

## **Quarter of pupils avoid school loos, survey finds: Time for a 'bog standard', urges leading charity**

A quarter of pupils in England's schools avoid using toilets, according to a new survey by a charity which today launches a campaign to get the Government to introduce new regulations to make school toilets healthier and easier to use.

ERIC, the UK charity helping children with continence problems, points out that the limited regulations that do exist don't include vital things like supply of toilet paper or soap. Netmums is backing ERIC's campaign and people can support by signing an online petition for a new 'Bog Standard'. Lobbying letters will be sent to Government Ministers, and the charity is seeking a meeting with the Schools Minister to press its case.

Regulations to ensure toilet and water facilities used by school staff meet proper standards do not extend to toilets used by pupils. School toilets have a big impact on health and wellbeing but many schools are failing their pupils with poorly maintained, dirty and smelly toilets.

The newly published survey was carried out by ERIC and Netmums in November, revealing

- a quarter of pupils said they avoid going to the toilet because they are dirty
- 31% pupils said they had toilets with broken locks
- 19% pupils avoid drinking so they don't have to go to the toilet
- 53% parents felt their child does not drink enough at school
- 91% parents thoughts pupil toilets should be cleaned twice a day or more
- 91% parents thought that cleanliness/condition of pupil toilets should be a priority for schools

ERIC's petition can be signed here: <http://www.petitionbuzz.com/petitions/bogstandard>

Jenny Perez, ERIC Director said; "Schools should meet the needs of their pupils in this area. Smelly, dirty toilets and a lack of privacy are unacceptable. Adults don't have to put up with these problems - so why should children?"

"There is a strong link between poor toilet facilities and continence problems like wetting and soiling. These affect 1 in 12 children and young people, causing loss of self-esteem and bullying. For most, a cure can be found, but all treatments require access to proper water and toilet facilities.

"Poor toilets attract poor behavior and unpleasant school toilets, a lack of soap and toilet paper and other basics are a recipe for these young people's continuing suffering. ERIC will be lobbying for these changes through our Bog Standard campaign. Please sign the online petition and help us ensure school toilets improve for good."

ERIC is working with the Paediatric Continence Forum, British Toilet Association, School Councils UK and the Community Practitioners and Health Visitors Association to implement the campaign.

### **Ends**

For further information or images please contact:  
Natasha Collins-Daniel  
Education and Media Manager  
Email: [natasha@eric.org.uk](mailto:natasha@eric.org.uk) Phone: 0117 301 2102

## Notes:

1. ERIC (Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence) is a national children's health charity dealing with bedwetting, daytime wetting, constipation and soiling in children and young people. ERIC provides information, support and resources to families and health professionals on bladder and bowel problems.
2. ERIC's Bog Standard campaign aims to improve the standards and access to pupil toilet facilities nationwide. The campaign launched in 2004 at the Houses of Parliament, receiving all-party parliamentary support.

### Ways to contact ERIC:

- 24/7 Helpline 0845 370 8008
- Website [www.eric.org.uk](http://www.eric.org.uk)
- Text 447 624 811 636

3. **Netmums and ERIC survey November 2011** – top line results below. A full summary of responses is available on request.  
29.3% respondents were talking about nursery toilets, 63% primary school toilets and 7% secondary  
53% parents felt their child does not drink enough at school  
91% parents thoughts pupil toilets should be cleaned twice a day or more  
91% parents thought that cleanliness/condition of pupil toilets should be a priority for schools  
80% parents thought there should be a legal framework in place to ensure a good standard of privacy, hygiene and cleanliness in pupil toilets  
38% pupils thought their toilets were ok, 18% thought they were dirty and 7% thought they were really dirty  
40% pupils thought their toilets smelt not too bad, 17% quite bad and 14% awful – really stinky  
40% pupils said they sometimes use their school toilets, 7% said hardly ever and 17% said only when I have to and I try and avoid them as much as possible  
24% pupils said they sometimes avoid going to the toilet because the school toilets are dirty and 12% said they often avoid going  
19% pupils avoid drinking so they don't have to go to the toilet  
50% pupils said that other pupils do not keep the toilets clean and tidy  
60% pupils said that other pupils misbehaved in the toilets  
31% pupils said their school had toilets with broken locks