

A MESSAGE FROM DR. HAUGSETH

MORE WAYS TO HELP YOUR PRACTICE THRIVE!

One of my favorite things about the PDTA is that many of our best ideas come directly from the challenges our members share with us. Every question you ask and every challenge you face help us identify new ways to support you and your team.

We're no longer simply adding resources. We're building a complete framework to help pediatric dental practices become more consistent.

Every system, Practice Playbook, training module, checklist, and leadership resource has one purpose: to help your team perform with greater confidence, consistency, and excellence.

Two of our most significant additions are the **PDTA Pediatric Practice Playbooks** and the **PDTA Pediatric Office Systems Library**. The Playbooks provide structured guidance for onboarding and integrating new team members, while the Systems Library provides practical frameworks for creating consistency throughout your practice.

You'll also notice improvements throughout the PDTA website designed to make our growing collection of resources easier to find and use.

If you haven't explored the Member Resources recently, take a few minutes to look around. You may discover resources you didn't even realize were available!

Thank you for being part of the PDTA community and for continuing to help us build better resources for pediatric dental practices.

As always, thank you for being part of the PDTA community. Your feedback, ideas, and experiences continue to shape the direction of our organization, and I'm excited about what we'll continue building together.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of your journey. We look forward to continuing to help you build a stronger team, a more consistent practice, and an exceptional experience for every patient and family you serve.

To your success,

Rhea

Rhea M. Haugseth, D.M.D.



*Halloween Costume Contest Winners
from My Pediatric Dental Practice*

Seasonal Practice Marketing Ideas

Fall is full of easy opportunities to have a little fun with your patients and families!

HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST

Invite patients to come dressed in costume and take photos (with permission) for your social media. Consider awarding winners by age group so your littlest patients aren't competing with teenagers!

FOOTBALL SPIRIT DAYS

Pick Fridays for your team to wear their favorite college or NFL team colors and invite patients to join in.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SMILE WALL

Create a simple photo spot and invite patients to share their first-day-of-school smiles.

PUMPKIN DECORATING CONTEST

Have team members decorate pumpkins and let patients vote for their favorite throughout October.

Running on Empty? TRY THESE ENERGY BOOSTS WITHOUT THE CRASH

Feeling drained has become way too common. Busy schedules, poor sleep, and nonstop screen time can leave you running on empty before the day even ends. Energy drinks and extra coffee might offer a quick fix, but not for long. Real, lasting energy starts with simple daily habits that support your body naturally.

PRIORITIZE QUALITY SLEEP.

Steady energy revolves around sleep. Getting enough rest helps your body recover, balance hormones, and recharge your brain. Most adults need 7–9 hours each night, but quality matters, too. A consistent bedtime, a cool bedroom, and less screen time before bed can make a monumental difference.

INCORPORATE MORE MOVEMENT IN THE DAY.

Likely the last thing you want to do when you're tired is to hop on a treadmill or pick up the weights, but regular movement actually boosts energy over time. Physical activity improves circulation and helps oxygen move through the body more efficiently. You don't need intense workouts to feel the benefits

either. A brisk walk, stretching session, or short bike ride can lift your mood and wake up your mind.

CONSUME FOODS THAT FUEL YOUR BODY.

What you eat directly affects how you feel. Sugary snacks and processed foods may give you a temporary boost, but they often lead to sluggishness later.



Balanced meals with protein, healthy fats, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains provide more stable energy throughout the day. But don't forget your water! Mild dehydration can leave you feeling tired without you even realizing it.

MANAGE THOSE STRESS LEVELS.

For many of us, stress is our middle name. However, chronic stress can drain your energy. Mental exhaustion often manifests physically, leaving you feeling worn out even after resting. Taking short breaks during the day, practicing deep breathing, or spending time outdoors can help reduce stress and improve focus. Finding small ways to slow down can restore more energy than constantly pushing through fatigue.

STAY CONNECTED.

Social interaction also plays a role in energy and overall well-being. Spending time with supportive friends or family can improve mood and reduce feelings of burnout. Positive connections help people feel more motivated, engaged, and emotionally refreshed.

SITUATION OF THE MONTH

Dear PDTA Pro,

We recently hired a dental assistant who came from a general dental practice. She's experienced and confident, but pediatric dentistry is a whole different world. Sometimes, it feels like she already thinks she knows everything, and I'm not sure how to introduce pediatric-specific techniques without making her feel like we're criticizing what she already knows. What's the best way to build on her experience while helping her learn the pediatric side of dentistry?

—Making the Transition

DEAR MAKING THE TRANSITION,

This is a situation many pediatric practices face. Experienced team members bring valuable knowledge, but pediatric dentistry has a unique approach, techniques, and philosophy. The goal isn't to erase what they already know. It's to recognize the strengths they bring while helping them build the skills they need to succeed in your practice.

START WITH WHAT THEY ALREADY BRING.

Before jumping into training, take time to discover the skills they've developed both inside and outside of dentistry. They may have exceptional customer

service experience, strong communication skills, or even a background in marketing or leadership. Every team member brings life skills and previous experiences that can strengthen your practice. Identifying those strengths first helps build confidence and creates a positive starting point for learning.

ASSESS BEFORE YOU TRAIN.

