

South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust  
Barnsley Children's Therapy Services

## Smearing

Name:

NHS Number:

There can be a number of reasons why a child may smear their own faeces, and each reason requires a different approach to changing their behaviour.

### 1. Poor motor skills

- Is often trying to wipe themselves but unable to do so due to poor control & dexterity, struggles to complete without vision
- Sometimes will wipe hands on any available surface (wall, towels etc.) to try to get clean

Practice

- Develop general fine motor control & dexterity (threading, posting, construction games)
- Practice bottom wiping

### 2. Texture (like the feel)

- Soft, smooth, squelchy... often a pleasant sensation if you don't associate poo with 'dirty'

Replace the sensory need (often touch seeking) with a more appropriate one

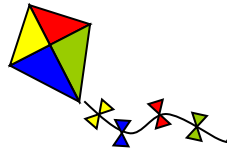
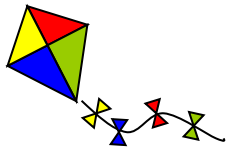
- Provide similar textures (gloop, play dough, chocolate mousse, chocolate spread, peanut butter etc.) to play with/ explore
- Do this regularly '**every day**' where possible to reduce the need to gain the experience themselves

### 3. Scent (like the smell)

- Strong, pungent aroma, can be pleasurable to those 'seeking' or those that need a lot of sensory information to 'register' smell

Replace the sensory need (seeking smell) with a more appropriate one

- Provide similar aromas (pungent, acrid) such as marmite, vinegar, coffee grounds
- Facilitate play with these smells '**every day**'



#### **4. Behavioural - Like the chaos/ attention**

- Difficult to ignore as need to clean up
- Can become a habit

##### Behavioural strategies

- Use clothing to make it harder to get to their bottom
  - i. Baby grows/ onesies (may even need to put these on backwards to reduce access to poppers)
  - ii. Dungarees, pinafore dresses with tights , clothing that takes time to remove
- Provide 'dedicated special time' to complete parent: child activities, to reduce the need to gain parental attention through smearing
- Use motivators/ rewards for positive outcomes

#### **5. Infection**

- May be worth discussing with your GP or Paediatrician especially if smearing happens at night or early morning

**Contact Childrens Therapy if further advice or information is required  
01226 644396**