

The dental hygiene profession education essay



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Elementary school has a huge impact on a person's career path. In elementary a child learns how to read and they take that with them throughout their whole career and lifelong path. The school system in elementary also has a huge impact on a child due to the surroundings and the curriculum given to individuals. It's also important because the teachers are a huge impact to every child and the materials given to them as well. Lastly, I would like to mention individual child's ability to learn that's greatly influenced by Lou Anne Johnson's book and Charles Murrays as well.

Elementary school holds an important factors pertaining to future goals in Dental Hygiene. Reading is an important factor because it helps to improve our academic goal in Dental Hygiene helping us understand and indulge in the curriculum. In the book *The New Public School Parent* by Bob Chase he asserts, " One of the most valuable contributions you can make is to find steady diet of books that are appropriate to your child's reading level and will engage him" (216). This shows that reading dictates a child understanding; therefore it's important to choose the right level of reading for each child to help them understand. Learning how to read is an asset for a child's future because it helps us prepare for Jr high, high school and college.

The school system in elementary school plays an important role because they're the sole providers for a safe, healthy and educational program. The most important thing in elementary is concentration and I think that teachers should help students if they're distracted from learning. In *Barron's Guide to medical and dental schools* by Saul Wischnitzer and Edin Wischnitzer they assert that, " Your position in the classroom can influence your level of

concentration. If you and your attention wandering, try to move to a place that is preferably near the front and, if possible, near the center. Try to avoid sitting in a crowded area” (37). The author basically explains the importance of sitting in the front seat to better understand and comprehend the important facts you can learn at school. Therefore I think it’s an important to learn in elementary and not be distracted at such an early age.

Lastly I’d like to mention the various abilities that have associations with elementary school. In the book *Real Education* by Charles Murray he mentions that, “ We have reason to hope that sometimes in the future, technologies for early intervention that produce dramatic and permanent change will be developed” (50). This shows that even the author agrees in the importance of early development. That’s why it’s very crucial for a child to learn at a very young age. Kids are very intelligent and at such a young stage they have the ability to enhance in anything given the amount of support from teachers. In the book *The Queen of Education* by Louanne Johnson she asserts that, “ Well trained teachers know how to motivate” (21). The author explains the important role that teachers should have to help improve a student’s ability with inspiration.

Susan: Junior High

Most people think that they can wait until they get to college to decide their career goals; however, that’s not the case for everyone. The earlier people make their career goal, the easier they can succeed. Junior high school can be considered as a sort of bridge that links between elementary and high school. Students in junior high school, they need to learn some basic math,

science, geography, history and other subjects. In this way, the advantage of preparatory with different branches of knowledge can let students get to know which subjects they are interested in before high school. Miss J states that “ educating our children is as important as performing brain surgery, seeking justice in the courts, or running a profitable business (20).”

Education is very important to every child.

Some researchers did a survey to 186 students enrolled in “ Perspectives in Dental Hygiene” at a state university in Minnesota found out that the most influential factor on Dental Hygiene was impacted by an introductory career course and they also found that the most influential people for career choice were dental hygienists, dentists, and mothers. In another word, students in junior high can get the most influences from teachers. Miss J states that” Well-trained teachers know how to teach. And when teachers teach, students learn. Attitudes and behavior improve (21).” Children in young age tend to find a role model to learn from and imitate so educator should take a serious look at this and let the kids know what they really want to be when they are young.

Once people get the Dental hygiene baccalaureate degree, they are still moving on and get higher educating and experiences. Personal satisfaction, additional knowledge, increasing career opportunities, status of a degree, and access to graduate education was primary motivators for undertaking additional dental hygiene education. As what Murray says that” the elite is already smart. It needs to be wise (109).” People who can get the dental hygiene baccalaureate degree is already an accomplishment because it requires an intense studying and you need to be one of those top score

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students in order to get in. People are moving on everyday; they do not just stop where they wanted to be, instead, they go even further. Same as Dental hygienists, once they get to one point, they move to the next. People who want to be in this field, they need to know there's no end of knowledge but move on! As Murray states "to prepare an elite to do its duty (113)."

