

Bottom wiping

Once children have learnt how to go to the toilet independently by controlling their bladder and bowel, they need to master the skill of wiping their own bottom. This involves understanding how they need to do it and having the control over their own body to coordinate the movement without being able to see what they are doing.

The following ideas might help your child to master the skill:

Start by practicing when you have time! And encourage your child to take their time and not rush!

Use face tissues as they are easy to gather in the hand or try flushable wet wipes. Teach your child to wipe 5 times and to check if the wipe is clean or almost clean by the fifth wipe. They may need to learn a specific amount of times to wipe if they don't know whether they are clean.

Make sure wipes or toilet roll are in easy reach and don't need both hands to hold and pull it.

If your child is struggling to balance whilst sat on the toilet, try placing a step in front to steady their feet on.

Some children may prefer to learn by standing to wipe until they become better at cleaning themselves.

Praise your child for trying, even if they don't do it perfectly.



There are some games and fun activities you can play or encourage your child to do that may help to develop the skills involved in wiping:

- ❖ Practice wiping blobs of paint off a plate using kitchen roll (this could be part of an art activity) to reinforce the movement and pressure of 'wiping' using tissue on a wet or sticky surface. This can also be done with food items like wiping a blob of jam with bread or the remains of soup in a bowl with bread.
- ❖ Retrieve a scarf or tissue tucked into the back of the waistband with their hand. Progress to learning to tuck it back in again, partially at first then fully. Use a full length mirror to help them to check what they are doing.
- ❖ Pass an object like a bean bag, soft toy (small) or scarf around the body at waist level, firstly in one direction then the other. If this is achieved without the object being dropped and with reasonable speed, progress to passing the object round and between the legs in a figure of eight. This can be done in standing/in sitting on the edge of a chair or low bench.
- ❖ Play "Hunt the Object" where the child sits on the floor and feels for objects behind them on the floor without looking/eyes closed if possible. (Placing one object at a time). Make the game more challenging by asking them to identify what they've found by touch alone.
- ❖ Place tape or stickers or blu-tak underneath chair for them to reach with their hand without standing. Progress to placing on clothing particularly on back, below the waistline for them to find and take off. When they master this, start placing sticker/tape on underwear to aim directly for the spot.