

 **starsmilez® IN YOUR PRACTICE**

Here are some great ways you can use StarSmilez® Dental Puppets in your practice.

Use a StarSmilez® Personality to break the ice – Young patients are easily intimidated by doctors, dentists and all healthcare providers. First impressions are important in developing a relationship with a young patient and can influence how they view healthcare providers for the rest of their lives. Children can be apprehensive when meeting strangers, and are often uncomfortable with people they do not know. By using a plush personality, a healthcare provider can focus the child’s attention on a fun, colorful character instead of themselves, giving the child a chance to relax and feel more comfortable in their surroundings. Show the patient how much the StarSmilez® Personality likes being at the dentist, how much the character trusts you and why they should trust you too.

Alleviate fears by demonstrating procedures – After meeting with your patient and introducing them to your StarSmilez® Personality, it’s time to start the checkup. The patient may understand that you are here to help them, but all the shiny, sharp tools and office equipment around the room can still be intimidating. Children fear the unknown, and when they do not understand something they will imagine the worst. Use your StarSmilez® Personality to demonstrate procedures you will perform so the young patient will know exactly what is going on. This will decrease your patient’s anxiety and help get you through procedures efficiently and without incident. Here are some examples of ways to demonstrate dental procedures or equipment:

- **Saliva Ejector** – Use the water squirt feature on your Large StarSmilez® Personality to squeeze a small amount of water into its mouth and demonstrate use of the saliva ejector and explain why you must use it. Doing this will help your patient recognize the noise the suction creates so they aren’t frightened by the sound.
- **Mouth Mirror** – Demonstrate how the mouth mirror can help you see the back of your patient’s teeth by using the mirror on your StarSmilez® Personality. Make the demonstration more fun by putting a slip of colored paper or crumbs on the inside of the teeth and make your patient find it.
- **Explorer** – Open the mouth of your StarSmilez® wide so that your patient can see inside. Use an explorer to demonstrate how the tool is used to check for cavities and explain why it is important.

QUICK TIP: If your client is still nervous, offer for them to hold onto the StarSmilez® Personality while you give your exam. This can give them a “security blanket” and help to ease any additional fears they might have.

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Teach oral cavity prevention – Good overall health and good oral health go hand-in-hand. It is our responsibility to teach good oral hygiene habits to children so that we can give them the opportunity to lead longer, healthier lives. Proper brushing and flossing habits can be some of the most challenging to teach and reinforce. Kids often think that a “good” brushing lasts about five seconds. Our job is to teach them not only that brushing is a serious task that takes some time, but also that it’s a rewarding undertaking that is part of a healthy lifestyle.

Brushing Techniques – Use the Large StarSmilez® and the Oversized Toothbrush to demonstrate the proper way to brush teeth. Point out all the places in their mouths that they need to remember to brush. Have them point to the areas in their own mouths as they follow along to make sure they know where to brush. Let your young patient brush the characters teeth themselves to show you what they have learned, and praise them for brushing correctly.

Flossing Techniques – Flossing is important for oral health, but must be done correctly. When your patient reaches an age where they begin to floss, use a StarSmilez® Personality to show them the correct way. Demonstrate how to hold the floss and then use the flossible locations in the model to teach your patient correct flossing techniques. After teaching the flossing techniques to your patient, let the patient try flossing the StarSmilez® Personality on their own. This way you can make sure they understand the proper way to floss.

CREATE AN OFFICE MASCOT

While nothing can compete with superior knowledge, experience and customer service when it comes to separating a business from its competition; many dentists are creating an "identity" for their practice through mascots. Mascots are a fun and inexpensive way to set your practice apart. A good mascot becomes the symbol of an organization and helps others to immediately identify a company or practice. Often a mascot is built into the practice's advertising campaigns, and even the company logos.

By using a StarSmilez® personality as your mascot, you not only make your practice stand out and get recognized, but your practice will also have a tangible mascot in your office that patients can touch, feel, and interact with. Mascots can be a great way for your community to remember your office. They make community events memorable and patient visits enjoyable. By using a fun dental mascot, patients will view your practice as a positive experience and remember you next time they need dental services.

StarSmilez® offers a variety of coloring pages, brushing charts and dental activities to make promoting your office mascot fun for the patients, especially kids, and easy for you. Simply choose from one of our eleven StarSmilez® plush personalities and print the corresponding dental content for your practice or link to the PDF’s online directly from your office website.