Ray: High School

As in many careers we always face many obstacles or challenges we must overcome when making choices, and deciding to be a dental hygienist isn't any different. Charles Murray on his book Real Education states " Schools have no choice but to leave many children behind" (43). In analyzing what he is saying I gather that our school system is not doing its job in establishing a path for students to take or make an educated decision about their future in any profession. In my opinion this path for example to want to become a dental hygienist could start from as early as Jr. High School but I will keep it relatively close to College as possible so I will talk about High School. Counselors should take the role of a secondary parent to an extent simply because that is their job and career they have chosen and they must know that such responsibilities come with such a demand; especially those of helping students plan a future based on what Murray calls abilities. In high school we take a variety of classes but none of those classes (and at least in my own experience) are connected with what they can potentially lead towards a certain career- for example in " Who wants to be a dental hygienist" Paul R. Palmer stated that " Students interested in a future career in dental hygiene should take high school courses in biology, chemistry, algebra, English, health occupations/medical professions education,

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geometry, psychology, computer skills, physical education, and speech.”

Now, if I was told that taking or focusing on a speech class or biology and math classes could prepare me for a dental hygienists career I would have potentially asked questions like “ what is a dental hygienists?” and “ what do they do?” This would have led me to potentially be interest or at least educated in the requirements of such career and perhaps opened my eyes to a journey in life.

During my research into dental hygiene I was able to gather some problems that we face in not being educated enough about this particular career and the path we should take, for example Angela L. Monson, RDH, PhD. Mentions in her article “ Career Influences and Perceptions of Pre-Dental Hygiene Students” that “ dental hygiene career choices are and have been identified by dental hygiene professionals and someone that is already a dental hygienists.” She goes on to also state that “ the age when most students chose dental hygiene as a profession was 16-20 years of age.” With this being said I focus my attention towards counselors and teachers in high school and the impact they can have on a student in choosing such careers or at least pointing them towards that direction. During these years of high school is when school faculty in this case teachers and counselors should be gathering ideas and information about every particular student and their abilities so they can better understand in what directions they should point each student. In my opinion there should be some sort of recruitment in high school by dental hygienists and dentist to be able to pursue and educate students about what it takes to become a dental hygienist, perhaps letting the students know that they are more likely to be successful in this field if

they take the above classes mentioned above. In an attempt to find a solution to these problems that education faces on introducing a better way to introduce these programs and goal orientated careers to teens in their high school years I can't think but of the book by Lou Anne Johnson called "The Queen of Education" where she states that "No classroom in this country shall have more than 20 students" (15) to me this is a very powerful statement because speaking from personal experience along with the experience Ms. Johnson has had in her teaching career I can relate from both perspectives, in high school I was enrolled in classes which had more than twenty students sometimes up to fifty, throughout the school year and my opinion on this is that educating all of the teens at the same time and about the same thing is impossible, we all have different learning experiences as stated by Charles Murray when he says "ability varies, and it varies a lot." (29) It's my personal opinion that it does vary different in every student and having more than twenty students at one time only lowers that ability and increases the challenge for the teachers in educating us- this connects directly how a career like dental hygiene doesn't get pushed or expressed in the high school level by our teacher or counselors; they are overwhelmed with the overcrowded schools and classrooms. It has been well documented in college that to pursue this career one needs to develop highly in science and math classes along with others classes that are not identified in high school and sometimes too late in college.

In the event and effort to fix these problems in our education system which is currently facing in translating these messages to the students about what classes they should take which will pertain to certain careers I propose also

what Ms. Johnson proposed and that is to invest in finding solution to decrease class sizes in our schools, once that occurs it's my believe that the teacher will be able to have more one on one time with the students while developing or helping figure out what their skills are which will lead them to a path of a counselor which will hopefully down a path of a career in this case being a dental hygienist. I propose that this country needs to make a real effort in improving our education system and if need be they must step in, appoint one teacher or educator which has shown exceptional advancement in their field to bring our education system upside down, shake it and see what trash comes out. We need to send letters to Congress, to our local authority, we need to sign petitions and keep writing them without no stoping regardless how many times they get rejected or ignored; someone will eventually listen and perhaps pay attention enough to change the system. It is also my strong believe that our school systems should come up with a system which would be in place to identify someone strong points and abilities. They should have programs in place that would focus on the many major careers for example, Nursing; Dental Hygienist and Doctors along with many more that would fit this whole page. Once these abilities have been established and exposed to the students leading them down that path would be easy and at the same time a successful journey, this could perhaps eliminate the negativity of failure which comes to be a killer of most dreams in our lives.

