

<p><u>Consider your surroundings before you start...</u></p> <p>Distractions can affect the outcome of successful communication. Are there any distractions in your working environment that may affect your conversation? Here are a few to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Surgery noise e.g. radio -Layout of surgery -Overcrowded surgery -Time constraints <p>Don't forget information overload can also be distracting – Try to focus on one oral health problem at each appointment.</p>	<p><u>It's not just what you say that matters!</u></p> <p>Improve your two-way conversation, by using the OARS approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open questions Affirmation Reflective listening Summarise <p>Think about how you are sitting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have an open posture -Lean slightly forward -Make eye contact -Relax 	<p><u>Some Do's and Don'ts to help your conversations run more smoothly...</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Refrain from doing all the talking -Collaborate with the parent, allow them to feel they can contribute to the conversation. -Don't make them feel rushed -Show empathy when needed and let them know you are listening -Allow them to identify their own motivations to change behaviour – they may need a bit of guidance, but with your help they will get there! 	<p><u>It's a two-way thing...</u></p>  <p>Although the dental team are keen to give parents of young children lots of information to help them improve their child's oral health - a conversation that only flows in one direction can sometimes have a negative effect.</p> <p>This top down approach can often be thought of as victim blaming, and though the intentions are to help and support the parent, this can potentially create a reversed effect.</p>
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<p><u>Are they ready?</u></p> <p>Behaviour change conversations will be much more effective if the parent is ready and motivated to make a change in the first place.</p> <p>Remember the stages of change to help identify the parent's <i>readiness to change</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Precontemplation -Contemplation -Preparation -Action -Maintenance -Relapse - <i>Relapse happens!</i> <p><i>Reassure the parent that this is normal and help them get back on track.</i></p>	<p><u>Are they likely to make a change?</u></p> <p>Look out for cues that demonstrate that the parent <i>believes</i> there is a problem, <i>believes</i> they need to make a change and <i>believes</i> they can implement change into their lives.</p> <p>Behaviour changes are more successful when a parent believes they can make it happen. If they don't, they may not be ready. Have you considered any barriers in their lives that may be stopping them?</p> <p>Talk through their concerns with them. Remember – don't make them feel rushed! You may need more than one appointment until</p>	<p><u>Make goals the SMART way!</u></p> <p>Help the parent create their own goals that fit into their daily lives. They are more likely to fulfil goals that they have personally implemented into their routine.</p> <p>When agreeing on goals, think about what the overall intention is. What is the parent hoping to achieve?</p> <p>Help them to make their goals SMART:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Timely 	<p><u>Having Behaviour Change Conversations with Parents of young children</u></p> <p>A mini guide to help you have constructive conversations</p> <p>Changing behaviour is not easy! But through effective communication, you can help parents to improve their children's oral health</p>
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