Clarion Review

Family & Relationships

Complete Guide for Having Children with Perfect Teeth

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Three Stars (out of Five)

If you're a parent proper oral care for your children can seem like a daunting prospect. Fluoride cavities fillings and orthodontics can provoke anxiety. *The Complete Guide for Having Children With Perfect Teeth* by Frances and William Glenn claims to simplify the bewildering challenge of keeping kids' teeth healthy. In fact the book promises that you can improve your kids' oral health while saving money choosing wisely and created the "perfect" smiles of the title. So…does this book deliver on its lofty goals?

Both authors certainly have the strength of science on their side. The Glenns can rightly be called experts in their fields. Frances Glenn who has a doctorate of dental science has been a pediatric dentist for 40 years. Her husband William a medical doctor has practiced otolaryngology for 40 years. Both authors have published numerous scientific articles particularly on the effects of fluoridated water on young children.

The Glenns use their expertise to provide a comprehensive overview for dental health from the womb to 18. So much information has the potential to be overwhelming but the Glenns' organized presentation makes this material manageable. They divide their book into five sections: 1) "Cavity-Free Children" 2) "Trauma to the Mouth and Teeth" 3) Orthodontics" 4) "Some Extra Information" and 5) "A Year by Year Guide for the Parent."

Within each section short chapters break the topics down into bite-sized pieces. For example instead of 50 pages containing all the facts about fluoride this discussion is spread across chapters that address prenatal fluoride dosage evidence for fluoride's benefits fluoride and your obstetrician etc. The book's broad coverage and easily accessible arrangement are its greatest strengths.

The Glenns also write fluidly and lucidly. Without technical language they explain complex concepts in a reassuring manner. In this passage they emphasize the importance of

prenatal fluoride supplements: “Less than 1 percent of the population lives in high fluoride areas. These are mostly west of the Mississippi River. …The Food and Nutrition Board of the National Academy of Sciences designates 3-10 mg of fluoride a day…for pregnant women. Therefore 99 percent of women in this country…need to take 2 fluoride tablets a day during pregnancy in order to try to perfect their children’s teeth.” If a reader is discouraged by the seemingly impossible specter of perfect teeth the Glenns’ book with its calm solution-focused stance will instill confidence.

As an expert and readable primer on juvenile dental health *The Complete Guide for Having Children With Perfect Teeth* puts a wealth of important knowledge at parents’ fingers. But presentation does leave something to be desired. The book is poorly proofread with many misspellings misplaced punctuation marks and odd capitalizations. Some graphics are too blurry to be effective. Overall though this is a useful soundly researched reference/advice book.