



Sticking up for orthodontic treatment

To mark the launch of the British Orthodontic Society's National Orthodontic Week - which starts on 22 February 2011 - a survey was undertaken by the YouGov' polling organisation to discover the public's views about protruding teeth. The results revealed that over **90% of people would want orthodontic treatment for themselves and/or their children if they had significantly protruding front teeth and the same number felt it should be available on the NHS.**

The results of a survey of 2,092 people (over the age of 16)* revealed that:

- Over 90% would want treatment of significantly protruded teeth for themselves and/or their children
- The top four grounds for wanting treatment were for health and psycho-social reasons:
 - Improving self confidence (85%)
 - To prevent teasing and bullying (77%)
 - To prevent damage to the front teeth through trauma (55%)
 - To improve speech (50%)
- Almost half the respondents (46%) felt that there was nothing that would prevent them from having orthodontic treatment for significantly protruded teeth.
- However, the most common reason cited for not having orthodontic treatment was cost (33%)

NHS treatment

- Almost 90% thought that orthodontic treatment for this protrusion problem SHOULD BE available under the NHS.
- However only half the respondents (56%) thought that treatment WAS available under the NHS,
- A quarter (27%) didn't know whether treatment would be available under NHS or not
- Regional variations in perception of availability of NHS treatment were found, from greatest in Wales (68%) to lowest in London (48%)

Correct age

- Only a third (33%) of respondents correctly thought that the optimal age for orthodontic referral from a general dentist is 10-12 years old

"Highly significant"

Commenting on the survey results Dr Nigel Harradine, Chairman of the British Orthodontic Society stated *"These findings are highly significant at a time of perceived threats to NHS healthcare. Patients need to be assured that they need not suffer the health and psycho-social consequences of problems related to the position of their teeth and jaws (and this*

is supported by a large body of research), but many think that orthodontic treatment and many other aspects of dental care are no longer available on the NHS. In fact, many patients referred for treatment before 18 years of age with significant malocclusions fully qualify for treatment in the NHS. Older patients may still qualify for treatment if their condition is sufficiently severe”.

Dr Harradine stressed *“It is very important that a clear and effective message is conveyed on the back of this survey. Namely, that orthodontic treatment is highly valued by the public; it is often available on the NHS on health grounds; and it is very important that people are referred at the correct age. In a time when economies and cuts in overall NHS provision are being sought, the importance of such treatment to patients must be correctly appreciated.”*

Find out more

The British Orthodontic Society is planning a week of informative activities during National Orthodontic Week which runs from 22 February 2011. The launch takes place at the V & A Museum of Childhood where you will have a chance to ask questions of Orthodontic Specialists. For more information about the NOW campaign visit www.nowsmile.org. The British Orthodontic Society website also provides year round advice at www.bos.org.uk.

* The survey in detail



QUESTION	RESPONSE	COMMENTS (*see below for detail)
1. If you or your child had teeth like these would you seek orthodontic brace treatment?		no significant variations for the sub groups
Yes, but only for myself	2%	
Yes, but only for my children	22%	
Yes, for both myself and my children	68%	
No, not for myself nor my children	2%	
Don't know	6%	
2. Which, if any, of the following are reasons why you would want to have orthodontic brace treatment? (Please tick all that apply)		Improve confidence and prevent teasing were consistently in the top 2 reasons across all groups
Reduce the risk of teeth being damaged e.g. during a fall or contact sports	55%	4th
Prevent teasing or bullying about the teeth	77%	2nd
Make it easier to eat all types of food	39%	5th

Make cleaning teeth better	34%	6th
Improve confidence	85%	1st
Make it easier to make friends	28%	7th
Improve speech	59%	3rd
Other reasons	5%	
Not applicable - I would never have orthodontic brace treatment	4%	
3. Which, if any, of the following are reasons why you would not want to have orthodontic brace treatment? (Please tick all that apply)		Age differences - younger age groups expressed greater concerns than older age groups
Braces could be painful	20%	
Don't like the way braces look	15%	
Teasing about wearing braces	17%	
Costs of braces	33%	
Time off school or work to attend appointments	7%	
Other reasons	3%	
Not applicable - there is nothing that would prevent me from having orthodontic brace treatment	46%	
4. What do you think is the best age to have brace treatment for this arrangement of the teeth?		Gender differences as below
6 or under	7%	
7-9 yrs	22%	
10-12 years	33%	women>men chose this age
13 -16 years	22%	
17 - 20	1%	
21 or older	0	
Don't know	15%	Men>women for don't know
5. Do you think orthodontic brace treatment for correction of teeth that look like this SHOULD BE available through the NHS?		No significant variations for groups
Yes, I think it should be	89%	
No, I don't think it should be	5%	
Don't know	6%	
6. Do you think that orthodontic brace treatment for correction of teeth that look like this IS available through the NHS?		Regional variations Gender variations
Yes, I think it is	56%	Regional variations: Wales 68% >Scotland>East>Midlands>south>north>London 48% Gender: women 61% >men 51%
No, I think it not	17%	
Don't know	27%	Men 31% > women 21%

COMMENTS/SUB-GROUPS*

The responses were split into 8 Groups:

- a. male and female,
- b. age groups (done in splits from 16 -24 and then in 10 years to 55+),

- c. social grade (ABC1 and C2DE),
- d. regions (North, Midlands, East, London, South, Wales and Scotland),
- e. working status (full-time, part-time, ALL workers, student, retired, unemployed, not working - other),
- f. marital status (married, co-habiting, separated, widowed, never married, refused),
- g. children in household (0 - 3+, ALL with children, refused), and
- h. Government Region (11 regions).

The survey canvassed 2092 adult individuals (over 16) randomly selected from the 300,000+ YouGov panel. The survey was run online and the questions asked, with reference to a picture. The figures were weighted by YouGov and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

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Issued on behalf of the BOS by Positive Communications. For more information, interviews with people who have undergone orthodontic treatment or the Chairman of the British Orthodontic Society, as well as campaign images, please contact:

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