

Bedwetting alarms

Bedwetting alarms work by conditioning the child to wake when she wants to wee.

- When the child begins to wet, a bell rings and wakes her up. Because the feeling of a full bladder and the sound of the bell happen at the same time, her brain associates one with the other.
- Over time, usually up to 12 weeks, the child wakes when she feels the need to wee.
- As the time needed for the use of the alarm and mat varies between each child, you and your child need to work with a trained health professional, who will teach

you how to use the alarm properly and follow the program.

- Your doctor can also prescribe short-term medication for school camps and sleepovers.

Remember

- Reassure your child that bedwetting is not his fault.
- Don't criticise or tease him, or offer rewards for something your child cannot control.
- Talk to your doctor to be sure there is no physical cause.
- Contact **Bladder and Bowel Health Australia** for more information and help.

For more information contact

- **HealthyWA**
www.healthywa.wa.gov.au
- **Local school health nurse**
- **Local family doctor**
- **Bladder and Bowel Health Australia**
(9am–4.30pm weekdays)
(08) 9386 9777 (Outside metro 1800 814 925)
www.bladderbowelhealth.org.au
- **National Continence Helpline**
(8am–8pm weekdays – Eastern Standard Time)
1800 330 066
www.continence.org.au
- **Ngala Parenting Line** (8am–8pm everyday)
(08) 9368 9368 (Outside metro 1800 111 546)
www.ngala.com.au
- **Raising Children Network**
www.raisingchildren.net.au

We've used 'he' and 'she' in turn - please change to suit your child.

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

This publication is provided for general education and information purposes. Contact a qualified healthcare professional for any medical advice needed.

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Child and Adolescent Health Service – Community Health

Reprinted November 2018

CAH-003428



Government of Western Australia
Child and Adolescent Health Service
WA Country Health Service

bedwetting



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Bedwetting is common in childhood.

It's sometimes called nocturnal (night-time) enuresis.

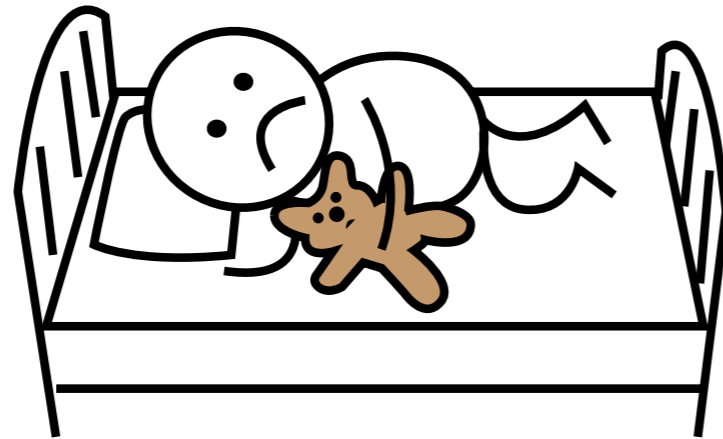
Most children are dry during the day at around 3 years old and are dry at night by 5.

It's not uncommon for pre-schoolers to wet the bed from time to time.

Why do children wet the bed?

Bedwetting happens when children don't wake up to go to the toilet when their bladder is full.

- Bedwetting often runs in families – a brother or sister, a parent, aunt or uncle, or grandparent may also have wet the bed after the age of 5.
- Many children who wet the bed produce more urine (wee) at night than others, due to a hormone which affects how much urine is made while the child is asleep.
- Some children seem to sleep more heavily and be harder to wake than other children. This means they are not able to wake themselves when they have a full bladder and need to go to the toilet.
- Other children who wet the bed have small bladders that can't hold a lot of urine.
- Sometimes bedwetting can be due to a medical problem, so check with your doctor.



- Children who wet the bed are usually healthy and developing as expected.
- Children who wet the bed have no control over this. Bedwetting is not caused by laziness or to get attention.
- Sometimes, children who wet the bed at home are dry when sleeping in a strange place. The worry from being away from home means they sleep more lightly for the first few nights.
- Stressful events can lead to a 'dry' child wetting the bed again, such as a new baby, being unwell, or a family separation or break-up.
- **If your child is ill, has a fever, dribbles urine day and night, or has pain when weeing, see your doctor.**

What you can do

Reassure your child that bedwetting is not her fault and that other children also wet their beds.

- Talk to your child about what she's thinking and feeling. She might just be scared of going to the toilet during the night, such as a fear of the dark.
- Make going to the toilet part of her bedtime routine.
- Make sure the bed is easy to get in and out of, and leave a dim light on, so it's 'safe' for your child to go to the toilet.
- To save washing, cover the mattress with a waterproof sheet and put plastic, covered by a bath towel, over the bottom sheet.
- Encourage her to drink during the day and do not restrict fluids – water is best. Avoid soft drinks and caffeine-based drinks as they can affect how the bladder works.
- If she has wet the bed, comfort her immediately. Make sure she has a shower so she's clean and doesn't smell – otherwise other children may tease her.

What not to do

- ✗ Small children are unlikely to be worried by wetting the bed unless Mum or Dad (or extended family) makes a big issue of it.
- ✗ Don't tease your child, or let others tease him, no matter how annoyed you feel about the extra washing.
- ✗ Taking your child to the toilet during the night may stop wet beds, but will not teach him to become dry.

Getting help

As children grow older, bedwetting is more likely to upset children (and their parents) and affect their confidence.

There is no instant cure for wet beds.

If your child is 5 or over, get some help.

Your doctor can refer you to Bedwetting (Enuresis) Services, or you can contact Bladder and Bowel Health Australia.