

My New Smile Means...
Just a little curve that sets everything straight.

Braces stripped off, glue delicately chipped away, my new smile revealed more than just thirty-two pearly whites glaring back: they shined freedom. Freedom from rubber bands, freedom from canker sores, freedom from threaders. It was over and then again, it had just begun.

Bound together with wire and metal since grammar school, my rookie teeth had never seen the confusion and gossip of middle school. At the close of my eighth grade year, I was the first of the many to be released from the constraints of metal and brace. Looking back at photos and yearbooks, the silver of my teeth reflects back the uniformity and awkwardness of junior high that everybody experienced.

Entering into the huge halls of high school, I instantly shrank taking in first impressions. Glancing at the unfamiliar faces and places, I felt lost hoping for a friendly glance. A flash of comfort – a smile. That little curve, that sets everything straight.

Finding friends and security in my suburban town, I have been sheltered and constrained from the real world my entire life. Braces firmly planted, I have obeyed rules and regulations from school as well as my family.

Beginning my journey into college, I again must take first impressions and be released from the wires holding me back. Armed with my smile, I'm ready to set everything straight and begin once more. Again my braces are stripped from my body, I am beginning a new part of my life. And this time, I truly have freedom. And this time, it is mine. And this time, I will smile.

“My New Smile Means...”

A smile can be an attractive or defining characteristic of a person. A smile can be revealing in its ability to display a person's true feelings of happiness and joy; however, a smile can also be deceiving in its ability to cover up and hide a person's true pain and suffering. Gartner Orthodontics has created a new smile for me that experienced each of the aforementioned qualities of a smile.

The first two months of my high school career I had braces on my teeth. Anyone having braces in high school knows this is not something to smile about. After those first two months though, my new smile was much more visible and vibrant because of all the new friends I made and the fun we had. The true display of happiness in this smile lasted until midway through sophomore year. At that point I learned my mother had cancer. After she got better, I blew out my knee that summer and was forced to sit out for my junior year of football, a season in which I was suppose to start at quarterback. During that year, I wore a smile on my face that was deceiving. I acted as if nothing bothered me, but deep down I was being torn to pieces. Eventually recovered emotionally and physically and got through the troubling times I had experienced. Although I wore a fake smile during this time period, I have looked back and realized that some days, it was the smile on my face that helped me get through a tough day. It taught me that a key to handling stress is to sometimes sit back, smile, and even laugh because people could use a smile to cheer themselves up. That same year, I met a girl who has become my girlfriend. As the amount of time we spent together grew, she said that seeing my smile made her feel happy and smile. She told me it was an attractive characteristic that drew her to me. As for her, I feel her smile is her defining, physical characteristic because she has a smile with big white teeth that just glow and I know when I see this that she is happy and in a great mood. Nothing makes me smile more than when I see this.

As one can see, smiles have been a large part of my life, not only in physical appearance, but emotional revealing as well. The new smile Gartner Orthodontics has given me has played a role in my life. To a certain extent, a new smile can give the new freshman in high school confidence in his physical appearance, just like it did for me three and a half years ago. I would just like to thank Gartner Orthodontics for the direct and indirect roles it has played in my life and for knowing that, you all should have a smile on your face.