

Take The Kids Fishing...

I have been blessed in my life to spend a good deal of time on the Texas coast. Boats, beaches, crab nets, and fishing were all a part of my childhood from the time I can remember. My hope is that I will pass those good times on to my own kids as they grow up.

Seeing the sun rise or set into the deep blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico is comparable to the feeling one gets when the sun, the Hill country, and the weather all work in unison to paint the sky pink and blue. For me, pulling lines for offshore game fish brings about the same giddy anticipation as opening morning of deer season. The feeder goes off and there's no telling what might show up. The zing of a strike makes your heart flutter just like buck fever.

A few weeks back, my dad and I worked up a plan to take the kids (two and four years old, now) for their first trip offshore into the Gulf of Mexico. Anyone who has been around boats and/or kids will tell you that we men needed reinforcements for this type of excursion. Along those lines, we also equipped ourselves with a mom and grand mom to ensure safety and common sense.

Luckily, the seas were calm and we got the boat rigged and ready at least an hour before lunch. As of yet, the kids do not make the four a.m. or earlier wakeup that accompanies most offshore excursions. Noon fishing would have to do. After securing life jackets and loading what seemed like snacks for twelve, we shoved off. As we turned out of the harbor and into the Port Aransas Jetties, I held my breath hoping that the bumpy ride out would not ruin the trip. I silently prayed for a good experience for all.

My prayer was answered when we hit the first wave and Parker exclaimed, "Oh yeah, baby!" Peyton shouted along, in what seemed like her own version of the same. The dads were happy.

We shot out six miles into the Gulf and bumped lines next to an anchored oil tanker. Dad and D-Pa worked hard to bring up some fish, but our time and the kid's attention span was limited. Somewhere along the way the snacks and juice boxes ran short and the moms started feeling queasy from the roll of the waves. After less than an hour of fishing, we headed back into port.

As we slowed down and entered the harbor, I asked Parker if he'd had fun. Through a mouthful of Cheetos, he confirmed that he did. I then proceeded to apologize for the lack of fish caught. As usual my son reminded me what life is really about.

"That's okay Dad, sometimes we have to practice."

Until next week, keep smiling.

-Comments can be sent to Drs. Parrish through www.ParrishDental.com.