

# Ideas for developing Interoceptive Awareness:

## Toileting

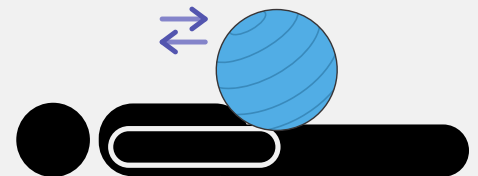
Some children and young people have not developed an awareness of when they need to go to the toilet as they do not sense the feeling of a full bladder or bowel. This requires interoceptive awareness, and the activities below can help to develop this sense of fullness.

When the bladder or bowel is full, it will be similar to feeling pressure on internal organs. This can be replicated using an exercise ball or peanut roll:

1. Child or young person **lies on their stomach** over an exercise ball or peanut roll, thus placing pressure where the bowel and bladder are located. Please ensure the ball or roll is a suitable size for the child or young person; they should be able to lie on it with their hands easily reaching the floor. A peanut roll will offer more stability than a ball.



2. Child or young person lies on the floor **on their stomach while adult rolls ball up and down their back**, applying adequate pressure. The focus should be on the lower back area to give the sense of pressure on this part of the body.



3. Child or young person **lies on their back**. Place an item on the child or young person's body on the area in which the bladder and bowel are located to develop an awareness of the feeling of pressure. The item, of course, should not be too heavy. Examples might include a beanbag, a football or a 1kg. bag of rice. Leave the item for a few seconds each time.



4. Teaching in the moment  
If you have an idea of when a child or young person is likely to need the toilet (e.g. they tend to have accidents at the same time every day or they recently had a drink and haven't yet used the toilet), use a visual support to communicate 'Full'. Then direct them to use the toilet, and after, use a visual support to communicate 'Empty'. This will help the child or young person to focus on internal body messages, and link them to a meaning and action.

