



## MY GUIDE TO...

# Continence, Constipation and Toileting Support

There are many reasons children experience a toileting problem. Symptoms may include day time wetting, frequent weeing or urgency when needing to wee, night time wetting, constipation or soiling, an aversion to using the toilet.

Although it is more common for pre-school, or Primary aged children to require support with toileting, some children of secondary school age also have symptoms of bowel or bladder problems or an aversion to using the toilet.

Children with special needs and disability may take longer to develop use of the potty or toilet, for physical, medical, or developmental reasons. Many parents seek support and advice. This guide seeks to answer parents frequently asked questions and signpost to the help available.

## Q1. My child is under 5 years, where can I find advice and support?

Talk to your health visitor or GP doctor.

**The health visiting service** will listen to you and support you with many questions such as - potty training, becoming dry at night, diet, child-friendly resources, approaches to try and more. The health visitor might make a referral with you, to another children's service if further advice is needed.

### The Bexley Health Visitor service contact details are:

Telephone: 0300 330 5777

Email: [bromh.bexley0to19@nhs.net](mailto:bromh.bexley0to19@nhs.net)

**The GP doctor** will listen to you, consider any physical or medical needs and make a plan with you. The doctor might make a referral to your health visitor or to another service, if required.

**Paediatric Continence Service, Oxleas NHS Trust** . Parents of children with disabilities under 5 years can call a phone contact line – see contact details within Q2.

## Q2. My child is 5 - 18 years old, where can I find advice and support?

Contact your school nurse, GP, or Paediatric Continence Service

**The school nurse or GP** will listen to you, consider any physical or medical needs and make a plan with you. A referral might be made to another children's service if required.

### Paediatric Continence Service, Oxleas NHS Trust

This nurse led service is available for children and young people who live in Greenwich/Bexley with a Greenwich/Bexley GP, Aged 5 to 18 years (19 years with additional needs) with bladder/bowel difficulties.

The service offers specialist assessment and management of continence issues and can support with a range of interventions and treatments.

Clinics are located in Kidbrooke Village Centre, Gallions Reach, Eltham community Hospital, High Point House and Erith Health Centre.

The service communicates with Special School/School nursing services, and referral is made with you to the GP or Community Paediatrician Service where needed.

**The Paediatric Continence Service contact details are:**

Telephone: 0208 319 9973

Email: [oxl-tr.enuresis@nhs.net](mailto:oxl-tr.enuresis@nhs.net)

Referrals to this service are accepted from parents, GPs, Health Professionals, schools, Social Services.

*If due to covid-19 restrictions, we are unable to offer a drop-in service, we change this to a **phone call drop-in service**.*

*Please email [oxl-tr.pcsproducts@nhs.net](mailto:oxl-tr.pcsproducts@nhs.net), or call 0208 319 9973 and leave a message with your child's name, date of birth, and your contact details*

*Tell us briefly what you need support with. Our Paediatric continence advisor will make contact with you.*

### **Q3 Where can I get help/support if my child has constipation?**

Your first contact would be your GP, Health Visitor or school nurse.

If you have followed a care plan for at least 3 months, made by a health professional, and need more support, the doctor might make a referral with you, to the **Childhood Constipation Service** at Darent Valley Hospital.

This nurse led service offers a 3 hour parent group clinic with information, advice, resources and the chance to hear from other parents. There is follow up support available after the group, individually by phone.

You can find more information here: [Childhood constipation and soiling \(thepoonurses.uk\)](http://thepoonurses.uk)

Referral to the Childhood Constipation Service Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust is via a doctor.

### **Q4. Is there a national organisation for support and information about learning to use the toilet, managing bladder or bowel difficulties?**

ERIC, is the Children's Bowel & Bladder Charity.

**ERIC contact details are:**

Helpline: 0845 370 8008 from Monday to Thursday (10am to 2pm)

Email: [helpline@eric.org.uk](mailto:helpline@eric.org.uk)

Website: [www.eric.org.uk](http://www.eric.org.uk)

### **Q5. My child has a physical disability and is unable to sit on a standard toilet, what help is there?**

If your child attends Shenstone, Marlborough, Willowdene or Charlton Park Special School, there is an in-house Continence Advisor who is able to carry out an initial assessment and make referrals where appropriate.

