

PART I

Facts About Bedwetting

You Are Not Alone

Michael's Story

Michael is a 9-year-old boy who saw me for a bedwetting visit a few years ago. When I entered the room, Michael was sitting on a chair next to his mom and dad. His arms were folded in his lap and his face was pointed toward the floor.

I knew right away that Michael was embarrassed about coming to see me. I started the visit by asking him lots of questions about school and his favorite hobbies. After a few minutes, Michael brightened up and we started talking about why kids wet at night and what they can do to become dry. When I told Michael how many children wet the bed, his jaw dropped. He couldn't believe it. All these years he thought he was the only one who woke up every morning in a cold, wet bed. As I watched Michael's face, I saw a huge burden melt away like a snowman on a warm afternoon. The rest of the visit sailed by. Michael became dry 4 weeks after he started the program.

One of the first things I tell kids at bedwetting visits is that they are not the only ones who have trouble staying dry at night. Because bedwetting is a private matter, people usually do not talk about it outside the family. As a result, most children (and some parents) think they are the only ones who have the problem. This is not true. Although it's hard to believe, there are more than 5 million children in the United States who wet the bed. I will discuss why this happens







in Chapter 3. Right now, I want to give you a sense of how big the number **5 MILLION** really is.

- If 5 million elephants were lined up end to end, they would stretch all the way around the world.
- If you built a tower out of 5 million soccer balls, it would be as tall as the Washington Monument.
- If you invited 5 million children to see a professional baseball game, you would need 100 stadiums to find them all seats.

When I see children at work, they often ask me how many kids their own age wet the bed. The best way to understand these numbers is to figure out how many kids wet the bed in different grades at school. First, we'll look at children in elementary school. Let's say we take a school that has 500 children from kindergarten to fifth grade (this means the school has kids ranging from 5 to 10 years of age). Table 1 shows how many kids wet the bed in each grade.

When you add up these numbers, it turns out that in an elementary school of 500 children, 50 are wet at night!

Table 1
Number of Students Who Wet the Bed in an Elementary School of 500 Children

Grade	Number Who Wet the Bed
Fifth	 (4)
Fourth	 (5)
Third	 (6)
Second	 (8)
First	 (10)
Kindergarten	 (17)

Krista's Story




A few years ago, I saw a 10-year-old girl for a bedwetting visit. When I told Krista how many kids are wet at night, she did not look relieved. Instead, she focused on the fifth-grade numbers. "You mean there are only 4 kids in my grade who wet the bed?" I told her that was actually a large number, but sensing her disappointment I did some homework. I found out there are approximately 50,000 elementary schools in the United States. If there are 4 fifth graders at each school who wet the bed, that means there are 200,000 fifth graders in the country with the same problem. That number made Krista feel a lot better.

Now let's do the same thing for middle school. Because middle schools are usually bigger than elementary schools, we'll take a school that has 1,000 children from sixth through eighth grade (this means the school has kids ranging from 11 to 13 years of age). Table 2 shows how many kids wet the bed in each grade.


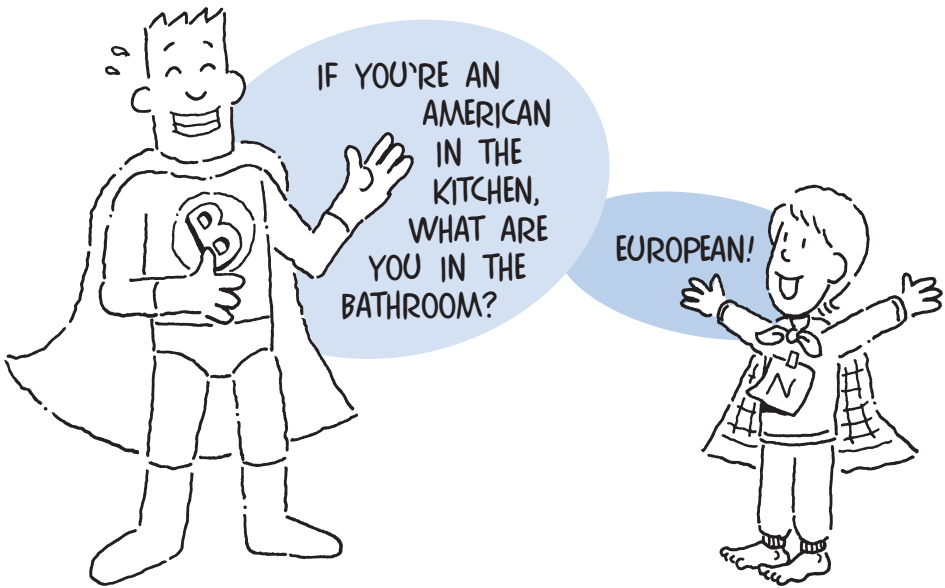
When you add up these numbers, it turns out that in a middle school of 1,000 children, 31 are wet at night!

Now comes the interesting part. When you add up the thousands and thousands of schools in our country, you can see why there are

Table 2
Number of Students Who Wet the Bed in a Middle School of 1,000 Children

Grade	Number Who Wet the Bed
Eighth	 (8)
Seventh	 (10)
Sixth	 (13)

more than 5 million children in the United States who wet the bed at night. **You are not alone!**



COACH'S CORNER

My husband wet the bed until he was 7, but my 9-year-old is still wet at night. When will he become dry?

Every year, 15% of children become dry on their own. Although children usually follow the same pattern as their parents, this is not always the case. Because there is no way to predict when your son will overcome his wetting, I recommend that you start the program if he's motivated to become dry.

My daughter used to wet the bed every night, but now she's dry half the time. What percentage of 11-year-olds are still wet at night?

I always use the school-based statistics with children because those numbers are easier to understand. Table 3 illustrates how many children wet the bed at different ages.

Table 3
Percentage of Children Who Wet the Bed According to Age

Age	Percent Who Are Wet
5-year-olds	20%
6-year-olds	12%
7-year-olds	10%
8-year-olds	7%
9-year-olds	6%
10-year-olds	5%
11-year-olds	4%
12-year-olds	3%
13-year-olds	2.5%
14-year-olds	2%
15-year-olds	1.5%
16-year-olds	1%
