

# Working Effectively with Children with Continence Issues



NOTTINGHAM CITY  
Safeguarding  
Children  
PARTNERSHIP

## What do you need to know about children with continence issues?

- Having control over continence is a developmental skill, and like other skills, children will attain it at different ages.
- Bedwetting (also known as nocturnal enuresis) is common and very few children will wet the bed on purpose.
- Bedwetting and daytime continence issues can have a significant impact on a child's behaviour and wellbeing. It can also be stressful for the parents or carers.
- Treatment and care should take into account the child's needs and preferences. Children and young people with this issue and their parents and/or carers should have the opportunity to make informed decisions about their care and treatment, in partnership with their healthcare professionals where the issue is sufficiently serious to need such input.

## As practitioners, how can we work effectively with children with continence issues?

- Refer to the NICE guidelines on supporting children with continence issues - <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG111/chapter/introduction>
- When supporting the child and their family, the emphasis must be on normalisation, no blame, no shame and strictly no punishments
- Children should not be held responsible for their continence issues - rewards for dry nights are therefore unhelpful
- NICE guidelines make it clear that maltreatment should be considered if a child is consistently reported to be deliberately wetting themselves, or the parents or carers are repeatedly punishing the child for their continence issues despite professional advice that it is involuntary

- Seek reassurance that the parents and carers are following professional advice they've been given to support the child with continence issues
- There is a specialist continence service for children in Nottingham. This is delivered by CityCare - for further information about the service and how to make referrals please visit this website - <http://www.nottinghamcitycare.nhs.uk/find-a-service/services-list/continence-advisory-service/>
- Where a child is attending specialist continence services it is important to ensure that the work of that service is incorporated into wider multi-agency planning and reviewing. This helps to avoid mixed messages.

#### Further reading...

- NICE guidelines on Bedwetting in under 19s - <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG111/chapter/introduction>
- Signpost children and families to ERIC (Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence) - <http://www.eric.org.uk/> - who provide support for children and families with continence issues
- National Clinical Guidance Centre guidelines on *Nocturnal enuresis: The management of bedwetting in children and young people* - <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg111/documents/nocturnal-enuresis-in-children-bedwetting-prepublication-check-full-guideline2>

#### Suggested activity

- In a group or within a team meeting, identify a case with a child with continence issues and discuss whether or not the NICE guidelines have been followed appropriately.