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A summary of how teachers/coaches/team leaders and carers can help support children & teens with IBD

## What is IBD...

The two most common forms of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) are Ulcerative Colitis and Crohn's Disease. These are life-long chronic conditions which can cause severe stomach pain. Although UC and CD are pathologically different, they have common features. In both, the intestines become swollen, inflamed and ulcerated. The diseases share many of the same symptoms.



*"sanitation is a human right" Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General*

# THE BOTTOM LINE!

## IBD is not...

- **Caused by stress**
- **Infectious or contagious**
- **A short term illness**
- **Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)**

### *Actions and communication that can help:*

- Let the child/young person leave and return to the classroom discreetly and without having to get permission whenever they need the toilet, *any toilet*.
- Appreciate that they may arrive late at school or training because of an urgent need to use a toilet or because joint pains/cramps or constipation have slowed them down.
- Be aware that a child/young person with IBD may need to take medication during school hours and/or need extra meal breaks/special diets.
- Respect their need for privacy; they should decide how much other pupils are told.
- Try to be alert for bullying from others, try not to be over protective or segregate them from activities.
- Let them judge for themselves how much sport/PE or after-school activities they can join in - but don't stop them trying whatever they want to try.
- Don't exclude pupils/team members with IBD from school trips: talk to them about their needs and try and arrange to meet these, eg with an aisle seat at the theatre or cinema and using a coach with a toilet.
- If they are unwell at school, don't rush to send them home – sometimes they may be able to continue after a rest.
- IBD can cause the child/teen to alienate friends, encourage the class to keep in touch, e.g. with cards and phone calls or by email, if they are absent for long periods.
- Liaise with parents and provide notes on lessons, arrange for work to be set by email or suggest 'Home Tuition'.
- Arrange a liaison teacher for the child/young person, their parents and other teachers to talk to.
- Discuss with parents/carers if possible, an individual health care plan should be drawn up for each child/young person, which can be passed on.
- For more information, contact [info@gutskykids.ie](mailto:info@gutskykids.ie)
- Links and resources can be found on [www.gutskykids.ie](http://www.gutskykids.ie)