



July/August/Sept 2026



Somerset School Nurse Team Newsletter

Welcome to the Somerset School Nurse Team newsletter!

The school nurse team is made up of Specialist Community Public Health Nurses, and Assistant Practitioners. We specialise in promoting the health and wellbeing of children and young people aged 5–19 years and cover primary and secondary schools across Somerset.

This newsletter will be delivered termly, and is intended to keep you up-to-date on all the things we are doing as a service, and will include topics and links relevant to physical and mental health.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful but please do feedback anything you would like to be added.

[Somerset children & young people : Health & Wellbeing : Phn School Nursing](#)



Feedback QR code

Starting Reception

Your child's journey to school starts at home

We understand that all children develop at their own pace, and that we're all learning from birth. When it's time to start school, some children will need more help than others.

There's lots you can do at home to build your child's confidence and independence, helping them feel emotionally and practically prepared to start school.

How can I help my child get ready?

Who can I speak to for help?

What if my child has additional needs or SEND?

For more information on how to help your child get ready for reception, and for information on supporting children with additional needs, scan the QR code or visit <https://startingreception.co.uk>

Are you concerned your child is not yet toilet trained for school?

If so, please see resource below for lots of helpful tips!

The Potty Training Guide



[The Potty Training Guide - Starting Reception](#)

Prior to starting school support can be found from your Health Visitor Team:

Contact the Health Visitor team via their **CHAT Health text line - 07480 635514**

Helpful Tips for Bedtime

Advice for parents and carers from The Sleep Charity



A bedtime routine is important in getting a good night's sleep. A routine helps to support a child's body clock and aid relaxation. Feeling relaxed is important in the run up to bedtime for both parent and child. If your child is experiencing difficulties sleeping it can make you both feel anxious. Youngsters often pick up on stress levels around them, so it is important to create a relaxing and calm environment as bedtime approaches.

Here are some helpful tips to create a relaxing bedtime routine for your child:

- A bedtime routine is important for all ages and a regular routine will help children relax and get ready for bed. Try to start the routine at the same time every night as it helps to support your child's body clock, meaning they are likely to nod off more quickly.
- Set aside time earlier during the day to allow your child to share any worries with you. It can be helpful to share how their day has been and what is planned for the next day. Make sure to give them your full attention.
- Dim the lights in the hour before bed to encourage the production of melatonin, this will help to promote that sleepy feeling.
- Looking at screens can make it harder to fall asleep. So turn off an hour before bedtime, this includes television, laptops, tablets and mobile phones. Screen activities can be mentally stimulating and may also inhibit the production of melatonin, the sleep hormone that helps us to feel drowsy.
- Bedtime role-playing can help children mentally prepare for bedtime. Try letting your child put their Elmer or other toys to bed, tucking them in and saying 'Goodnight!'
- Younger children may enjoy a bedtime box, filled with a selection of activities to carry out during the routine. Hand eye co-ordination activities such as jigsaws, colouring and threading are great for promoting relaxation, such as an Elmer colouring sheet. Older children may prefer to read, play a board game or take part in a craft activity.
- A bath half an hour before bed can help to promote sleep, the decrease in body temperature after a bath can help your child to nod off more easily.
- Massage can help some children to unwind as can mindfulness or simple breathing exercises. Imagine breathing in a beautiful white light and blowing out any worries or troubles each time they exhale. Breathing exercises are also useful for parents to carry out and are a great exercise to enjoy together.
- There's no better way to end the day than snuggled up in bed with a bedtime story – and it's never too early to start reading to your child. Make it part of their bedtime from being very young. It helps develop listening, concentration and vocabulary skills. It's also a great way to spend time with your child before bed.
- Children love predictability so don't be afraid to have one or two books that you use frequently at bedtime – they love the repetition.
- Why not consider making up a story about one of your child's favourite book characters? You can even get your child to make up a story too – it's great for the imagination! If you've read **Elmer and the Bedtime Story** you can have a go at making up stories to go with the titles mentioned by the jungle animals (e.g. The Story of the Vanishing Biscuit).
- Don't forget to end the day on a positive note by sharing 5 great things that have happened during the day.



For more info on sleep issues visit...

[Home - The Sleep Charity](#)



Click on the link below for FUN ACTIVITY IDEAS..

...to help your child get ready for school!

[Starting-Reception Activity-ideas-for-parents.pdf](#)



The Sleep Charity, incorporating The Sleep Council, provide advice and support to empower the nation to sleep better. Find out more: thesleepcharity.co.uk





ChatHealth

Parent advice & support
Healthy lifestyles
School transitioning
Emotional health

is your child 5-19 and are you looking for confidential help and support?

A safe and easy way to contact your School Nursing Team

Just send a text
07480 635 515

Disclaimer: This is not an emergency service. It operates Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm and is only available by using a UK mobile number. Your messages are stored on our secure system and can be seen by the School Nursing Team who run our ChatHealth Service. Although this is a confidential service, in the event of a safeguarding issue the School Nurse has a duty of care to act on this and may escalate the concern.

