

Big Smiles at Big Apple Pediatric Dentistry

By Daniel J. Babayan

Dr. Henry Martinez at Big Apple Pediatric Dentistry is changing our youth's experience of having their teeth cleaned, right here in the Valley, and in a big way. Named after the Big Apple of New York City itself, the practice opened six months ago, and has something for kids of all ages.

A native of the East Valley, Dr. Martinez attended ASU for his undergrad, then went on to receive an MBS from UMDNJ (now affiliated within Rutgers University) before ultimately becoming a DMD at the Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health here in Mesa. After finishing his doctorate, Dr. Martinez completed his residency at Bronx Lebanon Hospital in New York City, where the culture and various experiences he took part in would go on to influence both his love for pediatrics as well as for the city itself.

"Coming out of residency, I wanted to open a practice that would attract kids of all ages", says Dr. Martinez, adding, "I wanted to help cultivate a positive attitude about the experience of going to the dentist, through something other than the typical beach or desert theme that's common in pediatric practices. The city theme captures the attention of younger kids as well as teenagers".

Big Apple Pediatric Dentistry is the only dentist office in the Valley with a miniature bathroom made entirely just for kids, including a miniature sink and miniature toilet (don't worry, Mom and Dad - they also have a regular sink and toilet for you, too). Also featuring an infant room as well as TV's streaming popular networks such as Disney+ on the ceilings above each dentist chair, Big Apple is creating a fully immersive experience for children and teens alike, right up through age 21.

When asked about his motivation behind choosing pediatrics, Dr. Martinez replies, "the kids", without hesitation. "It's about them having fun and shaping them to not be afraid to come to the dentist", he states with a gentle confidence.

Dr. Martinez also works extensively with special needs children, a concentration for which he found passion while in residency at Jacobi Medical Center's Rose F. Kennedy Children's Evaluation & Rehabilitation Center in the Bronx. To present day, he performs oral surgery on children with special needs at Phoenix Children's Hospital in addition to his day-to-day interactions at the practice.

A quick tour of the office on the practice's website shows Dr. Martinez' passion and vision. Visitors are quickly drawn to the image of a vibrant, cartoon-style mural that spans the entire wall alongside the dentist chairs, featuring some iconic New York City landmarks. Painted by Tempe-based artist Paige Reesor, the piece delivers a uniquely fresh and creative garnish to a dental practice. Big Apple Pediatric Dentistry is certainly doing big things in the Valley, thanks to the caring and determined vision of our neighbor, Dr. Henry Martinez.



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