



Practice Brochures: An Easy, Affordable Way to Promote Your Practice

Why is a practice brochure an excellent idea for your pediatric dental practice? Because it offers so many benefits: informs the parents of new patients about your child-friendly approach to dentistry and commitment to quality care; keeps parents of current patients up-to-date on new team members, revised policies and changes in office hours; helps with referrals and is an effective tool for marketing your practice. For these reasons and more, this edition of *PMM News* focuses on how to create an attractive practice brochure in an easy and affordable way.

Content Fundamentals: What to Put in Your Practice Brochure

You can create the copy for your brochure quickly. Much of the content for your practice brochure already exists in current materials: new patient welcome letters, financial policy statements, patient education sheets, etc. Review those materials and pull out the information you can use with the topics below.

Practice Identity. The front cover typically features the name of the practice, name(s) of the pediatric dentist(s) and/or practice logo. It may also feature a great photo of your practice building, you and your dental team, or a really cute child. (I do not suggest a headshot of you on the cover. Put this inside of the brochure instead.)

Contact Information. The practice address, telephone and fax number, and Web site address should appear on the front or back cover of the brochure.

Practice Philosophy or Pediatric Dental Services. This section describes why your practice is an ideal place for infants, children and teens. You might emphasize your preventive and restorative services, caring approach to treatment,

child-oriented environment, benefits of good dental health, the abilities of your staff, your commitment to continuing education, and dedication to serving children with special needs.

Sample:

Welcome to our practice! As a pediatric dental office, we specialize in treating infants, children and teenagers. Our commitment is to help your son or daughter keep an attractive, healthy smile for a lifetime. We pride ourselves on preventing dental problems, protecting children's overall health, and creating a relaxed and dental-friendly experience. This brochure tells you about our caring approach to quality dental care for children.

Our goal is to help make your child's dental care as easy, comfortable and enjoyable as possible. We feature a pleasant environment, concerned staff and state-of-the-art equipment. Our play area with books, toys and educational computer games will help your child enjoy our office.

We encourage you to be a part of our dental health team, working with us to protect the health of your child. We will be counting on you to give your child encouragement in good dental care at home, as well as share with us your questions and concerns.

If your child is anxious about dentistry, medically compromised, or faces developmental challenges, we are an excellent choice for dental care. Our training, experience and dedication will help your child get needed care in the most supportive possible way.

Dentist Background and Credentials. One paragraph about your qualifications, along with a possible photo, will provide ample background for current and prospective patient families. Excellent points for your biography include your dental degree, specialty training, number of years in

practice, faculty positions or university affiliations, offices held in dental societies, and professional or community awards. In addition, if you yourself are a parent, you should certainly include that information as well.

Sample:

Dr. Lydia Greene received her dental degree from Northwestern University and specialty certificate in pediatric dentistry from the University of Illinois (U of I). She has practiced in Evanston for 14 years. She is a member in good standing with the American Dental Association, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, and serves as a part-time faculty member at the U of I dental school. Dr. Greene donates time to the community as a committed member of Mother's Against Drunk Driving and the board of the Evanston YWCA. Dr. Greene and her husband David have two children.

Office Hours and Appointments. This topic can simply list your office hours. Or, you could opt for a more detailed approach.

Sample:

Our office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon. To schedule an appointment, please call Rose at (808) 552-6767. For your convenience, we offer an automated system to confirm your child's dental visit the day before the appointment.

Emergency Care Services. You should note your availability for emergency care.

Sample:

Please call the office if your child is injured or in any discomfort. We will be available to respond to your concerns. If the doctor is not in the office, the answering service will forward your message promptly.

Request for Referrals. This section can be very brief and still encourage referrals. For example, "We welcome referrals" or "We welcome new patients."

Office Location and Parking. You can make prompt arrival for appointments easier by including your office location, parking information, directions and a map.

