



# Dr. Grant Zakhar

Savannah Smiles Youth Dentistry & Braces, Savannah, GA

## Combining Interests

Grant Zakhar knew from a young age that a science-related career was in his future. As a kid, he collected rocks and bugs, and his parents enrolled him in science camps. As he got older, he realized he wanted to pursue a medical career.

“My parents are from the autobody shop business, so I worked on cars a lot growing up. I also liked science,” said Zakhar. “You get to put the two together for orthodontics – biomechanics and biology. I really liked it and honestly never went back.”

Headed off to college, he set his sights on becoming an orthodontist – and all of the work required to get there – undergraduate, dental school, and then orthodontics residency. Zakhar was able to complete all three at Indiana University.

## Mission Driven Dentistry

As he looked for where he wanted to launch his career, he decided to aim his search with a warmer climate in mind. When he found a mission-minded organization with an

opening in Savannah, Georgia, Zakhar had found his place at Savannah Smiles Youth Dentistry & Braces, a Benevis-managed practice with three offices in the state. “I liked the opportunity to give and their mission to serve the underserved. It’s been great so far,” Zakhar said.

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Previously, the Savannah office did not offer orthodontic services. Now that Zakhar is part of the team, the practice has been able to give its patients the option under the same roof. “It has been exciting to see these kids just light up with joy because they’re so excited that they’re finally getting braces and fixing whatever they wanted,” Zakhar said. “The parents are so appreciative that we started orthodontics here at the office.”

## Treating and Educating

While some patients are interested in braces for cosmetic reasons, some have a real clinical need. “Some have so much crowding, their teeth can’t come in, there’s impacted teeth, or some growth of the jaw is needed to make room,” explained Zakhar. In addition, crowding can increase places where plaque can stick that are hard to reach with

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a toothbrush and floss, increasing risk for cavities. “I feel like I’m teaching the parents and the patient what’s going on, what we do, and why it’s not just putting colors on teeth. The education piece has been cool.”

## Seeing an Impact

Zakhar says seeing the impact he is having on patients is well-worth the hard work to get through dentistry school and residency.

“I recently had a patient in tears because she was so excited that she got her braces on because there were some things to correct that were leading to her getting bullied at school. As soon as we put them on, she was so excited just that the change was coming. That was awesome.”



## About Savannah Smiles Youth Dentistry & Braces

Savannah Smiles Youth Dentistry & Braces is one of Georgia’s leaders in Medicaid and affordable dental care for children and their families. Supported by Benevis, Savannah Smiles Youth Dentistry & Braces serves over 5,000 children on Medicaid annually. Savannah Smiles Youth Dentistry & Braces and its doctors are committed to improving lives by providing high-quality dental care in a fun, compassionate environment. To learn more about Savannah Smiles Youth Dentistry & Braces, visit [www.YouthDentistry.com](http://www.YouthDentistry.com).



## About Benevis

Benevis is a leading dental healthcare delivery organization for practices focused on delivering life-changing oral care and orthodontics to underserved communities. Through comprehensive care and operational services that expand access to dentistry, Benevis has a 20-year history of providing the highest quality care to approximately 5 million children and adults. Its network reaches more than 100 locally branded dental offices across the U.S. that deliver treatment through 1.2 million visits each year. Benevis also advocates for programs and legislation that ensure all families have access to the oral healthcare they need and deserve..

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