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Editorial

Metal clips to safeguard permanent teeth — A new euphemism for ‘space maintainers’

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Child Psychology and Behavior management are two paramount pillars of a successful pediatric dental practice. It is rightly mentioned that ‘body does what mind says’, and what body does is known as behaviour (as behaviour is an observation act which is defined differently by different individuals); therefore, if we need to do behaviour management, we need to study mind first, which is known as psychology. Child psychology is defined as the science that deals with mental power or an interaction between conscious and subconscious element in a child.

And Behaviour management is the means by which the dental health team effectively and efficiently performs dental health treatment and at the same time instil positive dental attitude.¹

The study of child mind and behaviour starts at the time when child first enter the pediatric dental clinic. The management of behaviour in children dental practice is broadly done by two methods, non-pharmacological and pharmacological. The ‘pharmacological’ refers to

drug, pharmacy etc. and when these drugs or pharmacy is involved in controlling behavior of the child, it is known as pharmacological means of behavior management.

And, when no drug or pharmacological means are involved, it is known as non-pharmacological method. The universally accepted method in this non pharmacological classification is communication. And Euphemisms play an imperative role in establishing effective communication and rapport of pedodontist with the child patient.² They are substitute words used in place of scientific words, which are difficult to understand by the child to make him apprehend the procedure in a simple way. It is also known as a second language.¹⁻³

There are many euphemisms quoted in the literature as follows:^{2,3}

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Scientific word	Euphemism
Caries	Sugar bugs
Local Anaesthesia	Sleepy water/ medicine
Impression material	Pudding
Rubber dam	Rain coat
Rubber dam clamp	Tooth button
Rubber dam frame	Coat rack
Sealant	Tooth paint
Study models	Statues
X-ray machine	Camera
Radiograph	Picture
Handpiece	Whistling train
Stainless steel crown	Hat for the tooth
Bur	Brush/ Pencil
Suction/ Evacuator	Vacuum cleaner
Fluoride varnish	Tooth vitamins
Air syringe	Wind gun
Water syringe	Water gun
Endodontic files in children	Tooth Bug Catcher
Space Maintainers	Metal Clips to Safeguard Permanent Teeth ⁴

A new euphemism, 'Metal Clips to Safeguard Permanent Teeth' for 'Conventional Space Maintainers' is now added to the literature of pediatric dentistry by Vipin Ahuja, Dr. Nilima Thosar and Annapurna Ahuja (Registered in the Copyright Office, Government of India with Diary no. 27656/2021-CO/L).

Conflict of Interest

None.

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