



# Free Report:

## “The Parent’s Guide To Braces”

Courtesy Of



**CURTIS ORTHODONTICS**

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## Introduction

Whether your child is a teenager or a youngster, you've probably downloaded this report because you're concerned about your child's well-being. Like any good parent, you have a lot of questions about braces, orthodontics, and helping your child or teen have a great smile and feel confident about themselves.

The purpose of this "Parent's Guide To Braces" is to provide you with as much information as possible so you are better informed and prepared. The following pages contain the most common questions parents ask about orthodontic treatment for their child or teenager and our candid responses.

If you have questions about any of this information or would like to schedule a **free consultation**, please contact us at (480) 838-7410 or [info@curtisorthoaz.com](mailto:info@curtisorthoaz.com).

## Most Common Questions

### **Q: When should my child get braces?**

**A:** Children should get braces when a problem exists that is developmentally abnormal. The American Association of Orthodontists recommends that every child be seen by an orthodontist at the age of 7. The earliest would be at age 7 if permanent teeth come in far from the normal position. A free check-up with a local orthodontist at age 7 can screen for these problems. Most children will be free of these problems and therefore will not need braces at this young age. A child who is free of these developmental problems can plan on getting braces to fix common irregularities between 10-15. After this age problems are typically harder to correct. Early identification of orthodontic problems can save time and money.

### **Q: I've noticed my child/teen doesn't smile a lot. Can crooked teeth cause that?**

**A:** There could be many reasons that you are noticing this in your child. Crooked teeth are a common reason that teens hide their smile. Braces have the ability to improve a person's smile *and* self-confidence.

### **Q: What are the key things to watch out for as my child develops?**

**A:** The following is a list of things parents can look out for in the development of their child's teeth and facial bones:

- **Cavities-** Cavities in baby OR permanent teeth are a real problem (with or without orthodontic developmental problems) Diseased teeth is an infection that can be transmitted from tooth to tooth.
- **Oral habits-** The sucking of fingers, thumbs, clothes, pacifiers and toys all contribute the deformation of the teeth and bones of the face.
- **Breathing problems-** Normal development of the face and teeth rely on proper balance of facial muscles. Position of the tongue and posture of the mouth in general, if out of normal balance, can permanently deform the tender growing face.
- **Family history-** Teeth and facial bones have both environmental and genetic factors that that can influence their development. Families with history of significant tooth development problems should be watched very closely. Missing teeth, extra teeth, large jaws and small jaws are all problems that can have a direct genetic influence.

**Q: When should my child start to see an orthodontist?**

**A:** A visit to the orthodontist is recommended at age 7. Age 7 is the age when serious developmental problems may be caught. Once the child has been found to be free of serious tooth development issues, a FREE periodic check-up (every 6-12 months) help give parents and children peace of mind know that all is growing well. Truly an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

**Q: How long does it usually take to straighten out crooked teeth in a child?**

**A:** The more serious the problem the longer the resolution. Simple gaps between the front teeth can be corrected with braces in as little as 3 months. More serious developmental problems that were missed at a younger age can be more expensive and have longer treatment times.

**Q: If my child has baby-teeth still, is that okay?**

**A:** There is a great variation in the length of time that children keep their baby teeth. Over retained baby teeth often cause the permanent teeth to come in crooked and displaces either to the palate or the cheek.

**Q: My teen is really active. How will braces impact his/her lifestyle?**

**A:** There are two common ways that braces impact lifestyle. Children who undergo treatment with braces and are also active in sports should be sure to wear the appropriate gear to protect themselves (even if the league they are playing in does not require it).. Secondly, some children find the metal of braces unattractive. To address this concern we offer orthodontic treatment without fixed braces. If you are a candidate, Invisalign is a great technology for moving teeth without fixed metal braces. Additionally, ceramic or tooth colored braces are also offered to patients who are concerned with the appearance of metal braces.

**Q: Will kids make fun of my child if she has braces?**

**A:** No in all reality braces are cool! More often than you would think, children and teens are *excited* to get braces.

**Q: Do children and teens get through their treatment period faster than adults? If so, why?**

**A:** As most parents can remember, new born babies are born with soft skulls and bones. As we age bones get stronger and more dense. Teeth move more quickly and more comfortably through soft bones. Additionally, children and teens have less dental and medical issues that complicate their treatment. For these reasons, Children and teens not only have more predictably fast treatment times than adults.

**Q: If I know my child needs braces, is it okay to wait?**

**A:** No one has ever *died* from untreated orthodontic problems! If you know that your child needs braces discuss with an orthodontist WHO YOU TRUST your reasons for delaying treatment. Generally mild to moderate problems of the teeth and face can wait however, some options that are available in a 9 year old are no longer available at 15. Have a frank and honest discussion about all of your reasons for waiting. You are not the first parent who has ever had this concern.

