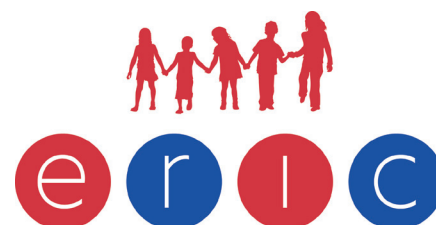




Jackie Fudge, conference manager,  
ERIC

# Find out what's new in paediatric continence

**'Young children face lowered school attendance due to bowel and bladders issues, and difficulties socialising, such as on school trips or sleepovers.'**



The Children's Bowel & Bladder Charity

It is estimated that 1.5 million children and young people (Paediatric Continence Forum [PCF], 2024), that is one in 12, across the UK battle debilitating, misunderstood and sometimes complex bowel or bladder conditions, including bedwetting, daytime wetting, chronic constipation and soiling.

This is a far bigger issue than many might think. Stigma around continence issues means that they are not talked about as much as other health conditions, and some people even delay seeking professional help because of embarrassment, or because they simply do not know what is wrong.

The impact on children and young people, and their families, is huge — from a young age, right through to possible complications in adulthood.

## LIFE-ALTERING CONDITIONS

The impact of wee and poo problems is a sad reality that many face. Three children in every primary school class are living with these life-altering conditions each day (Joinson et al, 2018). To add context, that is similar to the number of children and young people living with asthma (NHS England, 2024).

A general increase in later toilet training is being seen, which can cause long-term problems and worries for

families of new school starters. In fact, a recent survey highlighted that one in four children starting reception class are not toilet trained, according to teachers (Kindred Squared, 2024).

Young children face lowered school attendance due to bowel and bladders issues, and difficulties socialising, such as on school trips or sleepovers.

Teens face these issues too — and more. ERIC's Young Champions survey, which saw responses from almost 900 young people, highlights issues with toilets in secondary schools and the problems this can cause ([www.eric.org.uk](http://www.eric.org.uk)). Continence conditions in young people can affect both their mental health and long-term physical health.

The impact on health care is significant too. Early diagnosis, intervention and treatment could help relieve stress on children, families and also the healthcare system.

## ERIC'S CONFERENCE

Here at ERIC, we know how many children and families are seriously affected by continence conditions and we want to help them. One of our aims is to deliver the best education and learning for healthcare, social care, early years, and education professionals across the children's workforce — including through our professional conference.

ERIC's Paediatric Continence Care Conference is coming up in October



2024, with the theme: 'Understanding the puzzle and solving it together.'

The face-to-face event is a valuable opportunity to network, exchange ideas and practice with other professionals from all around the UK and beyond. There will also be the chance to speak to many companies in the exhibition area, to find out about products and treatments to support families. We are very grateful to our main sponsor, Coloplast, for their support.

We bring the latest research to the forefront of practice; highlight the impact of bladder and bowel problems on children of all ages and needs; demonstrate the impact of new approaches and services; and provide opportunities for networking and sharing practice.

The programme includes an optional breakfast symposium followed by the morning plenary session packed with the latest research and thought-provoking new approaches, including:

- ▶ An innovative new bedwetting treatment service using cutting edge technology
- ▶ A talk about barriers to treatment adherence
- ▶ Latest research examining the relationships between mental health problems and incontinence.

The afternoon session will offer a range of interactive workshops with each delegate being able to choose two.

A full programme including all the talks and workshops and the expert speakers presenting them can be found on the ERIC website. Highlights include:

- ▶ The use of neuromodulation for the treatment of bladder and bowel dysfunction
- ▶ Treating constipation, including the importance of toileting routines
- ▶ Making pee and poo cool in school!
- ▶ Current best practice in nocturnal enuresis management.

## ABOUT ERIC

ERIC is the only UK-wide charity dedicated to improving the lives of all children and young people (aged 0–19 years and up to 25 for children with additional needs) with bowel and bladder issues.

Our vision is that children and young people everywhere enjoy good bladder and bowel health. Our mission is to get everyone talking about good bladder and bowel health from birth and taking action.

ERIC provides information and support on continence conditions for parents/carers and professionals. The website is packed with resources like training for professionals, such as our upcoming healthy bladders and bowels or nocturnal enuresis webinars, and downloadable factsheets on common continence conditions to share with parents/

## More information

ERIC Paediatric Continence Care Conference: 14th October 2024 at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole, 9.30am–4.30pm (optional breakfast symposium starts at 8.30am).

Find all conference details and book your place at: <https://eric.org.uk/professionals/paediatric-continence-care-conference/>

The cost to attend this year's conference will be £95 per person for payments made by card through our online system. Payment by invoice can also be accepted at a cost of £110 per person.

carers. Our main factsheets are now available in languages other than English, so they can be shared with more families.

Updates are shared on ERIC's website and social media pages, including vacancies for volunteer helpline staff who work directly with families in need, and the recent campaign to help parents/carers get their children continence-ready for starting school. **JCN**

## REFERENCES

Joinson C, Whale K, Randall J (2018) *Young people with continence problems need better support at secondary school*. Available online: [www.bristol.ac.uk/policybristol/policy-briefings/young-people-continence-schools/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/policybristol/policy-briefings/young-people-continence-schools/)

Kindred Squared (2024) *School Readiness Survey, February 2024*. Available online: <https://kindredsquared.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Kindred-Squared-School-Readiness-Report-February-2024.pdf>

NHS England (2024) *Childhood asthma*. Available online: [www.england.nhs.uk/childhood-asthma/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/childhood-asthma/)

Paediatric Continence Forum (2024) *Children's Continence Commissioning Guide. A handbook for setting up (commissioning) and running of children's community bladder and bowel services*. Available online: <https://paediatriccontinenceforum.org/resources>

