

Eczema Outreach Support

Supporting a child with eczema in a school or nursery



Eczema Outreach Support is a UK-wide charity dedicated to empowering and connecting families of children with eczema.

www.eos.org.uk



Helping children & young people with eczema thrive

A little recap

This summary set of slides provides you with a recap of the content we covered in today's workshop. The animations aren't included due to the PDF format used. These are available to view on our website.

Please do get in touch with EOS any time if you have questions following the session.

Just drop an email to schools@eos.org.uk

A bit about eczema

- 1 in 5 children, across genders and ethnic groups
- 2.5 million children in the UK!
- Dry, itchy and often sore
- Atopic - like asthma, allergies, hayfever
- Chronic condition with no cure
- Needs ongoing management
- Can significantly impact mental wellbeing

What causes eczema?

- A combination of factors
- Genetics
- Environment
- Immune system
- Top layer of the skin lets moisture escape
- And allows irritants/allergens in



Useful to know

- Can look different on different skin tones
- Any age
- Widespread or localised patches
- Hidden or visible

Useful to know

- Ups and downs
- Flares
- Eczema triggers
- Can feel dismissed by some health care professionals

Treatments for eczema

- Emollients – regular application, even when it looks ok
- Soap substitute
- Garments/bandages
- Topical steroids (corticosteroids) – only on affected areas
- More treatments available (usually prescribed by Dermatology)
 - Other topical creams
 - Phototherapy
 - Systemic drugs

Mild eczema



Severe eczema

Battle of the emollients!

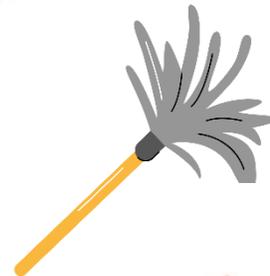
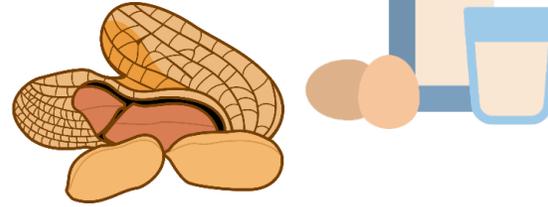
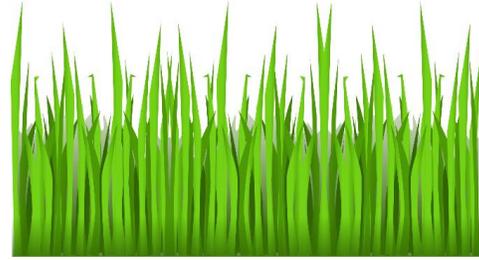
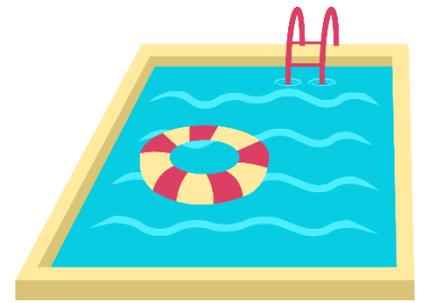
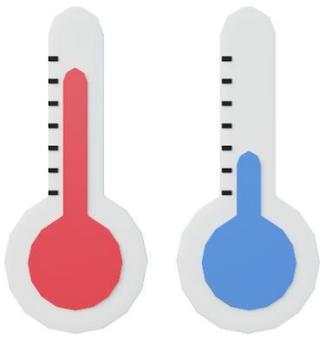
- Can be a challenge
- The cause of many tantrums or rows!
- Stingy and/or sticky
- Self-management when possible
- Holding a pencil is tricky after applying!

The worst symptom?

