

# Toileting aids and urinals



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## Why are toileting aids and urinals needed for some children?

Some children and young people find accessing the toilet a challenge. This may be because of a physical disability, or a sensory, or processing difference. Toileting aids or a urinal may help to make accessing the toilet or achieving bladder and bowel control easier.

## What toileting aids or urinal will be best for my child or young person?

There are a large variety of toileting aids and urinals available. However, no single product will suit everyone's needs. Some children will need to use a combination of products. It is a case of finding what best suits the child's needs. An assessment of the child or young person will help to indicate where they have difficulty and which aids or urinals might work best for them.

Assessments may be undertaken by a children's bladder and bowel nurse, health visitor, school nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, or through a multi-disciplinary approach. The outcome of the assessment should be discussed with you and with your child as appropriate.

## Commodes and toilet chairs

A commode, or toilet chair is a portable toilet, with a disposable or reusable pan or bowl beneath. A commode can be improve access to an appropriate place to pass urine or for bowel opening. Some children or young people may be able to use a commode or toilet chair with limited help. They come in a variety of forms e.g. static, movable, multi-purpose, or that also act as a shower chair. They have a variety of seating that can offer support not available on a standard toilet.

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## Toilet seat reducers

Children should have their bottoms well supported when sitting on the toilet. Standard toilet seats are too big for many children and some struggle with the sensation of cold or hard plastic seats. Toilet seat reducers make the toilet seat smaller so that your child or young person's bottom is well supported when they sit. They come in a range of sizes and designs.

Any toilet seat reducer should fit the toilet well so that there is no movement when your child is sitting. They are also available in soft wipe clean material, that may be more comfortable and some have handles for your child to hold while sitting. Some have integral steps (see below).

## Steps or plinths

The best position for bladder and bowel emptying is sitting with the bottom well supported, feet flat on a firm surface and knees level with or higher than hips. Most children and young people are not tall enough to get to this position without a step or plinth to rest their feet on. The step can also help your child be able to get on and off the toilet without help. However, steps and plinths need to be stable.

## Toilet seat raisers and frames

Toilet raisers increase the height of the toilet seat to make it easier for taller young people to get on and off, if moving between sitting and standing is difficult for them.

Frames provide extra hand holds and support for children who struggle with balance or who are anxious that they might fall off the toilet without something to hold onto.

## Urine directors

Urine directors can help direct the flow of urine for boys who have a short or retracted penis. Some boys have a urine stream that sprays and a urine director can assist with accurate direction of the stream.

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## Bottom wipers

A bottom wiper is a device which may help your child or young person reach their bottom to clean it. These may be helpful for children and young people who have poor hand control or struggle to reach their bottom.

## Bidets and specialist toilets

A bidet looks similar to a toilet. They produce a jet of water which washes the bottom area following use of the toilet. This may be helpful for children and young people who struggle to wipe themselves after using the toilet.

There are also specialist toilets available, that can wash and dry the individual before they get off the toilet. These can be expensive, but may be appropriate for some children and young people.

## Bedpans

Bedpans are used for passing urine or stool while in a bed or on a chair.

## Hand-held urinals

A hand-held urinal is a device which your child can pass urine into. The urine can then be disposed of into a toilet. Hand-held urinals can give children and young people the opportunity to manage toileting independently, either in their home or when out and about. Handheld urinals are particularly useful in the following circumstances:

- When there is an urgent and/or frequent need for bladder emptying and getting to the toilet in time is an issue.
- Where limited mobility or flexibility makes using the toilet difficult, such as for children and young people who need to be hoisted onto a toilet.
- When going on long journeys, or at any other time when access to a toilet is difficult, such as in places where there is limited availability of disabled toilets.
- To promote independence and less reliance on other people, so allowing more independence and privacy with toileting.

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## Urinals on prescription

Some urinals are available on prescription from your child's GP.

## Where can I get further information?

Your health visitor, school nurse, occupational therapist or other healthcare professional may be able to advise you on what would be suitable for your child or young person.

Speak to your healthcare professional if your child or young person is struggling to access the toilet, or contact us at Bladder & Bowel UK for further information.

Find more information about child bladder and bowel health in our information library at [www.bbuk.org.uk](http://www.bbuk.org.uk). You can also contact the [Bladder & Bowel UK confidential helpline](tel:01612144591) (0161 214 4591).

For further advice on bladder and bowel problems speak to your GP or other healthcare professional.

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