Isabelle: College

Before being qualified to apply for the dental hygiene program, a student has to finish about forty semester units' courses as prerequisites. Many of these

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classes are required to be completed within a short period of time. It is normal for a student to spend one to two years to complete the prerequisites prior to apply for the program. Make an appointment with a counselor to talk about all the prerequisite courses that you need to take so you do not need to take unnecessary classes. To finish all the prerequisites on time with good grades makes it even harder for the students to apply for the program that they interested in. According to Miss Scoles, students need to have strong science background in order to apply and be successful in dental hygiene program. As a student who majors in dental hygiene, I have experienced the challenges to do well in all the classes but having different obstacles to get good grades in the prerequisites, especially in science classes. Since I am in the program already, I understand that having adequate science knowledge is very important for students to do well in the dental hygiene classes.

Murray states: " Ability varies and it varies a lot" (29). It is true that students' abilities are different in different classes. Some of them may feel science classes are easy but some of them may struggle a lot to get a passing grade. Unfortunately, passing grades do not work well for applicators. Educators should find some ways to help these students because they study so hard and want to get the best grade in order to apply and qualify for dental hygiene. How to solve this problem? Having more knowledgeable tutors can be one solution. Most of the tutors work at school for only one semester then they will quite. The main reason that they do not want to work as tutors at school is because of the salary. School only pays the minimum wage which is too low when comparing to the tutors who work outside of school. Schools usually get the funding for tutoring programs from the government but they always say they are short of budget. If schools can solve this problem,

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improve the tutoring program, and use more funding on it, students will have a better chance to succeed in the future.

The dental hygiene program at Chabot College begins once a year in the fall semester and accepts eighteen students into each class. Because of there are many applications will be received exceed this number, school places students on a point based system. The points are derived from overall college grade point average, such as grades in Anatomy, Physiology, Microbiology, English, Psychology, and Speech. If students get high grades on these courses, they have a better chance to get more points and to be selected for the program. It is not necessary to be a resident of the college's district in order to be placed into the program, but there are five additional points are awarded to students who are district residents. The program director recommends students to take all or most of the general education requirements for the Associate in Arts degree prior to starting the Dental Hygiene program. Since the two year dental hygiene program is an intensive course of study which involving lectures, clinical work, and laboratories, there is very little time for additional courses to be taken outside of the program. Hisako, a registered dental hygienist, suggests that students who want to apply for dental hygiene program need to find out what do hygienists do, know what their job is. Dental hygienists are primary oral health care providers, which mean they work in patient's mouth. They provide oral health care education to patients who work in private dental offices, they can do research, and public health. Some of the applicators only know that dental hygiene is a very good career and they apply because it can make a lot of money. It is better to do an observation in a dental office

to see the actual work the hygienist does. It is very important to make sure you like the work they do and you want to do this kind of job for future. Some students got into the program then dropped out after one or two semesters because they found out it was not the right career for them which wasted time and money. Refers to money, it is a big issue to some applicators. Anything related to medical are expensive, dental hygiene program is not a exception. If you are selected, you will receive a letter from the program. The letter will inform you that you are placed into the program, also; you need to send in a \$6, 000 check for instruments in order to secure your spot. If you have no money to pay, they have the right to kick you out of the program. So applicators not only need to prepare the prerequisites, also need to prepare money as well.

After students placed into the dental hygiene program, be prepared to study hard. The program includes courses such as Clinical Dental Hygiene, Dental Radiology, general and Oral Pathology, Community Dental Health, Pharmacology, and Periodontic. These are a few of the courses in the program. There are exams, quizzes, competencies, and practical every single week; also, huge amount of homework too. The average of sleep hour is about five hours a day. From the second semester of the program, students are required to see real patients for cleaning and taking x-rays. There are certain requirements for the patients and students need to find their own patients. According to Murray, " interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, and logical-mathematical are the invaluable all-purpose tools" (23). They can be reflected in the dental hygiene program and these abilities are extremely important. Students do not need to be very good at every ability, just a little

bit of each then it will be beneficial. In order to be successful in the program, you need to have friends which means you have to have interaction with your classmates. You can sense others' emotions, needs, and work with others well. Also, you need to express yourself well enough to let others know you better, understand your thoughts and know yourself. The logical-mathematical is important to help you in basic numbering stuff, such as when you give local anesthesia to your patients you need to calculate how much cartridge you need based on the patient's body weight. Students will be paired up to do exercises before treating real patients. If you do not know how to interact with others and express yourself, it will be very difficult for yourself and others. Even for real patients, you need to have these abilities in order to deliver the best service.

