

## Play therapy in pediatric dentistry

Sir,

Play therapy is a modality for approaching children in relation to their level of development. It is a means for building a salutary relationship and establishing rapport with the child in a warm and friendly manner. It can be defined as an interpersonal process wherein the beneficial powers of play (e.g., relationship enhancement, communication, mastery, attachment formation, etc.) are applied, to help the children to resolve their current psychological difficulties and help prevent future ones. Play materials can be used effectively using age appropriate methods, which deliver the curative powers of play.<sup>[1]</sup>

It is arguably one of the most important adjuncts in preparing children for painful and invasive procedures. These can be considered as developmentally appropriate methods which enables the child's coping strategies when faced with strains of a new dental visit. They are effective, enjoyable, inexpensive, and easy to implement.

Bubble breath can be considered as a simple yet highly effective technique for teaching a concrete relaxation method for children. It is considered to be fun which enhances non-threatening interactions between the child and dentist. Children should be asked to blow bigger bubbles, and in an attempt to blow them, they tend to take deep breaths from the stomach and should be instructed to exhale slowly. This modality helps to train the children about controlled breathing, which physiologically enhances children's relaxation. It can be easily employed as a concrete method of relaxation training.<sup>[2]</sup>

It is a simple, inexpensive technique that is exceptionally engaging and non-threatening. Further, it acts as a distraction and can be considered as a child-friendly method to enhance rapport with children.

**Sandeep Chilamakuri<sup>1\*</sup>, Sivakumar Nuvvula<sup>1</sup>,  
Nirmala Sunkara<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Paedodontics and Preventive Dentistry,  
Narayana Dental College and Hospital, Nellore,  
Andhra Pradesh, India

**\*Address for correspondence**

Dr. Sandeep Chilamakuri,  
Department of Paedodontics and Preventive Dentistry,  
Narayana Dental College and Hospital,  
Nellore - 524 003, Andhra Pradesh, India.  
E-mail: sandeep4kids@gmail.com

### REFERENCES

1. Schaefer CE. The Therapeutic Powers of Play. North Wale: Jason Aronson; 1993.
2. Hall TM, Kaduson HG, Schaefer CE. Fifteen effective play therapy techniques. Prof Psychol Res Pr 2002;33:515-22.

#### Access this article online

Quick Response Code:



Website:

[www.jpediatrdent.org](http://www.jpediatrdent.org)

DOI:

10.4103/2321-6646.130381