Rather than assuming what a new team member knows or doesn't know, evaluate their current knowledge first. An assistant from a general practice may already have strong clinical skills but may need guidance in behavior management, child communication, pediatric restorative procedures, or working with young patients and their families. Once you know where the gaps are, you can create a training plan that focuses only on what they need.

USE THE RIGHT RESOURCES TO GUIDE THE PROCESS.

This is exactly why we created the new **PDTA Pediatric Practice Playbook**. The Playbook helps you identify your situation, then walks you through it step by step by connecting you with the right checklists, templates, training resources, and systems. Instead of wondering where to start, you'll have practical tools that help you onboard new hires, standardize training, and make the transition into pediatric dentistry much smoother!

—Pediatric Pro

CAN A WALK IN THE WOODS GIVE YOU MORE TIME?

SCIENCE SAYS SORT OF

Have you ever noticed how an entire workweek can seem to disappear in the blink of an eye, while an afternoon spent wandering through a forest feels long and memorable? Modern life moves at a relentless pace. Between busy schedules, deadlines, and daily responsibilities, it's easy to feel as though time is constantly slipping away. But something remarkable happens when we step into nature. The world seems quieter, our minds feel less crowded, and the hours don't race by quite so quickly.

Scientists have become increasingly interested in this phenomenon. Research suggests that natural environments can influence how we perceive time, helping moments feel longer and more meaningful.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND IT

One reason is that nature captures our attention differently than busy urban environments. The sound

of birds, rustling leaves, and flowing water draws us into the present moment rather than pulling our focus in multiple directions.

Nature also provides novel experiences that create richer memories. When the brain records more details, periods of time can feel longer when we look back on them. Additionally, spending time outdoors can reduce stress and encourage mindfulness. Instead of focusing on deadlines and responsibilities, we're more likely to become immersed in what's happening around us.

A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE OF TIME

Nature doesn't actually slow time down, but it changes how we perceive it! By encouraging presence, reducing stress, and creating memorable experiences, the outdoors can make life feel a little less rushed and much more meaningful.



When we fully engage with our surroundings instead of thinking about the next task on our to-do list, we're more likely to savor each moment. That shift in attention can make time feel fuller and more expansive, helping us feel as though we've gained something that's often in short supply: a little extra time to just be present in the moment!

HAVE A LAUGH

My new invention is way better than Zoom!



HR has reviewed your search history. We have questions.



SLOW COOKER MASALA CHICKEN AND RICE

INGREDIENTS

Chicken

- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 lb ground chicken
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 can (8 oz) tomato sauce
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp garlic powder

- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup frozen peas

Rice

- 1 cup uncooked basmati rice
- 1 3/4 cups boiling water
- 2 tbsp canola oil or butter
- 1 tsp salt

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large skillet, heat butter over medium heat.
2. Add chicken and onion, cook until no longer pink, 6–8 minutes, breaking into crumbles.
3. Transfer to a 4-quart slow cooker.
4. Stir in tomato sauce, water, salt, garlic powder, cumin, chili powder, turmeric, garam masala, ginger, cinnamon, and bay leaf.
5. Cook on low for 4–5 hours. Add peas, cook 30 minutes.
6. For rice, preheat oven to 375 F and grease a 2-quart baking dish.
7. Add all rice ingredients, cover with foil, and bake until water is absorbed, 25–30 minutes.
8. Discard bay leaf from chicken, and serve over cooked rice.

Inside This Issue

- p.1 The Resources You've Been Waiting for Are Here!
- p.2 More Sleep Isn't the Only Answer to Low Energy
- p.2 Situation of the Month
- p.3 Nature May Not Slow Time, but It Changes How You Experience It
- p.3 Slow Cooker Masala Chicken and Rice
- p.4 What Happened When a Dog Took Matters Into His Own Paws

FORGET FETCH

Eeyore the Dog Retrieved a Sheriff's Deputy

Injuries and medical emergencies rarely come with a warning. One moment, everything feels normal, and the next, something can happen while you're just grabbing the mail, getting out of the shower, or walking through your home.

Many people's saving grace is that someone was within earshot or in sight when the incident happened, available to render aid and get medical attention on the scene. But what happens when you're out on your own without anyone you know? You can only hope you have a guardian angel like Eeyore looking over your shoulder.

Law enforcement in Okaloosa County, Florida, responded to a call from a man who had grown worried about his wife. She was an older woman who had taken their 100-pound granddog, Eeyore, for a walk as the sun set. The husband stated that she normally only takes 10–15 minutes but hadn't returned for over an hour. He was panicking.

As the sheriff's deputy drove around the neighborhood, she spotted Eeyore, who quickly approached the vehicle. The deputy didn't hesitate; she quickly acknowledged it was the dog and asked, "Where's your momma?" Like a scene from a movie, the dog leaped into action, guiding the deputy straight to the woman on the ground.



Thankfully, the woman was alert and conscious, but they were concerned she had suffered an injury. However, she wasn't worried about herself in the moment. She was trying to figure out how the deputy found her. She sounded completely flabbergasted when the deputy told her the dog was responsible for her rescue. "The dog brought you over? He wouldn't leave. He kept coming back to me," she stated to the deputy.

As they waited for emergency services to arrive and provide aid, the two women made sure to give Eeyore plenty of love and appreciation. There's no telling how long the woman would have been outside, or whether she would have remained safe had Eeyore not remained persistent in seeking help. The sheriff's department was quick to credit Eeyore's "love and instincts" for the rescue!