Sample:

Our office is located on the northwest corner of Central and McDaniel. Parking is on the west side of the building. For wheelchair accessibility, choose the side entrance near Central.

Content Possibilities: Additional Topics for a Larger Brochure

If you plan to create a standard-size (8 1/2" x 11") two-fold brochure, your copy development is complete. However, if you prefer to go with a legal-size (8 1/2" x 14") three-fold brochure or other larger format, the topics below are great possibilities.

Financial Arrangements. You may choose to include a brief, positive description of your financial policies in your brochure. More complete financial information can be provided at the dental appointment.

Sample:

Our practice accepts personal checks, VISA, MasterCard and most forms of dental insurance. If you have a dental benefit plan, please bring your insurance information with you. We appreciate payment at the time of the visit. Our administrative staff will be happy to provide information and answer questions about fees, financial arrangements and insurance coverage.

Description of First Visit. You may choose to provide information about the first visit in a welcome letter. Or, if you decide to include it in the brochure, the following can serve as a guide.

Sample:

We recognize that every child is unique. Therefore, we can choose from a variety of approaches to make the first visit comfortable and fun for your son or daughter. The first visit will last about an hour. The dentist will count (examine) your child's teeth. We may clean your child's teeth and apply fluoride. Pictures (X-rays) may be taken. We will definitely give your child lots of praise to build a positive dental attitude. Parents are welcome to either relax in reception or accompany their child into the treatment area. (This last statement will vary depending on the preference of your practice.)

Design & Printing: Making Your Brochure Attractive Yet Affordable

Step 1: Lay out your copy

Using a standard word processing program, lay out your copy using a landscape orientation and three-column format (or four-column for legal-size paper). The type size should be no smaller than 10-point for the body copy. Titles, headings and practice contact information should be larger or bolder and in the same font. If your copy looks crowded, start editing! Remember to allow room for the photos or diagrams you plan to use, as well as ample white space.

Step 2: Choose your colors

Advances in digital printing technology make full-color brochures affordable – and the new standard by which you are judged. Select a color for body copy (such as black, blue or gray) and a contrasting color for the titles and headings (such as burgundy or green). As a general rule, however, you should choose a color palette that works with the colors you have already established in your dental practice logo.

Step 3: Choose your paper

Your best bet is 40- to 60-pound cover stock. Bright, white-coated paper will make your brochure look slick and professional. An uncoated stock in a warm tone will look friendlier and down-to-earth.

Step 4: Add artwork and/or photos

If you work with a professional designer or desktop publisher, supply your photo images at the largest possible size so they print well. If you do the work yourself, you will need to convert photos to CMYK format and scale them to the exact printing size at 300dpi. Programs like Adobe Photoshop are essential for producing high quality photos.

Step 5: Have someone else proofread the brochure

It is very difficult to catch your own errors. (One of my clients produced a brochure with the word “quality” misspelled. Very embarrassing!) Ask your

proofreader to pay special attention to headings and numerical information.

Step 6: Print the brochure

You have three basic printing options: going to a large commercial printer, local quick-print shop, or printing it yourself. A commercial printer will offer higher quality, more paper choices, and the latest in digital printing technology. If you plan to print at least 1,000 copies, a commercial offset printer may save you money. A quick-print shop will offer decent quality, limited paper choices, and can print to a high-end four-color digital printer. Print your brochure in-house on a high-end color ink-jet printer only if you plan on printing fewer than 100 copies. The cost of ink jet cartridges quickly adds up.

A Great Brochure: Put it to Work for Your Practice

Now that you have produced a brochure to be proud of, display it at the front desk and include it with your welcome letter to new patients. Carry copies in your briefcase and give copies to your staff. In addition, supply multiple copies to your referral sources, send your brochure to fellow health care professionals, and include with the handouts you distribute at speaking-engagements (schools, local societies, etc.).

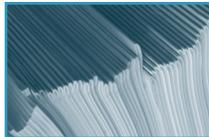


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