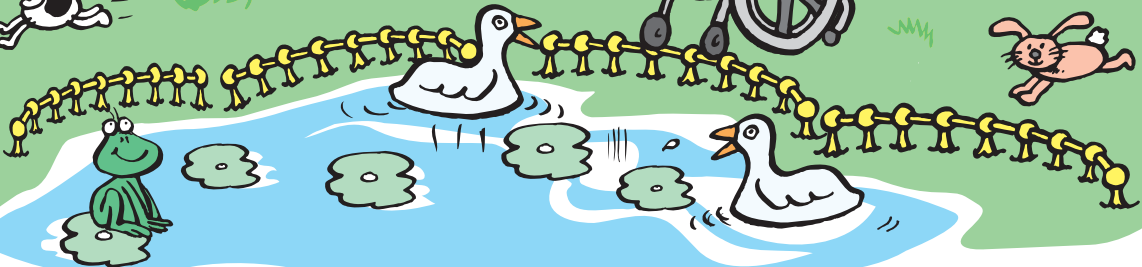


# Millie

## Goes to Camp

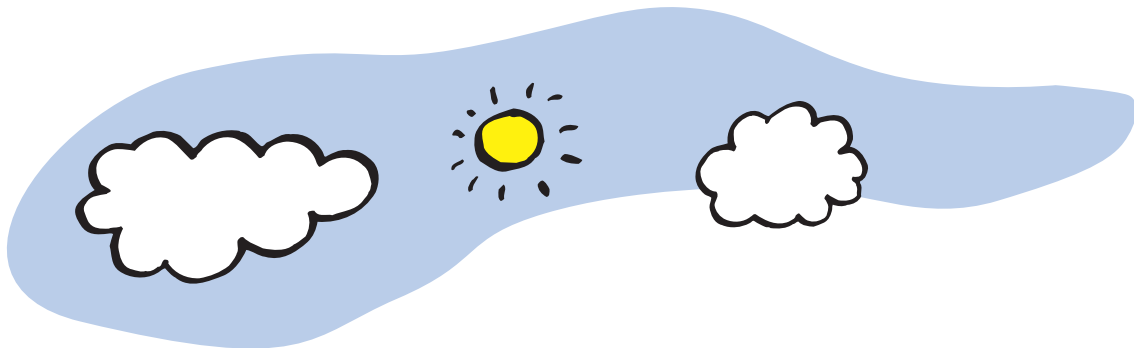






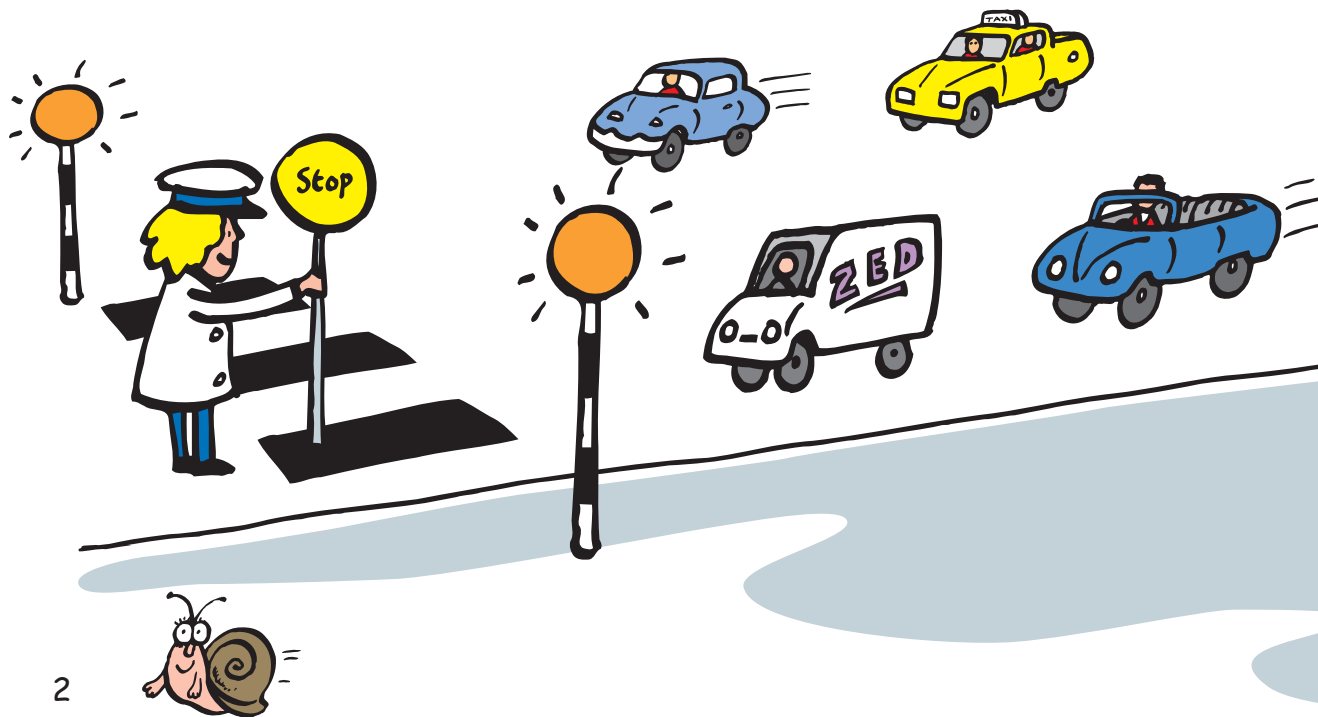
This is Millie. She lives with her Mom and Dad and little brother Peter near the park. Millie likes living by the park. She likes to feed the ducks. She likes it when her Dad pushes her and Peter high on the swings.





