

SAVING

Face

WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD VISIT THE ORTHODONTIST?

A whopping 75 percent of children will need braces. So, mamas, you may want to lean into this one: Orthodontic care has changed significantly since you were likely a patient. What's best for your children probably hadn't even been researched yet when you were a teenager. Yes, times ... they are a changin'.

Case-in-point is Marietta resident Olivia Goodwin, who started her first orthodontic treatment plan at age 11. Yes, 11. If you think that sounds early, note that the American Association of Orthodontics now recommends that every child have an initial orthodontic screening at age 7. If your radar is blaring that this must be some ploy to line orthodontists' pockets, sweep your skepticism aside for a second. Early care actually saves money – like it did with the Goodwins, whose early intervention avoided jaw surgery for Olivia.

A NARROW ESCAPE

"Olivia has an extremely narrow jaw, and I knew just by looking at her that she needed braces," says mom, Kristy Goodwin. The Marietta family interviewed three orthodontists before landing on Dr. William Kincer. "Dr. Kincer had a plan that would expand Olivia's jaw without extracting any teeth. My brother-in-law is an orthodontist in Michigan, and he felt most comfortable with this approach," Kristy shares. "Also, Dr. Kincer was hands-down Olivia's favorite."

Olivia's treatment involved expanding her mouth, straightening her teeth, and pulling her jaw forward to where it needed to be – all without surgery. Now age 16 and out of braces, Olivia is "beyond thrilled with the results," says Kristy. "If we had waited, she would have gone through so much more pain."

"Unfortunately, many parents assume that they must wait until their child has all of his or her permanent teeth, but if we can get in there at an earlier age, many problems are avoided," says Dr. Kincer, who has been in practice in West Cobb for over 25 years. "Extracting teeth used to be a lot more common; today, we know it's preferable to create a bigger foundation before all permanent teeth erupt."

LUCKY NUMBER SEVEN

So, why age 7, exactly? "By age 7, enough permanent teeth have arrived for us to evaluate the relationship developing between teeth, the jaw and the bite. At the first appointment, we do a panoramic x-ray that helps us determine what, if anything, is awry," says Dr. Kincer, who notes that initial appointments, including x-rays, are complimentary at his practice.

"There's no reason, except your time, not to come in. It's not to make us more money," underscores Dr. Kincer. "It's about saving you and your child grief in the future – financially, emotionally and physically."

SOURCE | Kincer Orthodontics. 44 Old Hamilton Road, Marietta. Complimentary consultation: 770-424-5280 (no referral needed). Kincerortho.com.



Olivia BEFORE



Olivia AFTER

Does your child need an orthodontic exam?

Early detection makes many orthodontic issues easier to correct. If you're seeing any of these in your child, an early exam is wise:

- Early or late loss of teeth
- Difficulty chewing or biting
- Mouth breathing
- Thumb sucking
- Crowded, misplaced or blocked-out teeth
- Jaws that shift or make sounds
- Biting the cheek or roof of the mouth
- Teeth that meet abnormally or don't meet at all
- Facial imbalance
- Jaws that are too far forward or back
- Grinding or clenching of teeth