PROMOTING CONTINENCE IN YOUNG CHILDREN: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

A SEMINAR FOR CAREGIVERS, TEACHERS, AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

PRESENTER: ELAINE BAPTISTE

OBJECTIVES & AGENDA



- **KEY TOPICS:**
  - UNDERSTANDING CONTINENCE DEVELOPMENT
  - ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION
  - PROMOTION STRATEGIES
  - SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH CONTINENCE ISSUES
  - RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Importance of Promoting Continence

- Support healthy child development.
- Enhance a child's self-esteem and well-being.
- Create a positive learning and home environment.

What we will cover today:

- Milestones and challenges.
- How to identify potential issues.
- Practical strategies and best practices.
- Ongoing support.

UNDERSTANDING CONTINENCE DEVELOPMENT

Normal Milestones

- **Toddlers (18-36 months):** Show interest in toilet, stay dry for longer periods.
- **Preschoolers (3-5 years):** Achieve consistent daytime control, learn to anticipate needs.
- **School-Aged (5+ years):** Master full nighttime and daytime control.

Common Challenges

- Infections, constipation, and medical issues.
- Anxiety, stress, or major life changes.
- Behavioural and developmental delays.

Impact on Well-being

- Emotional and psychological distress.
- Impact on social interactions and school participation.
- Lowered self-esteem.

ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

Who is at risk?

- Children with a family history of continence issues.
- Children with certain developmental or physical conditions.
- Those experiencing significant stress.

Assessment Tools and Techniques

- Symptom checklists.
- Toilet-training readiness assessments.
- Daily continence charts.

Red Flags: When to Seek Medical Help

- Sudden onset of incontinence after a long period of dryness.
- Painful urination.
- Associated symptoms like fever or lethargy.

UNDERSTANDING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Common Additional Needs

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Physical disabilities (e.g., cerebral palsy)
- Sensory processing disorders

Impact on Toilet Training

- Communication barriers
- Sensory sensitivities
- Motor skill challenges
- Behavioral and emotional regulation

Adapting Approaches

- Individualized strategies based on the child's profile
- Importance of patience and consistency

PREPARING FOR TOILET TRAINING

Assessing Readiness

- Signs of physical and emotional readiness
- Realistic goal-setting based on developmental level

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Use of visual schedules and cues
- Adaptive equipment (e.g., toilet seats, step stools)
- Safe and predictable bathroom setup

Family and Caregiver Involvement

- Collaborative planning
- Consistency across settings (home, school, therapy)

TOILET TRAINING STRATEGIES

Practical Techniques

- **Visual Aids & Social Stories**: Help children understand the process
- **Routines & Schedules**: Build predictability and habit
- **Communication Support**: Use of signs, symbols, etc.
- **Sensory & Physical Adaptations**: Address aversions or physical limitations

Case Studies & Examples

- Share real-life scenarios and outcomes
- Highlight diverse approaches and creative solutions

DAYTIME WETTING (DIURNAL ENURESIS) IN CHILDREN

Prevalence:

- Affects ~3–4% of children aged 5–7 years.

Management Overview:

- **Assessment** – Rule out UTIs, constipation, neurological issues.
- **Fluid Management** – Encourage hydration, avoid caffeine.
- **Voiding Habits** – Promote regular toilet use and full bladder emptying.
- **Lifestyle Adjustments** – Address constipation, encourage activity.
- **Behavioral Strategies** – Use positive reinforcement, build self-care.
- **Medical Interventions** – Consider medications like anticholinergics if needed.

Key Principles:

- Reassure and reduce stigma.
- Tailor plans to individual needs.
- Involve families and professionals.

NIGHTTIME WETTING (NOCTURNAL ENURESIS)

Prevalence:

- Affects ~15–20% of 5-year-olds.

Management Overview:

- **Reassurance** – Normalize the issue, encourage openness.
- **Lifestyle Adjustments** – Hydrate during the day, limit evening fluids.
- **Voiding Habits** – Establish bedtime toilet routine.
- **Bedwetting Alarms** – Help condition nighttime waking.
- **Desmopressin** – Medication option under guidance.

Key Principles:

- Support families and caregivers.
- Customize strategies.
- Monitor and adjust as needed.

CHILDHOOD CONSTIPATION

Common Causes:

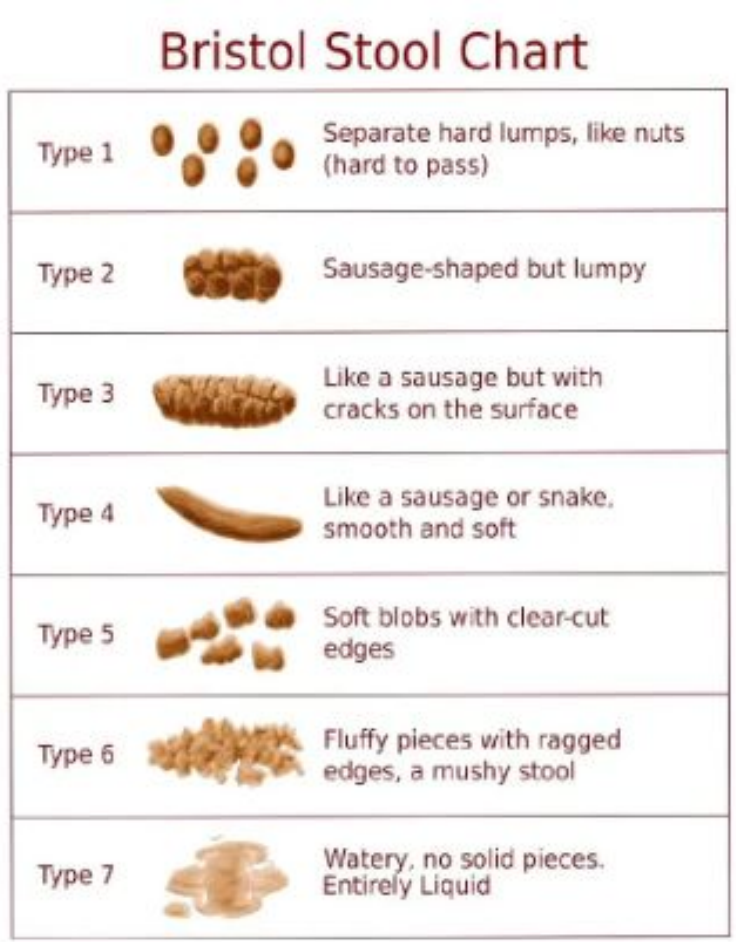
- Diet, toilet habits, with holding behavior.