She likes it when the whole family goes on bike rides.

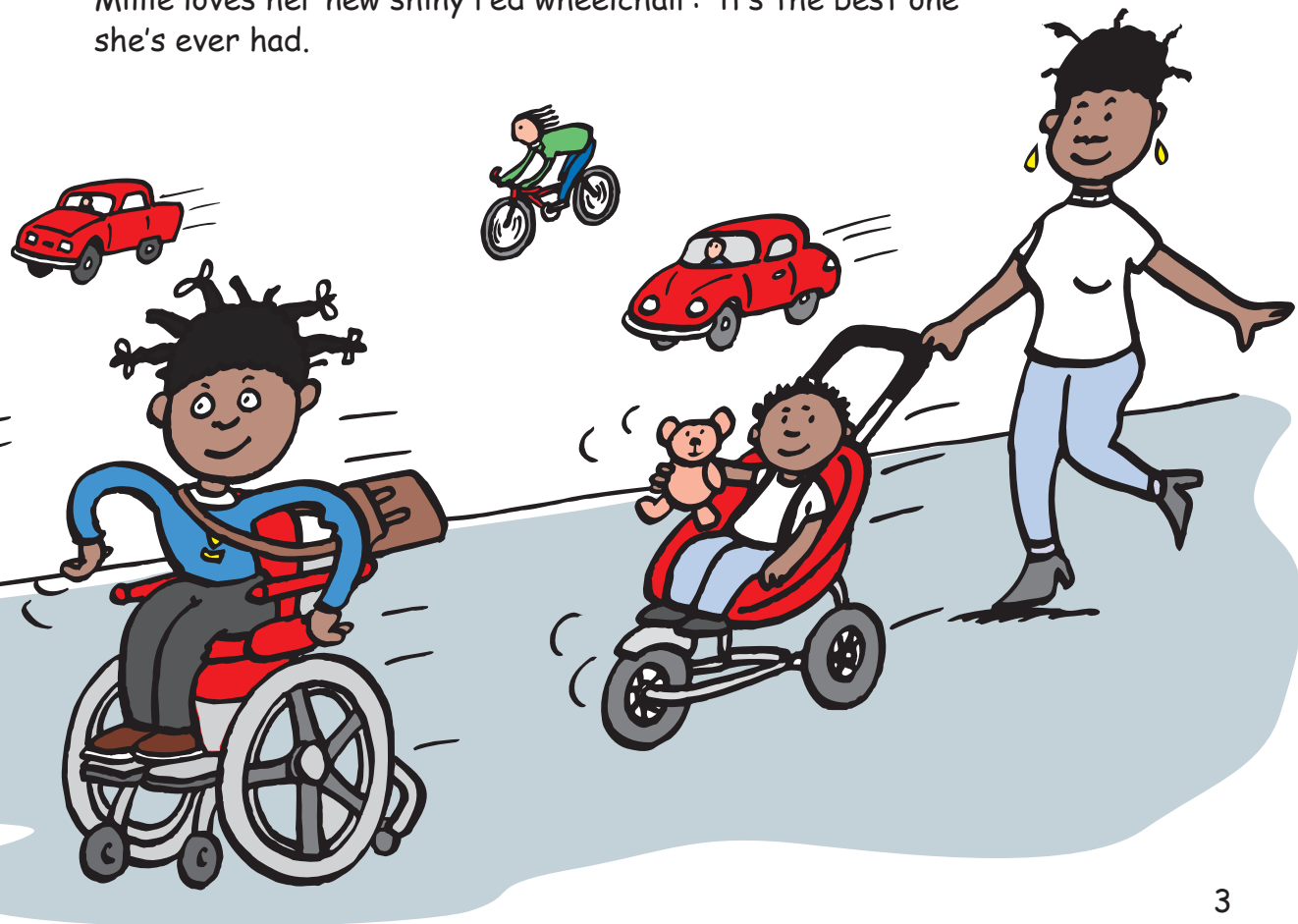
Best of all, she likes to race her Mom and Peter when they go to school in the mornings.