- The itch!
- Can be all consuming
- “Bone deep”
- Itch/Scratch cycle
- Distract/Keep hands busy
- Often worse at night

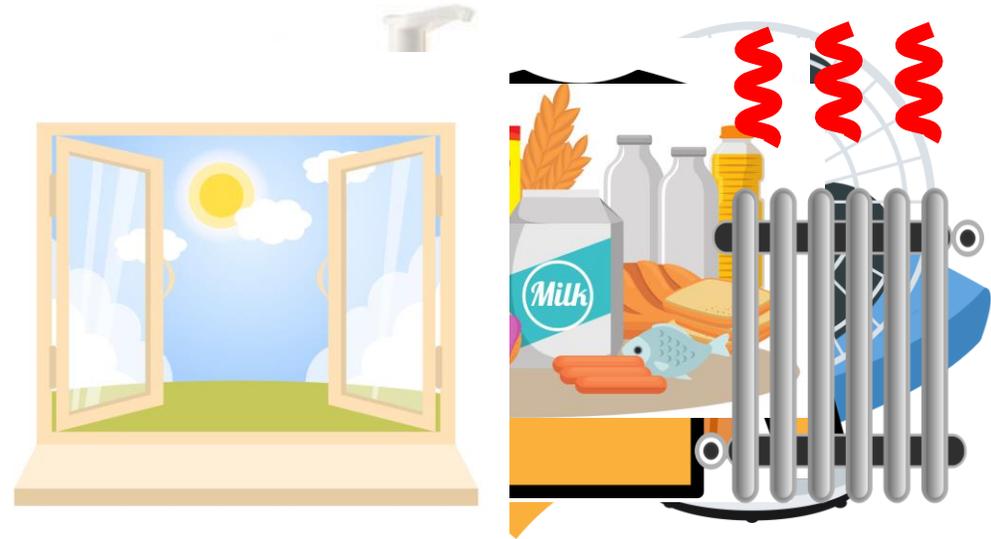


Common triggers in schools and nurseries



What can help?

- Cushion/mat
- Ice pack/fan
- Fidgety toys
- Gloves
- Easy access to creams
- Soap substitute
- Sitting away from window/radiator
- Garments under uniform
- Avoid certain foods, if appropriate



The impact of eczema

- Varies with the individual
- Often affects sleep
- Time-consuming, tedious treatments
- Painful



The impact of eczema

- May miss out on some activities
- Self-esteem
- Can affect family relationships
- Psychological impact can be huge



Possible impacts of eczema at school/nursery

- Triggers
 - Punctuality
 - Absences: Medical appointments, flare ups, reluctance to attend
 - Certain activities e.g. swimming, painting
 - Residential/outings
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- A large, solid green shape with rounded, organic edges is positioned in the bottom right corner of the slide, partially overlapping the white background.

Possible impacts of eczema at school/nursery

- Concentration levels
 - Self-conscious
 - Feeling different affects confidence
 - Unwanted comments/questions
 - Bullying
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- A large, solid green shape in the bottom right corner of the slide, consisting of several overlapping rounded forms.

What can you do?

- Communicate with parents/carers
- Signpost to EOS
- Access to child's care plan
- Check in with the child
- Listen and observe
- Dealing with questions/comments

What can you do?

- Remind about creams
- Support subtly and sensitively
- Be understanding if late/tired/fidgety
- Make adjustments for triggers e.g fan, coolpack
- Allow flexibility on uniform/start time?
- Review school/nursery policy?

Feedback from a member of our advisory panel

Give concession as you would any other chronic condition and make them feel that you're in their corner. I would have liked a quiet sit down conversation in which the teacher told me: "I'm here to help and don't hesitate if you need anything."

Be hyper vigilant to bullying, children with eczema are often not confident enough to stand up or speak up for themselves. My early experiences of this have left permanent scars.

The scenarios

A separate link is sent with details of the following four scenarios. In this, we outline the challenge that each child faces, followed by our suggestions for how you could help.



Let's hear from some children...

Take a listen to Esme...



I have a new teacher who has eczema too and knows what can make it worse. She reminds me to put on my creams and I can wear a comfy top. The headteacher says it's OK to come in late if I am up all night with my eczema. I like school a lot more now!

How would you help Esme?



Let's hear from some children...

Take a listen to Ben...



