

Chestnut Dental Marks Milestone as First Massachusetts Practice to Staff a Dual-Trained Pediatric Dentist and Orthodontist

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In 1978, Chestnut Dental became the first practice in Massachusetts to have a single clinician trained in both pediatric dentistry and orthodontics on staff, a distinction that shaped the coordinated specialty model the practice continues to follow today. The milestone traces to Dr. Jack Hertzberg, whose dual training in pediatric dentistry and orthodontics established the practice as an early proponent of combining the two disciplines under one roof.

The practice was founded in 1970 by Dr. Stephen Shusterman in Needham, Massachusetts. Within its first decade, the addition of a dual-trained clinician set it apart from other providers in the state, where pediatric and orthodontic treatment were typically handled by separate practices with limited coordination between them.

That structural choice reflected a broader approach to treatment that has defined the practice for more than

fifty years. As a Bedford MA dentist group with additional locations in Needham and Franklin, the practice built its reputation on continuity of care across a patient's development, with pediatric and orthodontic specialists working from shared records and treatment plans.

The practice has maintained a long-standing relationship with Boston Children's Hospital and the Harvard School of Dental Medicine. Many of its doctors trained at these institutions, and a number continue to teach there, a connection that has informed the practice's clinical standards since its early years.

"Bringing pediatric and orthodontic training together in one clinician in 1978 was a deliberate decision about how the practice would be structured, not a marketing idea," said Anne Hertzberg, D.M.D., a dentist with Chestnut Dental. "It meant a child's care could follow a single plan as they grew, rather than being handed off between offices. That principle is still the foundation of how the practice is organized."

The pediatric dental care history of the practice spans generations of patients, some of whom have returned as adults and enrolled their own children. The model that began with a single dual-trained clinician has grown into a team that includes pediatric dentists, orthodontists, a periodontist, a prosthodontist, and a sleep apnea specialist, all operating within a coordinated structure.

Hertzberg noted that the 1978 distinction is best understood as a starting point rather than an endpoint. "The idea was to reduce the gaps that can appear when specialties operate independently," she said. "Looking back, that early step is what allowed the practice to develop the way it did over the decades that followed."

The practice reflects on nearly six decades of pediatric dental care as context for the milestone, a span of time that began with the 1970 founding in Needham and the specialty distinction that followed eight years later.

Chestnut Dental has operated continuously since 1970, providing dental care across three Massachusetts locations. The practice offers coordinated care spanning pediatric dentistry, orthodontics, and adult dentistry, and maintains its ties to Boston Children's Hospital and the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, where several of its clinicians trained and continue to teach.

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CHESTNUT DENTAL ASSOCIATES, P.C.

Chestnut Dental provides Pediatric, Orthodontic, and Adult Cosmetic Dentistry in a family-friendly setting. Evening, Saturday, and emergency care are available. Board-certified pediatric specialists and Invisalign or traditional braces for all ages.

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