Improving LIVES

Disclaimer: This is not an emergency service; it operates Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm and is only available by using a UK mobile number. Your messages are stored on our secure system and can be seen by the School Nursing Team who run our ChatHealth Service. Although this is a confidential service, in the event of a safeguarding issue the School Nurse has a duty of care to act on this and may

Get Set for Secondary School

Be Organised

Use your new school's website to research the school layout, what lockers are available and whether swipe cards are needed in the canteen. Once you have your new timetable, print a copy for home. Get any books or equipment you might need ready the night before to save rushing in the morning.

Own Your Independence

Start showing your independence in the lead-up to secondary school by packing your own school bag, laying the table for breakfast or putting dirty clothes in the laundry basket. Being able to rely on yourself is a great skill to have when it comes to starting a new school.

Practise

Before term starts, plan the route you're going to take to get to school. Carry out some practice runs, especially during the times when you would normally be travelling to and from school. Arrange to meet a friend at the entrance on the first day so you can walk in together.

Get Talking

If you're not sure about anything, just ask. The teachers at your new school are all there to help you settle in. Talk to your parents or carers if you are worried or anxious about anything. They've been in your shoes before and will be able to offer support and advice.

Stay Positive

Embrace the change. Think about all the opportunities ahead of you - new subjects, new teachers, learning new sports and making new friends. Teachers won't expect you to get every answer right in class but they will be impressed with a positive, can-do attitude.

Look After Yourself

Eat healthily and get plenty of sleep. Look after your physical and mental health. Find time to relax after school by doing things you enjoy - take a walk in the park, meet up with a friend, listen to some music. Being able to 'switch off' may make you feel more relaxed and energised the next day as a result.

Be Yourself

There is no one else in the world like you. Don't try to be someone you are not. People will like you for who you are. Believe in yourself - you've got this!

Be a Good Friend

Be kind and helpful to others, even if you don't know them that well. Showing kindness and support to someone else might help boost their confidence as well as make you feel good too. Showing empathy and understanding is a great way to start building up positive friendships.

twinkl

SCREEN SMART

www.SocialWorkersToolbox.com

GUIDE YOUR CHILD. PROTECT THEIR FUTURE.

WHY IT MATTERS

Too much screen time can affect sleep, focus, mood, creativity, and real-life connections.

RECOMMENDED LIMITS (GUIDELINES)

Under 2 years: Avoid screens (except video calls)
2 to 5 years: Max 1 hour/day of quality content
6+ years: Consistent limits with balance

SET HEALTHY HABITS

- Create screen-free zones (meals, bedrooms)
- Watch and use content together
- Set time limits and stick to them
- Encourage outdoor play, books & hobbies

SIGNS OF TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME

- IRRITABLE OR MOODY
- TROUBLE SLEEPING
- POOR FOCUS OR LOSS OF INTEREST
- DIFFICULTY STOPPING OR MELTDOWNS
- WITHDRAWN FROM FAMILY & FRIENDS

TIPS THAT WORK

- BE CONSISTENT: Kids thrive on routine and clear boundaries.
- LEAD BY EXAMPLE: Limit your own screen time. They copy what they see.
- OFFER BETTER CHOICES: Give engaging alternatives like play, art, or stories.
- TALK & LISTEN: Understand their world. Build trust and guide.
- PRaise GOOD CHOICES: Encourage balance and celebrate progress.

SCREEN TIME CHECKLIST

- Do we have screen-free zones and times?
- Is the content age-appropriate and meaningful?
- Are we balancing screens with real life?
- Do we talk about what they watch or play?
- Are we leading by example?

WHAT KIDS NEED MOST

- BE HEARD
- BE PRESENT
- BE ACTIVE
- BE YOU

SCREENS ARE TOOLS. YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S GUIDE. CHOOSE BALANCE. CHOOSE CONNECTION.

YOU'VE GOT THIS! Small steps. Big impact.

Did you know constipation can be a common cause of bedwetting?

Constipation can go unnoticed except for the bedwetting, so **ALWAYS** check the bowel out first.

A full bowel can put pressure on the bladder which can then cause bedwetting.

Your child should be passing at least 4 soft stools a week, anything less could indicate constipation and need treatment.

POO CHECKER

What's your poo telling you?

	TYPE 1 Small hard lumps like rabbit droppings. This suggests severe constipation.
	TYPE 2 Sausage shaped, but hard and lumpy. This suggests constipation.
	TYPE 3 Sausage shaped, but hard, with cracks on the surface. This suggests constipation.
	TYPE 4 A soft, smooth sausage - THE IDEAL POO!
	TYPE 5 Separate soft blobs. May be fine if the child is well and softer poo can be accounted for e.g. increased intake of fibre or taking laxative.
	TYPE 6 A mushy stool. May be fine if the child is well and softer poo can be accounted for e.g. increased intake of fibre or taking laxative.
	TYPE 7 A liquid stool. This could be diarrhoea or overflow.

*Based on the Bristol Stool Form Scale produced by Dr KW Heaton, Reader in Medicine at the University of Bristol.
www.eric.org.uk HelpLine 0801 169 9949 @eric_charity #ERICUK1 © ERIC 2026

Advice for children with constipation -

ERIC



Somerset School Nurse Team Contact Details:

Email: schoolnurseduty@somerset.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 790 9854