

A check-up at the dentist.

Summer time is check-up time for the kids. When school is out, it's convenient to take them to their various appointments with doctors or dentists. Now, believe it or not, dental check-ups are quite exciting for my kids. I know, it sounds crazy. The reason for the excitement is that we have an agreement. If they have no new cavities, then they get a cash prize. The aim is to encourage them to brush their teeth well. They make their plans to buy a certain toy, and I hope that they don't need any fillings. You might think that it's a bit extravagant to pay the kids for not having cavities. Well, when you consider that one filling costs anywhere between one hundred and two hundred dollars, it's worth paying a lot less to a child to keep them brushing. Of course, I help my little ones brush. They always need a bit of extra help cleaning out the hard to reach places of their teeth. But, so far, I'm happy with our system. Only once did one of my children not get his prize, and that was because he would sneak candies into his room and eat them at night, and then fall asleep without brushing his teeth. I only realised this after cleaning his room one day, when I decided to pull out everything that was under his bed. What an experience. Amongst the jumble of toys, books, dirty socks, rocks from the garden, and gross unrecognisable thing, were candy wrappers. "Uh-oh," I thought to myself, "I wonder how long this has been going on..." When we found out that he had a couple of cavities, I had to give him the bad news that he wouldn't get his cash prize. *That* made a lasting impression! So he had two appointments with the dentist. They gave him the gas to relax him, the injections in his mouth, the fillings and the clean-up. Fortunately, the dentist and his assistant are extremely friendly, - not scary at all. They made every stage of his appointments fun and pleasant, as far as is possible at the dentist. And you know little kids, they love all the equipment, from the reclining chair, to 'Mr. Thirsty', the liquid extractor that is put in your mouth. And the place looks so nice. There are flowers everywhere, nice furniture, photos of smiling people, and little toys for kids. They manage to create quite an illusion!

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary: check-up, fillings, extravagant, 'hard to reach' places.

1. It's time for a dental check-up; we have them every six months.
2. He didn't brush his teeth at all. When he went to the dentist, he needed to have twelve fillings!
3. That lady is quite extravagant. She spends a lot of money on jewellery.
4. My new mop helps me to clean the 'hard to reach' places of my kitchen.