



Sensory Processing Service

Body Awareness & Bottom
Wiping Difficulties



Caring, Learning
& Growing Together



hnf-tr.humbersensoryprocessingservice@nhs.net

Body Awareness & Bottom Wiping Difficulties

Compensatory Strategies

- Mirrors – using vision to support touch can help a child to work out where the hard-to-reach areas are. They can then also use the mirror to do a final check over.
- Wet wipes – offer an easier and more effective method to remove faeces than paper.
- Cheaper toilet paper – gives more tactile ‘feedback’ than softer more expensive paper.
- Position – your child may find it easier (if their balance is good) to stand up to wipe, with one leg resting up on the toilet seat or bin. They can then look down to see what they are doing. If a rail is available encourage them to hold on with their non-wiping hand.

Addressing Postural Issues

- Consider the way your child sets themselves up.
- **Are their feet flat on the floor?** Are they leaning forwards slightly? Is their trunk strong enough to brace or do they need to rest down on an arm across their legs or lean on a rail? Do they feel stable?
- Is the toilet paper within easy reach so the child does not have to stand/twist and so will avoid any ‘squishing’?



Addressing Planning Issues

- Help your child organise a plan. Talk about starting from the front (forwards of rectum) and working from the left side across the middle and out to the right side. Working in 'rows' start moving backwards (past rectum) until they reach far enough back that the toilet paper is clean. Then go back over the entire area for one more check. Using the same pattern of movement will help the child self evaluate how well they have done and which areas they missed.
- To start with allow your child to wipe only once with the toilet paper before disposing. Agree on a certain number of sheets to wipe to help the child to organise how much to pull off.

Improving Body Awareness

- The sense of touch plays an important role. Help them develop better awareness of their bottom by encouraging them to use a wash cloth during a bath or shower and 'have a go' at washing themselves in a manner mimicking the wiping action with the toilet paper.
- Encourage them to consider the way wiping the rectum feels different to touching the skin of the bottom cheeks.
- Orientate them to the anatomy of the area using pictures from children's anatomy books.
- For younger children, play games using realistic baby dolls and pretend that they have been to the toilet, encourage your child to wipe the doll's bottom. Role play the strategies you have been working on.



Skill Building Strategies

- Bum bag games – fill a bumbag up with familiar items such as key, coin, peg, cotton wool ball, teaspoon etc. Put the bum bag on the child and have it loosely positioned around their waist with the bag hanging over their bottom. Sit them sideways on a chair so that their bottom is hanging just off the side and the backrest is not in the way. Call out one item at a time and see if they can search for it behind their back using their ‘wiping’ hand.
- Ball skills – play ball games where you vary the way the ball is thrown. Include throws from behind the bottom/through the legs. Pretend to juggle by passing the ball as fast as possible around the waist, upper thighs, and through the groin area.
- Self bottom massages – child to give own bottom a massage by rolling bottom over tennis balls. This may increase body awareness through increased proprioceptive input.
- Practise wiping bottom action with clothes on but with a weighted sock as the pretend ‘toilet paper’. This may help develop motor memory and hopefully aid the real event.
- Practise the actual wiping action by asking your child to wipe down the table after dinner or meal preparations – you may have to demonstrate first. Have them wipe down the sink or mirror or any glass top tables as chores to earn rewards or pocket money.



Draw a 'target' on some paper and laminate if possible. Start with small numbers in the middle and getting higher as you work your way out. Next squirt a bit of moisturiser / mousse / toothpaste on it in the very middle. Play a game to see who can accumulate the least points as they try to wipe up the moisturiser. Start off playing the game on a table and then start making it trickier by moving the target to the side of the body, eventually aiming to play it behind your back. You can even attach the target to the bottom of a chair if the child can reach.

Remember to make activities fun!



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sensoryprocessinghub.humber.nhs.uk
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