For children with physical disability who attend other schools the GP, School Nurse, SENCo or Paediatrician, can make a referral to occupational therapy for assessment of toileting equipment.

**Children's Occupational Therapy service contact details are:**

Telephone: 0203 004 0092

Email: [oxl-tr.BexleySCS-SPA@nhs.net](mailto:oxl-tr.BexleySCS-SPA@nhs.net)

**Inspire Community Trust:** a Social Worker, Therapy Professional, GP can make the referral.

Telephone: 0203 045 5465

Website: <https://inspirecommunitytrust.org/services/special-needs-housing-service/>

## **Q6. My child is physically able but is not yet going to the toilet; wiping, washing hands, like other children the same age.**

Ask for advice from the child development professional your child is known to. Your child might be known to one of these professionals - a health visitor, school nurse, nursery nurse, SEN Coordinator, the Autism Advisory teacher and Bexley Early Autism Service BEAS, or Portage.

Depending on the child's progress after putting in place strategies, these professionals might make a referral with you, to an occupational therapist if assessment is needed. The Occupational Therapist will work with you to identify strategies to help your child develop these daily routines.

## **Q7. When are products for wetting and soiling provided?**

Products are provided for children and young people over the age of 5 years old, following an in-depth assessment of their abilities, needs and what has already been trialled.

This assessment is completed by either the paediatric continence service for children at mainstream schools, or the continence advisor for children in some special schools. If the child or young person is physically unable to achieve continence they can receive products. If the child or young person has tried everything offered to them previously and followed the continence pathways without success then they may be considered for products.

In the child's best interests, the criteria for being eligible to receive products is high. This is because for a child over 5 years, the longer a habit is formed (wearing pads) the harder it is to change in the future. So, for children capable of achieving continence, to put the child in products would not be in their best interest long term. Nearly all children can learn to be dry, and if there are physical causes of incontinence then it is explored and treated in the hope that continence can be achieved rather than using products.

The continence service or advisor can discuss the range of products available. The ERIC website will offer information on alternate products you may wish to purchase.

## **Q8. Can I get help with the cost of incontinence?**

If, following an assessment, your child or young person is eligible for products they are provided at no cost to the child/young person/family. Products are supplied by the NHS Supply Chain, to home.

Products are delivered to the home address of the child/young person requiring them. The NHS Supply Chain gives a delivery date and products can be delivered at any time between 8am and 8pm on those days, so someone needs to be home. If the date is not convenient, then parents/carers are able to contact the NHS Supply Chain to rearrange.

There can be a financial impact in terms of increased laundry when supporting a child with their continence and toileting. Family Fund is a charity providing grants for families raising disabled or seriously ill children – they may be able to help with the cost of washing machines etc [www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk).

You may also wish to explore applying for Disability Living Allowance for your child – see the Bexley Voice My Guide to financial support for children and young people with special needs and disabilities in Bexley.

## **Q9. Where can I get advice on Medication that might help?**

Medication can only be prescribed by a medical practitioner. You should speak to your GP or nurse, who will help you explore all options for your child, before considering medication.

### **Helpful links:**

<https://www.bexley0to19.co.uk/0-4-years/development-learning-play-behaviour/>

<http://oxleas.nhs.uk/services/service/continence-advisory-service/>

[ERIC's Guide for Children with Additional Needs | ERIC](#)

[ERIC's Guide to Potty Training | ERIC](#)

[Advice on Bladder and Bowel Problems in Children and Young People \(bbuk.org.uk\)](http://bbuk.org.uk)

[Children's Continence Pathway | ERIC](#)

### **Bexley Voice – Parent Carer Forum**

Telephone: 07512 409936

[www.bexleyvoice.org.uk](http://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk)

Email: [bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Bexley Local Offer**

Bexley LA website offering information for those aged 0-25 with special needs and disabilities.

Telephone: 020 3045 5677

[www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/home](http://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/home)

Email: [localoffer@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:localoffer@bexley.gov.uk)