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A Harry Potter Party

By Claudia Anrig, DC

Family practices often look for new ideas for children's themes for their offices. One month that rarely receives attention in most offices is November.

On November 16th, a long-awaited movie premieres: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. The *Harry Potter* books (there are four published, with several on the way) have remained on the bestseller's list over the last couple of years. As a result, children, specifically boys, have returned to reading with a vengeance. This phenomenon is what the J. R. Tolkin books or the Star Wars trilogy was for an earlier generation.

For those who have not read any of the *Harry Potter* series, each book introduces you to characters (good vs. evil) and the adventures and decisions of young people, based on the core values of right and wrong. For children and adults, the books are difficult to put down once they pick them up.

So, why not a Harry Potter Party? The fanfare of the film is beginning to take hold. Movie trailers and merchandizing have already begun. For under \$200, your office could be the talk of the town. And depending on the size of your community, you could receive media coverage.

Where do you start? Begin with a staff meeting. Time will be of the essence, as you'll have only a few weeks to prepare once you've read this article. With your staff, decide if you are going to have a Harry Potter month, week, or a one-day party. Your office can become a "Hogwarts school."

Get your checklist ready. With a few dollars, and a few stops at various stores, you're going to remodel the office. You will want to stop off at a party supply store to purchase Harry Potter glasses for your staff, or maybe for the kids as well, if you are having a party or will be taking pictures. If you decided to have a party, pick up the plates, napkins and items as if for a birthday party.

Pick up wall posters for the movie (party suppliers, record stores or poster shops). Buy enough to decorate the room that will reflect the theme. Re-style the reception room, but don't rule out your hallways, staff area or adjusting rooms.

The posters could later become gifts for a raffle you may have. Purchase the books and audiobooks (books on tape) as raffle items. (By the way, if you have not listened to audiobooks, you are in for a treat!) Smaller gift items include coloring books, mugs, cups, and stuffed animals already stocked in most stores.

Purchase movie tickets. If you know anyone in your local media circle or at the movie theater, see if you can snag a few sneak-preview tickets for the grand prize.

Take the *Harry Potter* coloring books and copy some great images, and have the younger children enter the contest by coloring these pictures. Older children can write a short essay or answer a book trivia quiz.

Bring a storyteller for your reception room, or for your party, to read a few chapters. Have the staff and doctor assume the adult characters of the book. Costume stores can easily outfit you and your staff. Have a Harry Potter look-alike contest, and have the girls compete with a Hermione (a female character in the book) look-alike.

Your party food could also be inspired by the book, with dishes such as "Bertie Bott's every flavor beans"; "Drooble's blowing gum"; "chocolate frogs"; "pumpkin pasties"; "cauldron cakes"; and "licorice wands."

Other decoration ideas include giving each adjusting room the name of a house at Hogwarts: Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Slytherin. From construction paper, create house banners for display. To introduce a chiropractic theme, have your practice be the Gryffindor house (where all the main characters reside), and have one of your adjusting rooms play the role of the Slytherin house (where "bad guys," the "evil wizards" in the book properly have vertebral subluxation). Essays or quizzes can combine chiropractic and the book.

At the party, take photos and display them for the practice to enjoy. Your office may be a unique example of Harry Potter fever during this time, so don't hesitate to invite your mayor, school superintendent and other officials to join in the activities. Contact your local newspaper and television station to cover the special events.

This could mean the difference in bringing a largely overlooked patient base - children (and their parents) - into your practice, while allaying any apprehensions they may have toward chiropractic care.

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