fillings as and when they are required and simply put the child's teeth 'on watch', sometimes without even giving advice on the best way for them to clean them to help to avoid future problems.

Christina had also become particularly concerned having read in a newspaper, that in

DENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

The Dental Spa in Queen's Road have launched the Kids Spa which is dedicated to teaching children about oral hygiene

parts of the city, our children's oral health is in a really bad way, with lost teeth, numerous cavities and with many young children not even owning a toothbrush, let alone having been shown how to use one by parents. Apparently the importance of taking care of even first teeth is a simple one, because apart from general health and getting into good habits, if a young child loses a first tooth prematurely through decay, then as the second teeth start to appear either side of the gap, they are likely to become misaligned and crooked. In fact taking care of children's teeth should start from their very first tooth, by the parent gently using a little finger brush to clean around the new tooth and gum, then as soon as more teeth arrive, investing in a good quality children's brush.

Parental help will be needed up to the age of around 6 years old, after which the child themselves should know exactly how to keep their own teeth and gums in good shape. Please note that it is also important for all of us to clean teeth before breakfast, particularly as it was explained to me that there are more bacteria in the human mouth than on a loo seat (guck!) and of course as the bacteria multiply whilst we sleep, the need to clean before eating anything in the morning is obvious.

At the heart of Spa Kids is the unique Oral Insights Interactive system and situated in a special and attractive 'child friendly' room. The system allows the young patient as well as the dental professional, to view the child's tooth brushing technique in real time 3D. The child wears a comfortable head set which is linked via the system to a computer screen and the software then generates virtual models of the child's teeth and jaw. The child will then brush

their teeth as carefully as they know how and the system calculates the time spent on each tooth as well as any missed. Once finished it gives an overall report, giving the young patient a score out of ten and it also cleverly colours in the 'missed' areas on screen so that the child can then be shown exactly how to improve their oral cleaning technique.

It seems to me that this is a really fun way to introduce children to the correct way to care for their teeth, particularly as through playing computer games they are already familiar with technology and are likely to be fascinated by the Oral Insights system. It is also recommended that they come back every six months to see if they can better their last score or even beat other siblings or even parents, as the system can be used on adults!

An appointment for Spa Kids is normally £30, though at the moment there is a special offer of only £15 for the 30 minute session and they have even launched a free comic called Bug Busters to get the children even more involved and educated in a fun way. You will need to get a referral from your own dentist to make an appointment for Spa Kids, but you can simply telephone them and they will tell you anything you need to know.

However I think that Christina and her colleagues are offering all parents an excellent opportunity and for a very small investment, to ensure that their children are well on the road to a lifetime of excellent oral health and of course a beautiful smile.

Spa Kids (part of Dental Spa) at 14-15 Queen's Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 3WA Tel: 01273 710831 and more details on their website at www.dentalspa.co.uk/kids (REGENCY)



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