**Q: What's the worst case you've treated for a child or teen?**

**A:** I have seen multiple children over the years with many extra teeth coming into the mouth in rows. These more severe problems are very gratifying to treat because of the wonderful changes that are seen. These children are often shy and embarrassed about the condition of their teeth. There is nothing more satisfying

than the day the braces come off and you can feel the excitement and the pride of the newly created smile and personality!



**Q: How long should I expect my child/teen to be in braces?**

**A:** The length of time varies greatly with the severity of the orthodontic problem. Most orthodontists in the U.S. quote treatment times in 6 month increments (i.e. 6, 12, 18, 24, 24+ Months). There are many factors that determine treatment length. Factors that increase treatment time include:

- Jaw bone discrepancies
- Missing or extra teeth
- Missed appointments
- Poor patient cooperation
- Poor home care of braces/broken braces
- Extended time without the recommended adjustment visit.

**Q: How many appointments are there during the treatment period and how long do they take?**

**A:** Take the total number of months estimated and plan visits every 4-8 weeks. This will give you an idea about the total number of visits to the orthodontist.

Example: Typical treatment time 24 months= 96 weeks of treatment  
One visit every month would be 24 visits. One visit every six weeks would be 16 visits. One visit every two months would be 12 visits. A good orthodontist will schedule appointment intervals relative to the biology of tooth movement NOT relative to when payments are due!

**Q: What are the latest developments with braces? I hear the clear ones are really good...**

**A:** Teeth are moved into proper alignment with metal wires, rubber bands and plastic retainers. New metal and plastic technologies allow for more precise and comfortable treatment. Modern braces and aligners use more gradual gentle forces to move the teeth into their desired location. Additionally, the materials that braces are made of offer increasingly esthetic; less intrusive options.....

New x-ray technologies allow dentists to find developmental problems at younger aged with greater fidelity. Just as the resolution on your television picture has improved, x-rays today are more high definition and even in 3D!

**Q: How much can I expect to pay?**

**A:** Just as treatment time is dependent on severity of the problem, so goes the amount you can expect to pay. One common misconception is that you are buying braces? (What is the cost of braces?) A similar question would be to ask an artist the cost of the paintbrush rather than the masterpiece, a mechanic the cost of the wrench or a carpenter the cost of the hammer. Braces are not a commodity they are the tool used to deliver the service.

The best secret about orthodontists that very few people know is that the fact that information and initial consultations to discover the problems and educate yourself about the solutions are FREE!

**Q: Can I finance braces?**

**A:** Yes, Yes, Yes! The good and bad news about treatment with braces is that it takes time. Most orthodontists allow patients to finance their treatment over the estimated treatment time. In certain situations, treatment time *can* be lengthened in order to make treatment that was otherwise unaffordable now within reach. If you have been given an orthodontic estimate and you have a certain monthly budget, share it with your orthodontist so they can work with you.

## Free Consultation

If you live in or near Chandler, Mesa, Tempe, Scottsdale, or Gilbert and would like a *free consultation* with Curtis Orthodontics for your teen, child, or even yourself, please contact our office to schedule an appointment.

**Phone: 480-838-7410**

**Email: [info@curtishorthoaz.com](mailto:info@curtishorthoaz.com)**

## About Dr. Alan Curtis, D.D.S., M.S.

Dr. Alan Curtis is a native of Tempe, Arizona. Dr. Curtis graduated from Brigham Young University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Zoology. Scoring in the top one percent on the dental admissions exam, he completed his dental degree at the UCLA School of Dentistry. He then completed two additional years of specialty training in orthodontics at Baylor College of Dentistry, Texas A&M University, where he earned a Certificate in Orthodontics and a Master of Science degree in Oral Biology.



Dr. Curtis is an active member of the American Association of Orthodontists, Arizona Orthodontic Study Group, the Pacific Coast Society of Orthodontists, American Dental Association and Arizona Dental Association. Dr. Curtis has become Board Certified by the American Board of Orthodontics. Dr. Curtis is an adjunct faculty member at A. T. Still University Post Graduate Orthodontic Residency program. Dr. Curtis currently serves as a Board Member of the Pacific Coast Society of Orthodontists representing the state of Arizona. Dr. Curtis is fluent in Spanish having served an LDS mission to the Canary Islands, Spain. Dr. Curtis and his wife, Christie, have three children, Alex, Will and Jake. He enjoys spending time with his family, digital photography, playing golf and snowboarding.



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