Congratulations on Starting Your Braces Journey with Kids Dental and My Braces!

You're on your way to achieving a beautiful, healthy smile with the help of Kids Dental and My Braces. Now that your braces are on, it's crucial to keep your teeth and braces clean to ensure the best results and prevent any issues along the way. Proper oral hygiene will help keep your teeth and gums healthy and make your orthodontic treatment a success.

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR TEETH AND BRACES

1. Brushing Your Teeth

- **Brush for 4 minutes:** Spend 2 minutes on your top teeth and 2 minutes on your bottom teeth. This ensures every tooth and bracket is thoroughly cleaned.
- **Brush 3 times a day:** Brush after breakfast, after lunch (or when you get home from school), and before bed to remove food particles, plaque, and bacteria that build up throughout the day.
- **Use fluoride toothpaste:** Fluoride toothpaste is essential for protecting against decay during orthodontic treatment. It makes teeth more resistant to decay by strengthening enamel and replacing lost minerals. Please follow instructions on the toothpaste - spit after brushing - do not rinse.
- **Use the right toothbrush:** A soft-bristled manual or electric toothbrush works well. Be gentle around your braces and gums to avoid damaging them.
- **Brush around your braces:** Hold the brush at a 45-degree angle and brush in small circles around each bracket, wire, and along the gumline. Make sure you brush under the wires too.
- **Don't forget your gums:** Massage your gums gently with your toothbrush to avoid irritation and keep them healthy.

2. Using a Proxy Brush (Interdental Brush)

- This small, cone-shaped brush is perfect for cleaning between your teeth and braces, reaching areas your regular toothbrush may miss.
- Gently insert it between your teeth (if gaps/ spaces allow) and brackets to remove trapped food and plaque.

3. Flossing with Braces

- Flossing is crucial with braces. Use a floss threader from your Kids Dental and My Braces Oral Care Kit to guide the floss under the wire and between your teeth. Replacements can be purchased from the pharmacy.
- Gently slide the floss between your teeth and along the tooth surface, taking care not to snap it against your gums.
- If flossing is difficult, ask us for tips at your next appointment. Regular flossing prevents tooth decay and gum disease.

4. Mouthwash

- Consider using a fluoride mouthwash after brushing. Fluoride strengthens teeth and helps protect against decay, especially in hard-to-reach areas around your braces.
- Gargle thoroughly for the best results.

5. Survival Kit

When you get your braces at Kids Dental and My Braces, we'll provide a Survival (Oral Care) Kit, which includes:

- Toothbrush and
- Travel Toothbrush
- Floss Spool
- Tooth Mouth Mirror
- Orthodontic Wax
- Proxy/ Interdental Brush
- 2-Minute Hourglass Timer
- Packet of Floss Threaders

If you need more orthodontic wax, simply ask at your next appointment. Other items (e.g. toothbrushes, floss, and mouthwash) can be purchased at a chemist.

6. Check for Food Traps

- After meals, check your braces for trapped food using the mirror from your kit.
- Use your interdental brush or floss to remove trapped food, and rinse with water or mouthwash if needed.

7. Avoid Certain Foods

- Avoid sticky, chewy, or hard foods to protect your braces and keep cleaning easier. Some examples include:
  - Chewing gum, toffee, caramel, hard lollies, popcorn, nuts, ice, tough bread or bagels.
  - Hard foods like apples and carrots should be chopped into smaller pieces to reduce the risk of damaging your braces.
  - Avoid sugary, starchy, and acidic foods and drinks (e.g., soft drinks, sports drinks, fruit juices) that can cause tooth decay and enamel erosion. Stick to 3 meals and 2 snacks per day, and drink plenty of water.

8. Habits to Avoid

- Habits like nail biting, pencil chewing, unnatural tongue thrusting, and picking at your braces can damage your braces, leading to extra appointments and longer treatment times. Make an effort to stop these habits.

9. Swelling or Irritation?

- It's normal to feel irritation in the first few days as your mouth adjusts to braces. Use orthodontic wax to cover any areas where a bracket or wire is irritating your mouth to reduce discomfort.
- If the irritation persists, contact us at Kids Dental and My Braces for further advice.

10. Regular Dental Check-ups

- Continue seeing your dentist every 3-6 months for check-ups and cleanings in addition to your orthodontic appointments at Kids Dental and My Braces. This ensures your teeth and gums stay healthy throughout your treatment.

Tips for Success

- **Be consistent:** Brush, floss, and care for your braces after every meal. Regular care ensures your teeth stay healthy, and your braces stay intact.
- **Take your time:** Use the 2-minute timer from your Oral Care Kit to make sure you're spending enough time cleaning each area of your mouth.
- **Stay positive:** Adjusting to life with braces can take time, but every step brings you closer to a perfect smile.

Should you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us on 07 3831 5677 or email buzz@kidsdental.com.au