



## New Year's Resolutions

Written as this is on January 1, I'm reminded of the old story about a husband and wife conversing shortly after the start of the new year. "So," asks the wife, "what are your resolutions for the new year?" "My first resolution is to not procrastinate as much as I usually do," replies the husband. "Is that all?" asks the wife. "No, there are more," answers the husband, "but I haven't gotten around to making them out yet."

The start of a new year is traditionally when we reflect on our personal and professional lives and give thought to the changes we would like to make. January is a very busy month for health clubs, weight loss clinics, and other self-improvement programs as we resolve to lose those 10 pounds we picked up over the previous year, and to get into better physical and mental shape. We typically resolve to spend more time with family and friends, help others, and get better organized. And procrastinate less.

I offer the following 5 resolutions for your consideration as we begin 2006. Many of you will find that you are already doing well in some of these areas, but others may provide some food for thought.

- 1) Practice the best evidenced-based pediatric dentistry that you can. Much of what we learned in our residency programs has been supplanted by newer, better information. Practice paradigms are constantly shifting, and it's tough to keep abreast of every new technique and device. But I'm referring to the evidence for the procedures we do routinely—pulp therapy, restorative dentistry, prevention, and the like. Check out the reviews at [www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org). Remember, too, that evidence-based practice includes not only new scientific evidence, but also your professional judgment, your patient's preferences and values, and the clinical circumstances at hand. Use this combination of factors to provide the best care you can for your patients. A related thought: maybe this is the year to start (or finish) the board certification process.
- 2) Volunteer at your local dental school. Dental schools have been experiencing a faculty shortage for some time now, and there's no quick fix on the horizon. As educators my age and older begin to leave the workforce, schools are finding it difficult to fill their ranks. Dental education is slow to change, so until new concepts—such as community-based education in practitioners' offices—gain a foothold, many schools are looking for part-time faculty to teach at the pre- and post-doctoral levels. I've found that students and residents alike enjoy their interactions with "real-world" dentists. Part-time faculty also find that their business experience is in high demand. If you don't live near a school of dentistry, consider increasing your support for your alma mater. Talk to the pediatric dentistry program about supporting some worthwhile resident expenses that the department may not currently be able to fully fund, such as travel to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) annual session or continuing education courses.
- 3) Contribute to the AAPD Foundation, AAPD PAC, or other worthy causes that advance the oral health of children. The AAPD Foundation supports and promotes education, research, service, and policy development, all focused on improving the oral health of children. Through its collaboration with industry partners, the Foundation conducts public education and other oral health promotion programs. Another focus is disaster relief, which I wrote about in a previous issue of the journal. The AAPD PAC supports candidates of both major parties at the federal level who have shown a commitment to children's dental health. Both of these organizations will make great use of your donations.
- 4) Get involved with advocacy or offer your talents to the AAPD. If you're not currently involved in the AAPD's advocacy efforts, check out the AAPD Advocacy page of the Academy's members-only section of its Web site. Much work is taking place to ensure that children's oral health is not being neglected by Congress and federal agencies. A lot of this effort occurs behind the scenes, and our members are not always aware of the great strides AAPD has made, especially considering our relatively small size. We have a compelling message to take to legislators and policy makers, and AAPD depends on member advocates to help get that message across. If you are interested in assisting with this effort, or just want to know more about how you can contribute your time and talents to your Academy, speak to your AAPD district Board of Trustees representative for more information.
- 5) Enjoy life outside of dentistry. As wrapped up as we are in the good work that we do for children, we need to take some time for ourselves and our family, to explore outside interests, to enrich our lives, and to "recreate" ourselves. Go to the symphony, take some dance lessons, hike in the woods, enroll in an adult education class in art appreciation, get back to that woodworking project you started but never finished. Indulge in your hobbies, and strengthen your connections to your friends and family—and to yourself.

Oh, yeah—don't forget to back up your data and keep your antivirus and spyware protection updated (Mac users: no letters, please).

Final notes: I'd like to express my gratitude to Rebecca Slayton for the fine work she has done as editor of the Journal of Dentistry for Children for the past 1½ years. Increased responsibilities at her institution have forced her to give up the editorship of that journal. Rebecca, I appreciate the hours you spent on behalf of JDC. On a positive note, Paul Casamassimo, former AAPD editor-in-chief, has agreed to another stint as interim editor for JDC. Thanks,

Paul, and welcome back. Finally, by the time you read this, Pediatric Dentistry and the Journal of Dentistry for Children will have begun accepting manuscripts electronically through the ScholarOne web-based service. Further information can be found in this issue, and at the AAPD Web site. This method of managing submissions will result in better service to our contributors, our reviewers, and the publications staff.



Stephen M. Adair, DDS, MS

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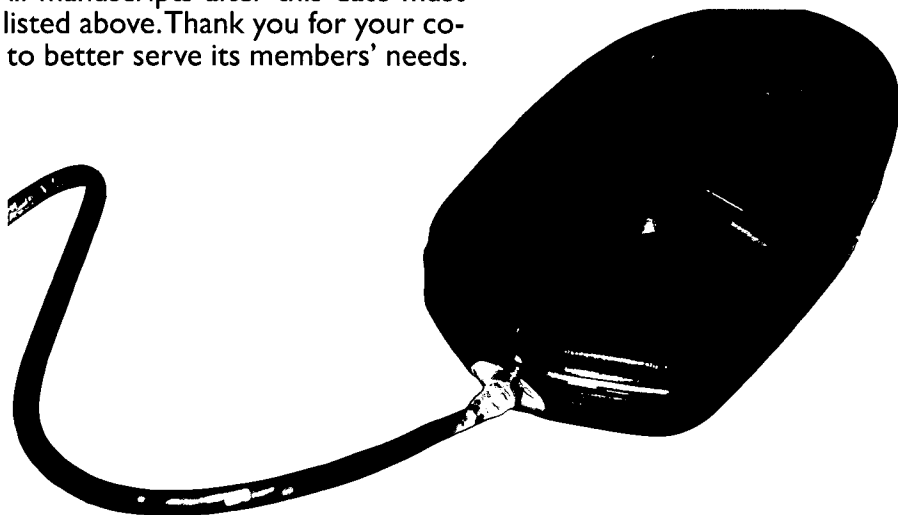
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Pediatric Dentistry: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/pediadent>

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For further information, please contact Communications Coordinator Robert Gillmeister at [rgillmeister@aapd.org](mailto:rgillmeister@aapd.org). Please note: Beginning Feb. 1, 2006, the AAPD will no longer accept manuscripts submitted via mail or e-mail. All manuscripts after this date must be submitted at the Web sites listed above. Thank you for your cooperation as the AAPD works to better serve its members' needs.



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