



IBD in the classroom – Blackboards and Bathrooms



We know that inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) can be unpredictable, embarrassing, stressful and even debilitating – especially for children. We also know, parents of children living with IBD have learned to create an environment of support, compassion and encouragement in their child's world.

However, when it comes to school, this environment can be busy and overwhelming and many teachers do not have the expertise or insights, like that of a parent, to deal with IBD. Teachers need support, when it comes to IBD children in their classrooms. Likewise, IBD children and their parents definitely need the support of teachers!

Teachers are some of the most influential people in our lives. They help us define who we are and who we have the potential to become. They provide us with skills to respond to challenges and crises. They inspire us and are an integral part of who we are. And, they have the daunting responsibility of shaping the minds and futures of dozens of children every single day. Some children will enter the classroom with IBD and if a teacher is unprepared, it is the IBD child who will suffer most.

To help educators best support the needs of their IBD students, Robbie's Rainbow and The Canadian Digestive Health Foundation collaborated to develop Blackboards and Bathrooms.

Blackboards and Bathrooms is an educational resource, which strives to help teachers understand what IBD is and sheds light on how symptoms and treatment can impact behaviour and academic performance. It also equips teachers with strategies and resources they can employ at school.

ROBBIE'S RAINBOW MISSION

Our mission is to help improve the health and quality of life of children and teens living with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis (IBD).

We are committed to helping guide and support IBD families, teens and children by providing access to critical treatments and care, building educational resources and patient advocacy.

The goals of the program are to :

Foster an environment that minimizes the negative impact symptoms of IBD can have on a child's educational experience and academic performance

Help teachers communicate effectively with students, their caregivers and classmates,

Provide teachers with easy-to access resources.

Blackboards and Bathrooms provide educators with a high-level introduction to this chronic disease. More importantly, it explains how symptoms can vary dramatically over days, weeks and months and how these variations can result in fluctuations in energy, attention, focus, participation and achievement.

Blackboards and Bathrooms stresses the importance of immediate bathroom access and even includes a personal "All Access Pass" that empowers children who need to leave the classroom, because of persistent symptoms, to do so without restriction or questions.

It addresses pain, the impact of various therapies, the need for special accommodations (when necessary) for field trips and physical education, and identifies social issues like bullying.

To download your FREE copy of Blackboards and Bathrooms, visit: www.RobbiesRainbow.ca



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