

Children with special needs have a physical or intellectual disability, or developmental delay. They may be later than other kids in achieving bladder and bowel control during the day and night. Acquiring bladder and bowel control requires very complex skills. There is a wide age range for day and night control for kids with, and without special needs. The age range for development of bladder and bowel control in kids without special needs is 1.8–4 years for day control and 2–5 years for night control. These skills are often developed at different ages, just like other childhood skills like learning to walk, or talk. Just as kids need practice to walk and talk, they need practice to be dry, and they will have accidents to begin with. Day time dryness is developed before night time dryness, and achieving bladder and bowel control can be both a challenging and rewarding time for the child and the parents, whatever the age it occurs.

Nocturnal enuresis (bedwetting) is not considered a problem in any child until the age of 5 years, and night time control may develop later in kids with special needs.

DryNites[®] Pyjama Pants can help you and your child manage their bedwetting. **DryNites** Pyjama Pants are trim and absorbent, so they provide discreet, absorbent protection. **DryNites** Pyjama Pants are available in two pack sizes for children 4-7 years (17-30kgs) and 8-15 years (27-57kgs) from leading supermarkets, pharmacies and variety stores.

Skills required for achieving bladder and bowel control¹

- Child can stay dry for 2 hours.
- He or she is able to indicate when they need to go to the toilet – feels sensation in bladder or bowel.
- Child can 'hang on' for a short time when required.
- Child can find the toilet and knows what it is.
- He or she is able to get to the toilet and pull down clothes and underpants.
- Child is able to sit on the toilet – with stool and toilet seat insert so they feel safe.
- He or she can do a wee or poo and then wipe themselves – this is a difficult task.
- Capable of getting off the toilet and pulling up clothes and underpants.
- Able to flush the toilet and wash and dry hands.

There are a number of Government Schemes to assist parents of children with special needs in purchasing continence aids, as they may need to use products like **DryNites** Pyjama Pants for a longer time. Regulations vary from state to state so it is best to check with the Continence Foundation of Australia on Freecall 1800 330 066 for information relevant to your state.

Tips for healthy bladder habits in children

- 6–7 drinks each day, preferably water. Limit sweet and caffeine drinks (cola and chocolate drinks).
- Stop "just in case" visits to the toilet (i.e. before going out). Contrary to popular belief, it is good for children to 'hold on' so the bladder learns to store larger amounts of urine.
- Prevent constipation and straining as this can affect the bladder.
- Don't lift kids (to take to the toilet) when you go to bed or during the night.
- Don't restrict fluids in the evening.

For more information on bedwetting, visit  drynites.com.au

1. One step at a time Continence Foundation of Australia Victorian Branch Inc.