" No classroom in this country shall have more than twenty students," Miss Johnson states in her book (15). Small classes do have the advantages than bigger classes. Dental hygiene program only accept twenty students the most each year. In small classes like this, instructors can help every single student in the class. They have more time to correct student's homework and do one on one teaching; for instance, dental hygienist needs to know different instrumentation technique, instructor can do four demos with five students each group then watch them demo back base on a one on one teaching. Students can learn better this way. During the program, students are required to do some community service work. They can go to schools to teach children how to maintain a good oral health or go to some clinics for volunteer. Since there are only twenty students, it is easier to assign the work. Students in dental hygiene are kind of special. They have their own

break room separated from the school's cafeteria. They have microwave and refrigerator so they do not need to wait in the long line in cafeteria to microwave their food.

Educational system has problems, dental hygiene program has problem existing as well. The most unfair thing for students is instructors playing favorites. It is understandable that everybody has their right to like or dislike somebody else, but not as teachers at school. When they play favorites, they become unprofessional and not fair to other students. There are contradictions between some of the instructors and they do things involve students, that makes some of the students' life miserable. Students can not do anything about that, only thing they can do it to bear it. Some of the graduates already warned us before they leave.

To have friends in dental hygiene program is another important factor to be success. Since students need to find clinic patients by themselves, it is better to look for patients together and share all the patients that they found. During clinic days, students need to be in clinic early to get ready for patients. It includes 15 minutes sterilization process and some paper works. If you were running late for some reason, you can just call your friends to help you set up the operatory so you can see patient on time. The most important thing is that you can complain to them, talk to them, and cry in front of them, they understand what is happening to you so they know how to comfort you. Nobody can understand your stress except your friends in the same programs like you, even your family members will not be able to understand your stress.

Most of the courses in dental hygiene program related to science, so have the strong basic science background can make students life easier in the program. After students graduate from the program, they will get a AA degree which does not reasonable to a lot of people. Since their courses are all based on science background, why can't they get the AS degree? A lot of graduates went to continue education to get their bachelor degree after they graduate. It does not necessary to be bachelor in dental hygiene, can be any major. Dental hygienists who have their bachelor degrees have a wider career selection. They do not need to stunk in the private dental office only, they can do research or teaching as well.

Dental hygienists play an important part in a dentist's office. Dental hygienists clean teeth in order to remove plaque, tartar, or stains from teeth. They assist the dentist to check patients' teeth and gums, and note down any presence of diseases or abnormalities. Working with an assortment of dental instruments, then they clean, polish, and floss a patient's teeth. Depending on what is necessary for the patients, they may take dental pictures and develop X-rays or apply fluoride treatments. Dental Hygienist confirms a patient's medical history and takes vital signs before starting treatment. Hygienists manage with a wide selection of patients who impact the oral health care visits. A hygienist is ready to lend a hand with suggestions on a patient's dental care during an office visit. For example, suggesting to a patient to switch to a softer brush or better flossing technique. Dental hygienists work in germ-free and brightly lit offices. They wear safety glasses, surgical masks, and gloves to shield themselves and patients from infectious diseases. Neck and shoulder pain often occur from

sitting in the same position while they are treating patients. The unique feature of this job is the flexible scheduling. Many hygienists work only part-time which allows them to work for several different dentists. Dental hygienists are rank among the fastest growing occupations.

In conclusion we have discussed and shown you many ways that a dental hygiene can be a challenging one, in way of education, competition and teaching strategies. We have also presented strong solutions which we believe can improve the way this profession is presented to present and future students which desire to pursue it and make it their career, we hope that you have a better understanding what it takes to become and stay a successful dental hygienist.