

C A S E S T U D Y



Two Dental Specialists, One Unique Space

After completing a fellow University of Michigan School of Dentistry grad's new practice in Grand Blanc, Michigan, FUNchitecture was invited by Dr. Lizzie Malette-Barber to design a pediatric dental and orthodontic office with her colleague in Ann Arbor. From the start, the vision was clear: create a space that was durable, sustainable, and – most importantly – FUN! The design needed to remove the fear from dental visits for young patients while offering a fresh, modern home for two thriving practices.

The office was planned around its core functions with 10 operatories for hygiene and procedures and five orthodontic

chairs in an open bay layout. Private exam rooms for each discipline, a dedicated sedation room for surgical procedures, and state-of-the-art X-ray and sterilization facilities ensure the highest standard of care. A centrally located office for all practitioners and a hub for check-in and check-out connect seamlessly with consultation rooms, providing parents with a private, comfortable setting for discussing treatment plans, billing, or any other concerns.

Every corner of the office radiates energy and excitement, thanks to hidden cove LED lighting that shifts colors to match the

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practice's bold palette of lime, blue, hot pink, and yellow – or even to celebrate holidays and special events. Each light fixture was individually selected for coordination with the color scheme of the office and to complement the surrounding décor. Ceiling mobiles and a playful tooth-brushing station add to the joyful atmosphere. Patients and families are greeted by interactive wall art, acoustic leaf canopies made from recycled PET fabric, and vibrant décor that creates a space that is both stimulating and calming.

Sustainability was woven into every design choice. The project features an all-electric approach to energy provision, supported by rooftop solar arrays with no natural gas run to the site, in alignment with Ann Arbor's clean energy goals. Flooring, carpet, and acoustic treatments feature upcycled and recycled content, while simple yet striking light fixtures made of wood and string provide beautiful, sustainable accents.

The result is a dental and orthodontic office that blends cutting-edge technology with whimsy, warmth, and environmental responsibility – making every visit a reason to smile.

