

Against the Odds 2011

Against the Odds was conceived by the British Orthodontic Society (BOS), which represents the dental specialty of orthodontics; the science and art of correcting irregularities of the teeth, bite and jaws. The entries to the competition were judged by Professor Tim Newton, Professor of Psychology as Applied to Dentistry and Head of Oral Health Services Research at the King's College London Dental Institute, Sara Wallis, feature writer of the Daily Mirror, and the Chief Executive of the BOS and specialist orthodontist Les Joffe.

Girl with multiple health problems finds something to smile about

What toll would it take on you if even a simple procedure like having your ears pierced could not be contemplated for fear of an infection? Imagine always being the 'different' one in your school class because of a disfiguring scar caused by emergency open-heart surgery to remedy a heart defect discovered when you were only 5 days old? These are just two of the struggles which have dominated Katie Irvine's life; however today she was awarded first prize in Against the Odds, a national orthodontic competition which has given her something to smile about.

At the age of three and constantly on antibiotics, Katie's ear infections led to double mastoid surgery and an enduring hearing defect. She was then fitted with a prominent and visible hearing device at the age of eleven which scarred her confidence as much as her appearance. As if this was not enough she also suffered from kidney reflux, so sleepovers at friends' houses were not an option for Katie, for fear of being discovered as a 'bed wetter' and any medical procedure she undergoes needs to be carefully preceded by antibiotics, as an infection could affect her heart.

On top of all of this, Katie's prominent front teeth and upper jaw was yet another issue which affected her childhood. Comments about her teeth, as well as her chest scar and the 'scrabble tile' behind her ear led to her becoming very withdrawn. As time went on she lost what her mother described as her 'endearing' smile, upset by the many ailments she had to endure in her young life, and leading her to question "why me?".

During these times Katie would constantly fret about her overcrowded teeth, refusing to smile, so as soon as she was old enough for treatment, at eleven, Katie's dentist referred her to her local orthodontic practice in Musselburgh in Scotland. As her mouth was overcrowded, it was identified that she would need four teeth extracted before any braces could be fitted, however as a result of her medical history Katie's orthodontist Dr Mustafa was able to spare her the trauma of removing teeth and undergoing a general anaesthetic and antibiotics. Instead he embarked on a sixteen month course of orthodontic treatment specifically suited to Katie's medical as well as her oral needs. This treatment completed in March 2011.

During her treatment Katie's confidence improved to such an extent and she placed so much trust in her orthodontist Dr Mustafa, she felt able to attend appointments on her own. This journey to a new smile and increased confidence has won her first prize Against the Odds which was created to illustrate the power of orthodontic treatment to change lives.

Katie still has to live with her hearing device and the scar from her heart operation but as she says *"I can hide them, but I couldn't hide my teeth!"*

Dr Les Joffe, Chief Executive of the British Orthodontic Society, one of the judges of the competition praised Katie, commenting: *"Katie's case clearly illustrates how the advances, techniques and range of orthodontic treatments available today can have real life changing benefits".* Whilst another of the judges Sara Wallis noted *"Katie has shown pure bravery in battling through the traumas of her young life - we were inspired by her story and felt others would be too. No problems are insurmountable and so it has proved in Katie's case".*

Katie was treated by Dr Mustafa Abdel Ellah Mustafa at Sayegh & Partners Orthodontics in Musselburgh, Scotland. She has been awarded £750 worth of travel vouchers, courtesy of support from SDS Ormco while Dr Mustafa will be awarded a trophy presented at the British Orthodontic Society's annual conference in Harrogate in September 2011.



A smile better than ever!

Kristine Knight now has a smile which is far better than she ever thought possible thanks to an accident of fate. Her story has won her a number of admirers and now a prize in the Against the Odds competition. In 2008 Kristine suffered from a traumatic accident which fractured her skull and knocked out her front teeth. As she explains *"After an operation to realign my jaw, my mouth was wired causing my other teeth to move. I was also suffering from traumatic stress and was very nervous".*

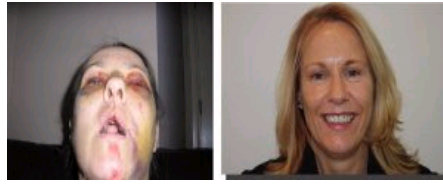
Confronting the damaging impact of her accident and her psychological well being Kristine, still deeply anxious and suffering from stress, took decisive action and embarked on a course of treatment with Orthodontist Dr John Costello. However the road to Kristine's restored mouth has not been easy. On the first day of her orthodontic appointment, Dr Costello and his team were sympathetic to Kristine's plight, allowing her to go to a separate area for some privacy, calming her nerves before her consultation began. Dr Costello took her through her treatment step-by-step as a crucial aspect of her overall treatment was the coordinated placement of a temporary bridge (artificial teeth to replace her missing teeth) before she could have a brace fitted.

