

ENGAGE AND EXCITE

WORLD SMILE DAY ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR DENTAL PRACTICE

*"I made a circle with a smile for a mouth on yellow paper because it was
sunshiny and bright." -Harvey Ball*

World Smile Day, celebrated annually on the first Friday of October, is a day dedicated to spreading joy and kindness by simply smiling. The day was founded by Harvey Ball, a commercial artist from Worcester, Massachusetts, who created the iconic smiley face in 1963. Originally designed to boost morale at an insurance company, the smiley face quickly became a global symbol of happiness.

Ball's creation reminds us that a smile can brighten someone's day and make the world a better place. In your dental offices, it's all about the patients' smiles. We know a great smile can positively impact every child's life, from confidence to overall well-being. That's why we're dedicated to helping our young patients achieve and maintain their very best smiles and have some fun along the way!

There are many ways to drum up excitement and engagement for World Smile Day in your office. One great idea is to host a photo contest in the office. Set up a photo booth or a designated corner with your logo, fun backdrops, and props, and encourage patients to take a photo during their visit. To make it more



exciting, consider making it a themed day or week, where patients can dress up in silly costumes or participate in a Halloween costume contest.

Patients can enter the contest by sharing their photos on social media and tagging your practice, or you can simply collect the photos and enter them into a drawing. To boost engagement, offer a prize for the photo that gets the most likes or votes or conduct a drawing for all photo entries or posts on your office's social media platforms. This builds excitement in the office and helps lighten the mood, especially for young patients who might feel nervous about their visit.

Incorporating these themed photo contests and activities into your practice's events calendar can make visits more enjoyable and memorable for patients and promote your practice, too. It's a win-win that is sure to celebrate the power of a smile!

The 2024 PDTA conference is fast approaching! This year, we're excited to offer a fun backdrop for your team to snap photos and share their experience on social media. It's a perfect opportunity to highlight the continuing education and professional growth happening at the conference. Don't miss out on this chance to better your practice while capturing some great memories. We can't wait to see you there!

Rhea

Rhea M. Haugseth, D.M.D.

NOURISHMENT FOR THE MIND

DIETARY TIPS TO COMBAT ANXIETY

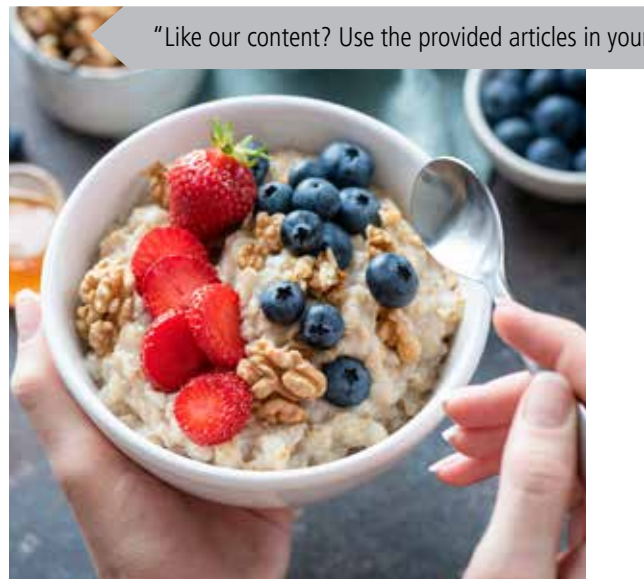
Our diets can affect our mood and health, but no one food or drink provides instant, long-lasting relief for anxiety symptoms. As awesome as it would be to say, "I think I'm feeling anxious. Pass me that popcorn chicken, stat," the truth is that *removing* certain foods and drinks from your diet can help calm your anxiety. So, if you're after a more peaceful mood, here are some ingredients to avoid *and* include to achieve the best result!

Avoid Alcohol

We've all heard it, but alcohol is not the solution to your problems. Although ingesting alcoholic beverages can result in short-term relief, the long-term effects are anything but helpful. Alcohol can make getting to sleep more difficult and lead to an overall worsened mood as it leaves your system. In fact, alcohol is a depressant and can make your anxiety much worse.

Cut Back on Caffeine

Millions of people rely on coffee to start their day. However, caffeine — a core component of coffee — can make you feel nervous and fidgety if ingested in large quantities. If you suffer from jitters in the morning, it might be time to taper your caffeine intake.



More of These, Please

Enough about things to *cut* out of your diet; how about things we can eat to make ourselves feel better? Berries contain antioxidants, which can aid in combating stress and depression. Complex carbohydrates in oatmeal, breads, and quinoa can help increase the serotonin in your brain, resulting in a calming effect over time. If you like fish, try out salmon. It contains vitamin D, which helps produce dopamine and serotonin, easing anxiety symptoms. Now you have the right ingredients for a successful, calming diet!

SITUATION OF THE MONTH

Dear PDTA Pro,

With Halloween just around the corner, we are looking for ways to create excitement and engage our patients (especially the kids)! It's a fun holiday so we want to be sure to not miss out on a great opportunity to celebrate and have a little fun! What ideas do you have for us?

—Looking To Create Some Smiles

Dear Looking To Create Some Smiles,

Halloween is the perfect opportunity to have a ton of fun with your patients in the office and on your social media platforms. By embracing the spirit of the season, you can make your office a place where patients look forward to their appointments. Here are four ideas to bring Halloween excitement to your practice and boost engagement on social media.

