STATEMENT ON DO-IT-YOURSELF ORTHODONTICS

Do-It-Yourself (DIY) orthodontic treatment is a potentially harmful trend on social media that may cause irreversible damage to the gums and teeth of anyone attempting to self-treat. YouTube and Google are not viable sources of information for individuals without any professional training when it comes to tooth movement.

DIY orthodontic treatment uses some of the following non-sterile materials:

- rubber bands
- paperclips
- friendship bracelet beads
- superglue
- orthodontic wax
- dental floss
- numerous other non-dental grade materials

Many of these have the potential to cause extensive damage to teeth, bone and soft tissue that could require expensive and extensive restorations and/or gum surgery by a team of dental specialists.

DIY orthodontic treatment is tempting because of the possibility of saving money. With DIY orthodontics, by the time a problem is recognized, damage has likely been done that is not reversible, even with professional help. The best solution to obtain a healthy, beautiful smile is to visit an orthodontist - many will do an initial consultation at no cost - and talk about professional treatment options. Most orthodontists will have flexible options to make treatment affordable.

The CAO realizes that cost for orthodontic care is a concern for many families and that has likely amplified interest in DIY orthodontics. To help families who truly cannot afford treatment, the CAO, and the Canadian Foundation for the Advancement of Orthodontics (CFAO) have created a national organization called Smiles4Canada that helps qualified low-income children receive orthodontic care at minimal expense. CAO members across the country routinely donate their time to treat children in need through this program.

Orthodontists are uniquely qualified specialists who diagnose, prevent and treat dental and facial irregularities to correctly align teeth and jaws. After graduating from dental school and then completing the required two-to-three years of specialized education in an accredited orthodontic residency program, orthodontists are eligible for membership in the Canadian Association of Orthodontists (CAO). For more information or to find a CAO member orthodontist in your area, please visit www.yoursmileourspecialty.ca

The Canadian Association of Orthodontists is the national organization of educationally qualified orthodontic specialists. The Association is dedicated to the advancement of orthodontics and the promotion of quality orthodontic care in Canada. By representing the orthodontic specialty in Canada, it is the official voice of Canadian orthodontic specialists.

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