

Addressing Crossbites and Underbites in Children

A guide to understanding and treating dental alignment issues early.

Based on Crossbites And Underbites by Cool Mountain Kids Pediatric Dentistry

Step 1: Identify Potential Alignment Issues

Notice if your child's upper and lower teeth do not line up correctly when biting down. This could indicate a crossbite (upper teeth inside lower teeth) or an underbite (lower front teeth protrude beyond upper front teeth).

- Look for difficulties in chewing or speech.
- Observe for jaw fatigue or discomfort.



Step 2: Understand Common Causes

Recognize potential factors contributing to these issues, including genetics, environmental influences (like mouth breathing), prolonged oral habits (thumb-sucking, pacifier use), or premature loss of baby teeth.

- Consider family dental history.
- Note any persistent oral habits.



Step 3: Recognize the Impact on Development

Be aware that crossbites and underbites can affect more than just appearance. They can lead to chewing difficulties, speech challenges, headaches, neck pain, and potentially impact facial development.

- Children may avoid certain foods.
- Self-confidence can be affected.



Step 4: Prioritize Early Detection

Understand that early identification is crucial because a child's jaw and facial structures are still developing. This creates an optimal window for simpler and more effective treatment.

- Regular dental check-ups are key.
- Pediatric dentists are trained to spot these issues early.



Step 5: Consult a Pediatric Dentist

Schedule an evaluation with a pediatric dental specialist like Cool Mountain Kids. They will perform a comprehensive examination, potentially using digital imaging, to assess the alignment issues.

- Look for practices with integrated orthodontic care.
- Ensure the environment is child-friendly.



Step 6: Explore Interceptive Treatment Options

Discuss treatment approaches tailored for children's developmental stages. This may include appliances like palatal expanders for crossbites or growth modification appliances for underbites.

- Interceptive orthodontics can be less invasive.
- Treatment aims to guide jaw development.



Step 7: Understand Long-Term Benefits

Appreciate that early treatment can prevent future complications such as TMJ disorders, abnormal tooth wear, and chronic jaw pain, while also improving chewing, speech, and oral hygiene.

- Proper alignment aids lifelong oral health.
- Boosts confidence and comfort with dental care.

Resources & Further Reading

Related guides for this process:

■ Childhood Crossbite & Underbite Checklist

<https://storage.googleapis.com/pediatric-dentistry-checklists-20260707-a10c96/pediatric-dentistry/Checklist/childhood-crossbite-underbite-checklist.pdf>

■ Early Treatment for Crossbites & Underbites (Infographic)

<https://storage.googleapis.com/pediatric-dentistry-checklists-20260707-64863c/pediatric-dentistry/Infographic/crossbites-and-underbites-infographic.pdf>

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Early intervention for crossbites and underbites sets the stage for a lifetime of healthy smiles.