Management Overview:

- **Dietary Adjustments** – Increase fiber, fluids.
- **Toilet Habits** – Encourage routine and relaxation.
- **Lifestyle Changes** – Promote activity, reduce stress.
- **Medications** – Use laxatives/stool softeners if needed.
- **Behavioral Strategies** – Reinforce positive habits.

Key Principles:

- Educate families.
- Provide ongoing support.
- Track and adapt management.



SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE & COPING WITH CHALLENGES

Fostering Independence

- Encourage self-care skills gradually
- Celebrate small successes

Common Challenges

- Resistance or fear
- Accidents and regressions
- Inconsistency across environments

Managing Setbacks

- Reassess strategies and adjust
- Maintain a positive and supportive tone
- Use reinforcement and encouragement

PROMOTION STRATEGIES

Positive Reinforcement

- Praise and celebrate successes, no matter how small.
- Use a reward system (e.g., sticker chart) for effort, not just results.
- Avoid punishment or shaming during accidents.

Adapting to Individual Needs

- Recognize and respect a child's pace.
- Adjust strategies for children with special needs.

Interactive Demonstration

- Show a short role-playing scenario of a positive toilet-time interaction.

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SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH CONTINENCE ISSUES

Individualized Support Plans

- Work with families to create a tailored plan.
- Set realistic, achievable goals.

Collaboration with Professionals

- Maintain open communication with healthcare providers.
- Communicate and coordinate with school staff.

Addressing Emotional Aspects

- Provide a supportive, non-judgmental environment.
- Offer reassurance and build confidence.

Managing Incontinence

- Offer discrete and reliable products.
- Create a plan for managing accidents at school or daycare.

CONCLUSION AND RESOURCES

Key Takeaways

- Promote, assess, and support continence.
- Use positive and practical strategies.
- Work together as a team (parents, teachers, and providers).

Additional Resources

- List of recommended books, websites, or local support groups.

Q&A Session

- Open the floor for questions from the audience.

COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR CHILDHOOD CONTINENCE

Available Support:

- **Children's Continence Services** – NHS-based assessment and treatment.
- **Specialist Nurses** – Paediatric continence expertise.
- **Continence Products** – Alarms, nappies, etc.
- **Toilet Training Support** – Especially for children with additional needs.
- **Charities & Organizations** – ERIC, Bladder & Bowel UK.

Accessing Services:

- Via GP, health visitor, school, or self-referral.
- Contact local NHS Trusts or councils.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

Eric website

- A parents guide to disimpaction - https://eric.org.uk/childrens-bowels/parents-guide-to-disimpaction/
- How to prepare Macrogol Laxatives - https://eric.org.uk/how-to-use-macrogol-laxatives/

POO DIARY

Child's name _____

Date	Time	Poo in toilet - amount	Any soiling? - amount	Type	Comments	Laxatives given	Suppositories/ Enema/Washout

Child's name _____ **INTAKE/OUTPUT CHART** Date _____

Time	Drinks volume	Drinks type	Urine volume	Nappy/pad/ pants - damp/wet/ soaking	Stools quantity - small/medium/ large	Stool type – Bristol Stool number	Where were stools passed?	
							Into nappy/pad/ pants?	Into toilet/potty?
7 am								
8 am								
9 am								
10 am								
11 am								
12 pm								
1 pm								
2 pm								
3 pm								
4 pm								
5 pm								
6 pm								
7 pm								
8 pm								
9 pm								
10 pm								
Night-Time (tick)			Passed urine?	Wet bed?				
TOTALS								

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close bathroom door
diaper
don't put in toilet
dry hands
dry hands with blower
dry pants
flush toilet
1
flush toilet only once
get paper towel
pee standing up
poop in toilet
pull down pants

THANK YOU

Contact Information:

ERIC - www.eric.org.uk tel: 0845 370 80 www.eric.org.uk/help-at-school

NICE Guideline: The management of bedding wetting in children and young people - www.nice.org.uk/cg111

Constipation in children and young people - www.nice.org.uk/cg99

Bladder and Bowel uk – email: bladderandboweluk'disableliving.o.uk Tel: 0161214 4591

Support Offered:

Helplines – Expert advice and guidance.

Guidance Documents – Best practices for schools and nurseries.

IHCPs & Policies – Templates for care planning.

Training – For professionals.

Specialist Products – Alarms, watches, protective wear.

Inclusive Support:

Tailored advice for children with disabilities.

Resources for families and professionals.