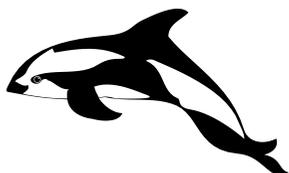


For the younger child.....

Don't talk to young children about "squeezing" - they get very confused! Use a balloon to show them that when it blows up it gets harder. Tell them they have something like a balloon in their tummy and that it slowly fills up with wee. When it gets full it gets hard and 'tells' them it wants to go to the toilet. Of course, like babies, it can't talk properly... but babies can make you understand they want something and like a baby, if you don't take notice your bladder will "talk" louder and may even put a bit of wee in your pants to show you it's serious. Bladders are also a bit like some children- the kind who, when someone asks them to do something, they do the opposite... or when asked not to do something, they just keep doing it. So... when you take your bladder to the toilet you've got to remember **not to push**. If you push, you're telling your bladder to 'hurry up and finish'.....and its not going to like that! It gets angry, only lets a bit out and leaves the rest inside. Instead, you've got to trick it. Just sit/stand there, *DON'T PUSH*, and wait for the wee to start coming out (your bladder is thinking if you're going to push or not). When the wee starts to come out don't think 'Great, now I can push!' If you do that, your bladder will know you were tricking and will stop too early again. Let it drip at the end.

You might like to explain "pushing" as your child 'teasing' the bladder... 'Yes you can do a wee/ No you can't'.

There is of course no guarantee your child will believe or understand any of this nor that they'll change any of their ways. You'll need to repeat it many times. Use rewards and so on for changes you notice in weeing patterns (e.g. sitting longer, undies down). This means you may need to go into the toilet with them from time to time. A final trick is to get them to blow *long and hard* on a party whistle before they start weeing - it can help relax the pelvic floor muscles ☺.



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Relaxed Weeing

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First things first.... THE POSITION

In order to start off with a relaxed pelvic floor...it's best to sit! Boys are often disgusted by the thought. It's still worth talking with them about it (otherwise get them to stand on a step). Feet need to be supported so the hips are at 90° (the way YOU sit!). You'll need to get a platform or step (eg tommy turtle or higher). Undies must be down to ankles. This means you're not using your leg and bottom muscles to hold your legs apart or keep your balance - so your pelvic floor can relax.

Next.....

Information for the older child is on the next page and for the younger child on the back page.

For the older child...

The sequence is Squeeze....Relax... Wait

Squeeze *The idea behind squeezing is that it makes relaxation easier. Try this exercise.... squeeze your fist tightly for a few minutes and then let it slowly relax. Your hand feels 'useless'. Moving the muscles makes them 'work' again. Your pelvic floor works exactly the same. When you squeeze your buttock (bottom) muscles, you tighten and lift up your pelvic floor. With practice, the squeeze becomes more 'selective' and the technique works better because the leg and tummy muscles aren't squeezed. There are many ways of teaching this to your child.... pretend they are 'busting' and need to hold on or that they feel a 'fart/ fluff /etc' coming and want to hold it in for a short while, boys can try lifting their penis in the bath or shower using these muscles. Get them to practice this as often as you can e.g. on car trips.*

Relax *This is the hard bit! Remember, the only way all the wee will come out is with a relaxed pelvic floor. Sometimes it's easier to start with some sort of 'relaxation trigger'. This can be.... thinking about something nice, rubbing a piece of velvet or satin between fingers or against the face and thinking about how it makes you feel, hanging a poster in the toilet....*

If your child seems to be committed and is not making progress within a month, we will move onto "Biofeedback" as a way of teaching relaxation. Ring the rooms to arrange.

Wait *The message is that YOU aren't actually doing the wee, it's your BLADDER that's doing it. You're only there to take your bladder to the toilet and DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING ELSE ACTIVE except the "squeeze". If relaxation is going well there won't be a need to push even a little bit to start and the wee will drip on for what seems like forever at the end.*

Other thoughts:

There are children who'll catch on straight away and others who'll find it impossible.

Young children have a lot of problem with the idea and in remembering to do it all the time.

Boys don't like sitting to wee and unfortunately the less practice they have at that position the less quickly they become expert. The trouble is that you don't know if they're doing it properly or not.... and they'll always say they are. Your best guide will be their symptoms.

If nothing has changed at the end of the first month and your child seems not that involved, it's best to take a break.

Although it is difficult, try to remember that none of this is easy!

If you had to do this yourself you would likely forget many times.

You have a lot more experience with pelvic floor muscles than your child has.