

MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD

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Program Numbers: #1626-#1630
Week-Long Theme: "Mouths and Feelings"
Premiere Dates: November 19-23, 1990

MISTER ROGERS TO EXAMINE DENTIST IN WEEK OF "MOUTHS AND FEELINGS"

All-New Week of Programs
Set for Thanksgiving Week Premiere

Pittsburgh, PA -- Who likes going to the dentist? For many older people it's an ordeal, and the origins of our anxieties may go way back to early childhood. Because of increased understanding of this, as well as more and more helpful preparations for children and their dental visits, fewer and fewer children are frightened by dental work. Nevertheless, there are those who still have fears when they first encounter the professionals and paraphernalia of a dentist's office. In an attempt to allay some of these possible childhood concerns, Fred Rogers goes to the Neighborhood dentist himself. The all-new week of programs, "Mister Rogers Talks About Mouths and Feelings," premieres on most PBS stations Thanksgiving week, November 19-23, 1990. (Editors Check with your local PBS station for the exact times programs #1626-#1630 air.)

"Knowing what to expect is such an important part of getting ready to do something new," says Rogers, and in helping children prepare for the dentist, Rogers brushes his own teeth and goes through a dental check-up. He also visits with a young boy undergoing a dental exam and, with the help



of dental professionals, introduces viewers to the reception area, a dental chair, X-ray equipment, fluoride treatments, and the instruments, gloves and masks dental professionals wear.

Going to the dentist, though, is only part of what turns out to be a week's worth of helpful talk about many of children's feelings about their mouths. As with several of Rogers' programs, adult viewers may wonder what all the fuss is about.

Explains Rogers: "When it comes to our development as human beings, our mouths are one of our most important body parts. Just think: When we're babies, our mouths bring us nourishment, comfort, information, and the ability to communicate and express affection. Our mouths also bring us one of our first experiences of persistent pain -- the pain of teething -- and one of our earliest times of lasting anxiety as we try to learn to control the urge to bite. We grow to have strong feelings about our mouths when we're little, and those feelings stay with us -- particularly when someone wants to intrude on that space with an unfamiliar and sometimes strange sounding equipment."

Other highlights of the week include:

- *honest talk about biting, and Neighborhood of Make-Believe episodes in which Lady Aberlin is transformed into a sometimes scary tiger with big teeth -- and back again to her caring self;

- *a look at the giant "teeth" on an earthmover;

*making mouths on gingerbread cookies at Brockett's Bakery;

*new factory films on how people make toothpaste and toothbrushes;

*infectious merriment with a most magical mechanical laughing box;

*and a quiet time with accomplished storyteller, Margaret Kimmel.

"Parents may find their children have extra special reactions to this week about mouths and feelings," cautions Rogers.

"In presenting the programs, we hope to continue helping caregivers find their own ways to talk and play about some of the important -- and often overlooked -- things in the lives of the children they care for."

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