



# NYC SMILE DESIGN

## MAKING A LASTING IMPRESSION

### *Smile Makeovers by Drs. Tabib and Mello*

Fall 2009

#### Leticia's Story.....

Leticia is a teacher who specializes in early childhood education, and is an ESL coordinator in an elementary school in Queens. She is also a vibrant young mother of "two beautiful girls, ages nine and three," who really loves her work.

"I've been teaching for years," says Leticia, "and I believe that teaching is healing. I love to be around children and to learn from them every day. It's an experience in pure honesty, and in being able to be myself. I worked in the classroom for nine years, seeing my students in small group settings. I've also been doing related administrative work."

Leticia's warm personality is readily expressed in her smile, but therein lies a tale: a childhood accident caused her two upper front teeth to break apart. "I went to different dentists to repair the damage, but the botched jobs made my smile less than perfect. So all my life I've been very self-conscious about it. I was even uncomfortable baring my smile to a dentist!

"Of course, though, I had to move forward. I found ways to cover up my smile—even my girls asked my why I kept my hand up nearby to hide my



teeth. I had to find a way to rectify the situation that would make me comfortable.

"I was referred to Dr. Mello by a friend who was a patient of hers. I was reluctant to go at first because of my earlier experiences, but then I thought 'it can't be worse than the last time.' So, I went online to see NYC Smile Design's work, and decided to try again.

"I felt comfortable right away during my first appointment. Dr. Mello was very encouraging, calm and reassuring, and made it clear that no job was too big to tackle. It all seemed doable. So I left feeling hopeful, for once, and that I'd finally be able to get

the help I needed to get the smile I had wanted for so long.

"It had to be natural, and Dr. Mello was aware of that. 'I don't want it to look like dentures,' I told her 'I only want the color to be even, especially my two front teeth. They're the first ones you see.' That was my goal; just color them the same!

"Dr. Mello explained that, aesthetically, it would be appropriate to consider additional procedures, but she left it up to me to decide. I gave her the OK, but was still a little unsure (old habits die hard!), so I went home and thought some more. Finally,

I was sure that I'd found the dentist who could help me. And this time, I didn't change my mind.

that they were striving for perfection. It's been such a wonderful experience!

"I knew it would be a big job, but I was okay with that. During the first session, they bleached my teeth and performed a gum lift, to give my teeth the cor-



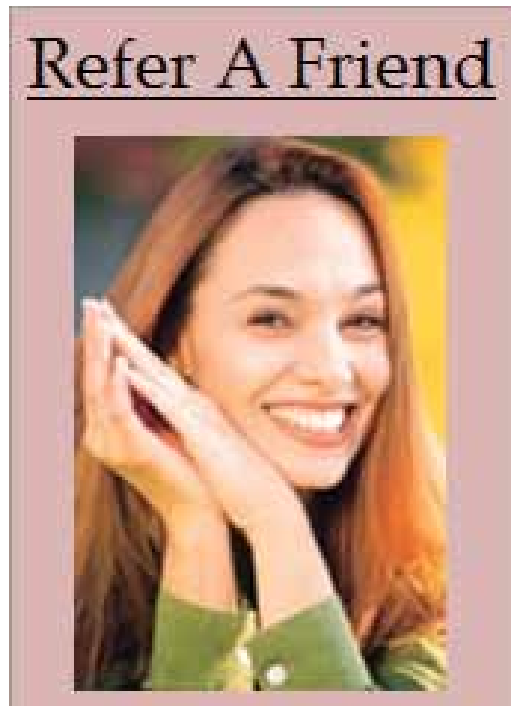
rect aesthetic position. During my subsequent visits my teeth were prepped for veneers. The initial consultation was in February, and we finished everything in July. I had no discomfort....I was so excited to finally be able to get it right!

"After we finished, I went for a follow-up visit. Dr. Mello looked at my teeth and said 'I'm still not happy. If it's okay with you, can I improve the color?' She had noticed a slight difference that even I hadn't seen. I said, 'of course!' Then she was happy!

"It's really been a load off my shoulders; I am comfortable for the first time. Now I can smile! I wish I had done it earlier. I've told my kids, but I haven't told my colleagues. They've noticed that I'm smiling more, and I'm even getting compliments from people I've been meeting for the first time: 'You have a great smile!'

"But my bottom teeth have been shifting over time, and it's in my best interests to rectify that, too, because their angle would make it possible for them to strike the now-perfect two upper teeth. This could become more of a problem as I got older. Dr. Mello asked if I'd be interested in Invisalign to solve the problem. It was a good idea. I had the mold made, and we plan to begin the process later this fall.

"I'm happy with Dr. Mello—I want to be her patient for as long as possible. And I'm happy with NYC Smile Design. They're very accommodating. I appreciate the fact that they make you feel hope, and that they really care. I'll never forget the fact



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