For 15 months Kristine wore her brace diligently, encouraged by the changes she could see developing in her mouth. During this time, Dr Costello liaised with a dental specialist who was going to fit her with dental implants to permanently replace missing teeth at the completion of her orthodontic treatment, and who was jointly responsible for the restorative aspects (tooth replacement and fillings) of her treatment. On the day Kristine's braces were removed she had no less than three separate appointments with her implantologist and Dr Costello was by her side and accompanied her to surgery as she was taken to have her implants fitted.

As Kristine commented at the conclusion of her treatment *"I now have a smile better than before the accident, in fact better than in my whole life so something great has come out of what was a traumatic incident for me"*

Psychologist Professor Tim Newton, one of the judges of the competition, commented that Kristine should be commended on her bravery in confronting the decision to have orthodontic treatment: *"Kristine's treatment and greatly improved smile exemplifies the benefits of orthodontic intervention not only on one's physical health but on one's psychological well being."*

Kristine's specialist orthodontist was Dr John Costello who practises at Total Orthodontics in Tunbridge Wells. Kristine has won a Philips Sonicare toothbrush whilst her orthodontist will be awarded a certificate at the British Orthodontic Society's annual conference in Harrogate.



S'milestones'

At the age of 50 Jayne Hawkin's orthodontic experience has in her own words *'without a doubt changed my life'* and won her a prize in the Against the Odds competition. Because she was a particularly stubborn teenager Jayne chose to rebel after embarking on a course of orthodontic treatment aged 14. She had surgery on her mouth and was fitted with a removable orthodontic appliance, but she never placed it in her mouth. That was possibly the worst decision she ever made as Jayne explains now *'How many times in the intervening years have I bitterly regretted that decision, the embarrassment of my crooked and uneven teeth preventing me over the years from having photographs taken in situations and occasions that can never be repeated... I had a smile that nobody, but nobody would show if they could help it.'*

In 2009 Jayne took the steps to remedy her past actions and improve her teeth, when she realised that she was fast approaching two BIG milestones in her life. First, that in 2010 she would turn 50 and second that she and her husband were due to celebrate their Silver Wedding Anniversary - the celebration of both to be marked by taking a Caribbean Cruise. When Jayne read that orthodontist Dr Jeremy Peak was opening a new practice opening in Truro, particularly offering adult treatment she could not believe her eyes. Could this be the chance to finally achieve the teeth she so yearned for and could she at least reverse the teenage decision which had caused her such angst in the ensuing years?

Straight teeth had become something of an obsession for Jayne, and the thought even occurred to her that the older she became the nearer she was to getting false teeth which would actually give her the smile she desired! She made an appointment on the opening day of the new practice and relates that she was *"Both excited at the possibility of straight teeth but also fearful that I might not be suitable due to my age, as I bet not many 48 year olds have orthodontic treatment"*. Her fear that she was too old proved groundless as her Orthodontist Dr Peak assured her that she could have a smile with her own teeth of which to be proud as he would be able to realign her teeth and create the smile she had always wanted. Jayne happily admits that the twenty-two months of treatment were an actual joy *"I never thought of it as treatment; but as one step nearer to my goal."*

Psychologist Professor Tim Newton, one of the judges of the competition, commented that Jayne should be commended on taking the decision she took to have orthodontic treatment: *"Her case shows that you are never too old to have braces and undertake orthodontic treatment. Her greatly improved smile exemplifies the benefits of orthodontic intervention at whatever age."*

Jayne's specialist orthodontist was Dr Jeremy Peak, who practises at the River Practice establishment he set up in Truro and The Crescent Specialist Dental Centre in Plymouth. Jayne won a Philips Sonicare sonic toothbrush to ensure her teeth look as good as the day her braces were removed. Her orthodontist will be awarded a certificate at the British Orthodontic Society's annual conference in Harrogate in September 2011.



Tell us your story or find out more

If you have an equally moving story to tell, [click here to enter next year's Against the Odds](#) competition. Entry forms will also be available from your orthodontist from January 2012.

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