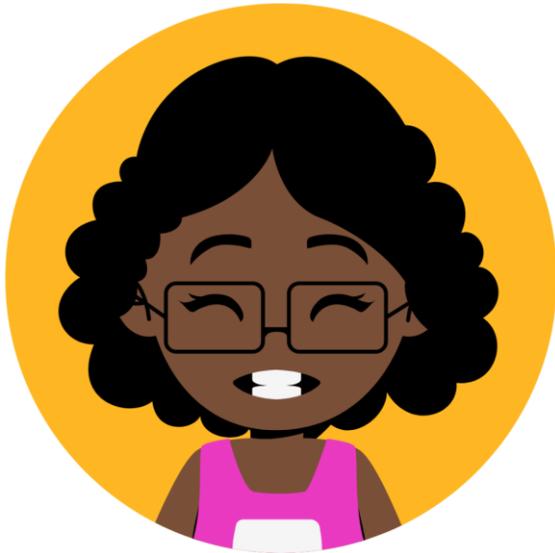
Eczema Outreach Support did a workshop for my class. At first, I was scared it might make things worse. But everyone thought it was fun and liked the moisture meters. They don't say mean things anymore and most people don't mind holding my hand now because they know they can't catch it.

How would you help Ben?



Let's hear from some children...

Take a listen to Maisie...



My parents spoke to the head teacher to see if there was somewhere else I could put my cream on. I have a room I can use now, which is much better than the toilet! Since I get itchy when I'm hot, the teacher lets me finish PE early so I have time to put on my creams.

How would you help Maisie?

Let's hear from some children...

Take a listen to Luke...



I had a great time! We had a meeting with the teacher which helped me feel better.

*I was allowed to take my own sheets and duvet cover and **lots** of spare clothes. I had somewhere to go to put my creams on and I knew I could go to the teacher if my skin was sore. I loved all the activities. My teacher said I didn't have to do the ones in the water because that made my eczema worse. But, I used lots of extra cream and I didn't miss any.*

How would you help Luke?

What EOS does

- Welcome pack with resources for parent and child
- We offer a listening ear – we understand
- We can share some practical hints and tips
- Peer support for parents/carers
- High 5 Club - online catch ups, animations



What EOS does

- Face to face events
- Workshops for school/nursery classes
- Junior and senior workshop caters for different ages
- Training for health visitors
- Awareness raising
- Lots more!



Our wellbeing resources

Planning a Response

Have people ever made comments or asked questions about your eczema?

Why does your skin look like that?

Can I catch that if I touch you?

What's wrong with your skin?

Most of the time, people are just curious and don't know what eczema is. But not knowing when people might comment or ask questions can make us worried about showing our skin and meeting new people. Sometimes people might also say things about our eczema that are hurtful or unkind.

One thing that can help us feel more confident and in control of the situation is to plan how you will respond to comments and questions about your eczema. Here are some ways you might respond...

Shutting it down and changing the subject



This makes it clear you don't want to talk about eczema but tells the person what you are happy to talk about. This might be especially useful with people you don't know very well.

Telling people before they ask



You might feel more confident if you bring your eczema up first. This can help you control the situation and put yourself and the other person at ease.

Responding confidently

Planning what you want to say about your eczema will help you feel more confident. Most of the time people are just curious, so you can help them learn more about eczema.



Ask a friend for help

If you're feeling underconfident, you could ask a friend or family member to respond for you.



Worry Ladders

Here is an example of how to use the fear ladder. Don't forget to ask someone you trust, like a friend or parent, to help you come up with the different steps. They can help hold you ladder and make sure you don't fall off!

Most Scary



Least Scary

Don't move up the ladder until you feel confident with the step you are on.

Step 5: Wearing shorts or a skirt that show the eczema on my legs in public.

Step 4: Go to a public place wearing shorts/a skirt for 10 minutes.

Step 3: Go for a walk near my house with friends or family wearing shorts or a skirt

Step 2: Hang out with my friends at home wearing shorts or a skirt.

Step 1: Wearing shorts or a skirt at home when I'm with my family.

Make sure you put the least scary task at the bottom and work your way up to achieving the thing you are scared of at the top (step 5).

Follow up email

I will email through links to:

- Survey (certificate issued on completion)
 - Slide summary from today
 - Notes about the scenarios we covered
 - Our school/nursery leaflet
 - Information about our school/nursery workshops
 - Our Wellbeing resources
 - Video on applying emollients
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- A decorative green abstract shape, resembling a stylized leaf or a cluster of overlapping circles, is located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Thank you for joining us today!



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