Set Up a Fun Photo Corner

Create a dedicated photo corner in your office decked out with Halloween-themed decorations. Think spider webs, pumpkins, and spooky backdrops. You can even incorporate fun props like witch hats, fake fangs, and ghost masks. Encourage your patients to take photos in the corner before or after their appointment. To make it even more exciting, offer a small treat or token to those who participate.

Host a Costume Contest

Invite your patients to come into the office in their Halloween costumes and take photos for the entire week of Halloween! You can run a costume contest, where patients submit their photos by tagging your practice on social media or commenting on a dedicated costume contest post on your page. Offer prizes for the best costumes in different categories like "Best Overall Costume," "Funniest Costume," and "Most Creative Costume." This encourages participation and promotes your practice online as patients share their photos with friends and family.

Themed Social Media Campaigns

Run a month-long Halloween-themed social media campaign. Share daily or weekly posts with fun dental-related Halloween and candy tips, spooky trivia, or short videos of your staff in costumes. Encourage your followers to share their own Halloween photos, using a unique hashtag that ties back to your practice.

Trick-or-Treat Bags

Hand out Halloween-themed goody bags filled with dental-friendly treats, stickers, and a toothbrush. Include a note encouraging parents to take a photo of their child with the bag and share it on social media. Don't forget to remind them to tag your office!

With these fun ideas and activities, you're sure to create a fun and memorable Halloween experience for your team members and patients! It's all about building a sense of community around your practice!

—Pediatric Pro



AUTUMN AWAITS

IDEAS FOR YOUR FALL BUCKET LIST

After a summer spent adventuring outdoors, you may feel like turning into a pumpkin come fall. But fall is full of uniquely enjoyable opportunities. From brewing cider to hanging up creepy Halloween decorations, here are three bucket-worthy activities that make the most of autumnal creativity and coziness.

Apple Picking for Apple Cider

Apple picking season starts in the waning days of summer before ending in October, making September the best time to visit a local orchard. Whether you're in Alaska, Wyoming, or almost any state in between alphabetically, pick-your-own apple orchards offer you and your friends the chance to get back out in nature, exercise, and enjoy the fruits of your labor. Best of all? Apples are the easiest fruit to pick, and the reward is a delicious, ready-to-eat snack or an ingredient in a refreshing beverage. Ground-up apples are the base ingredient for apple cider, a delicious drink that epitomizes the greatness of fall!

Blazing Bonfire

Now that summer is spent, a good, old-fashioned bonfire is in order. Whether making s'mores or sharing ghost stories, a bonfire is a recipe for a good time with friends, family, and the occasional apparition.

Horrorifying Halloween Home

We have all seen the homes on the block with bare lawns and dark porches during Halloween. But what's the fun in that? If that was your home last year, now is the perfect time to turn it around and embrace the most macabre, creative ideas for decking out your home — inside and out. From creatively posed skeletons to a front porch full of jack-o'-lanterns, there is no shortage of simple, scary props to adorn your home. If you have never carved a jack-o'-lantern, it should be on your bucket list — not just for fall. See how far you can take Halloween this year!

HAVE A LAUGH



PERFECT PEACH COBBLER



INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups sliced fresh peaches
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup cold butter, cut into pieces
- ½ cup milk
- 2 tbsp butter, melted

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375 F and grease an 8-inch square baking dish.
2. In a large bowl, combine peaches, sugar, 2 tbsp flour, cinnamon, and nutmeg; mix until blended, then spoon into prepared dish.
3. In a medium bowl, combine 2 cups flour, brown sugar, baking powder, and salt.
4. Cut in butter with forks or pastry knife until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
5. Add milk and stir until just blended.
6. Drop dough by spoonfuls onto peach mixture and drizzle melted butter on top.
7. Bake for 40–45 minutes or until top is golden brown.

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THE PAWSITIVE EFFECTS

The Integral Role of Pets in Enhancing Childhood Development

We all know a family pet can bring a world of fun, but animal companions are actually proven to do much more than that! Pets are more than just your kids' companions; they play a significant role in child development. Here's how every child can benefit from growing up with a furry (or not-so-furry) friend.

Social Skills and Empathy

Pets often serve as a child's first friend and confidant. Interacting with a pet requires a child to read nonverbal cues and respond appropriately, which can enhance their empathy and understanding of emotional states. When a child learns to care for the needs of their beloved pet, they learn that other people also have needs and emotions that must be cared for.

Health Benefits

Numerous studies have shown that children with pets are less likely to develop common allergies and

asthma. Surprisingly enough, it didn't matter whether these kids grew up with cats or dogs; both were equally likely to help prevent asthma and certain allergies. Of course, children who have already been diagnosed can have their symptoms triggered by their furry friends. That's why parents should consider introducing a pet as early as possible!

Emotional Support

Pets provide a unique comfort that can sometimes elude even the closest family members. During challenging or stressful times, a pet can comfort a child. A pet's presence can be incredibly soothing and reassuring, providing a silent strength without the complication of human emotions.

Fun and Adventure

Let's not forget that pets are fun! They bring laughter and joy to a household. Kids' adventures with their pets — from exploring the backyard jungles with a



trusty dog to hosting a tea party with a patient feline — can foster creativity and imagination.

Pets truly make a home more vibrant and livelier. They teach lessons in love, life, and the joy of simple things. So, if you're contemplating adding a pet to your family, know that the pitter-patter of little paws can benefit your child's development. And let's be honest, who wouldn't want an extra dose of unconditional love around the house?