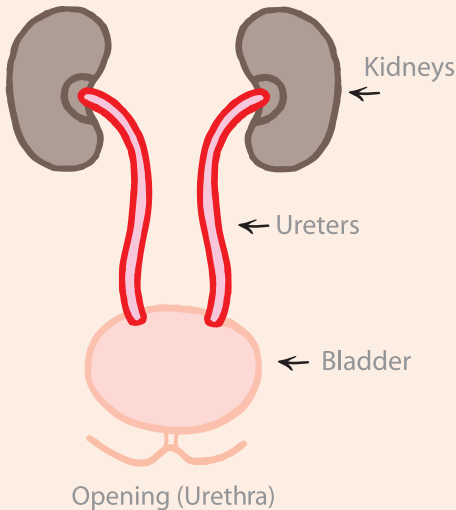


Millie has learned to go fast in her wheelchair. "Watch me" she shouts as she goes past the swings.

Bounce, bounce goes Peter in his stroller. "Slow down" calls her Mom, "we're almost there".

Millie loves her new shiny red wheelchair: it's the best one she's ever had.

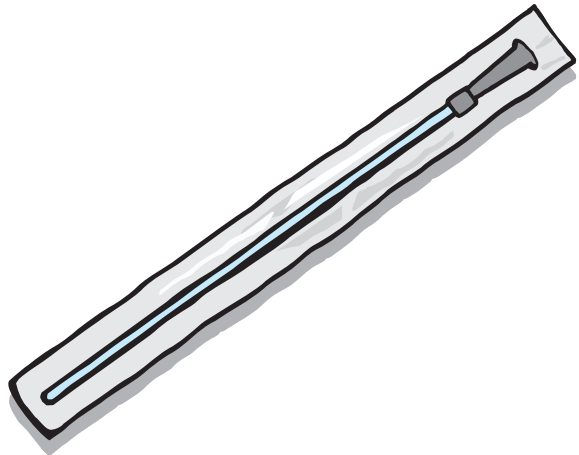




Everyone has kidneys, ureters, a bladder and a urethra. The bladder is like a balloon because it stores urine. When the bladder becomes full it has to be emptied to make room for the body to make more urine.

Millie needs a wheelchair to get around because she has spina bifida. Having spina bifida means that Millie's legs function differently so she cannot walk and run like many of her friends.

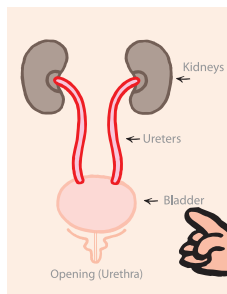
Her bladder functions differently too. This means Millie needs to use a special tube called a catheter to empty her bladder.



A nurse at the hospital showed Millie how to use her catheter. Millie uses a mirror so she can see that she has put the catheter in the right place.

Her Mom or Dad sometimes help her do it, and sometimes she can do it all by herself. This makes her feel quite grown up.

Millie has to use her catheter 4 times a day. Some people do it more times, and some people do it less often. Occasionally when she is busy playing she forgets and her Mom has to remind her.



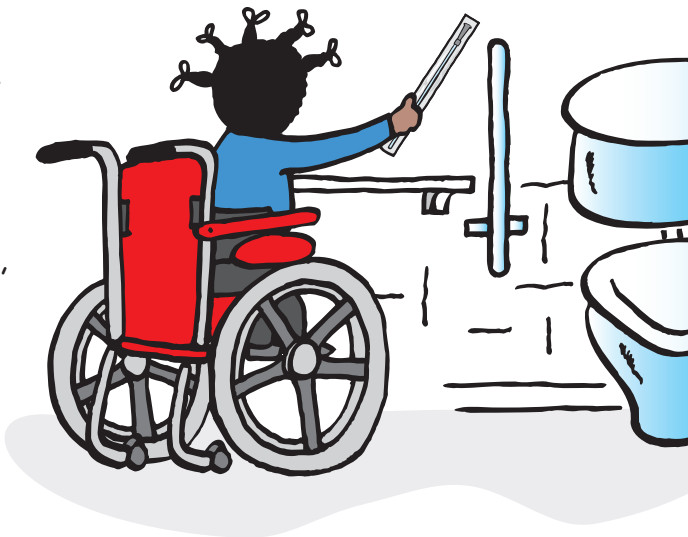


Some catheters are ready to use and do not need additional water or gel. Other catheters need gel or water so the catheter slides into the urethra more easily.

When Millie needs to empty her bladder, she goes to the bathroom and washes her hands. Millie then moves herself out of her wheelchair and onto the toilet just like her physical therapist showed her. She has handrails on the wall to make this easier for her.

Millie cleans her urethra with a wet wipe. This helps stop germs from getting into her bladder. She then takes the catheter out of the packaging, being careful that the catheter doesn't touch the sink or toilet.

She holds the catheter carefully, puts the tip into her urethra and slides the catheter into her urethra until the urine starts to come out.



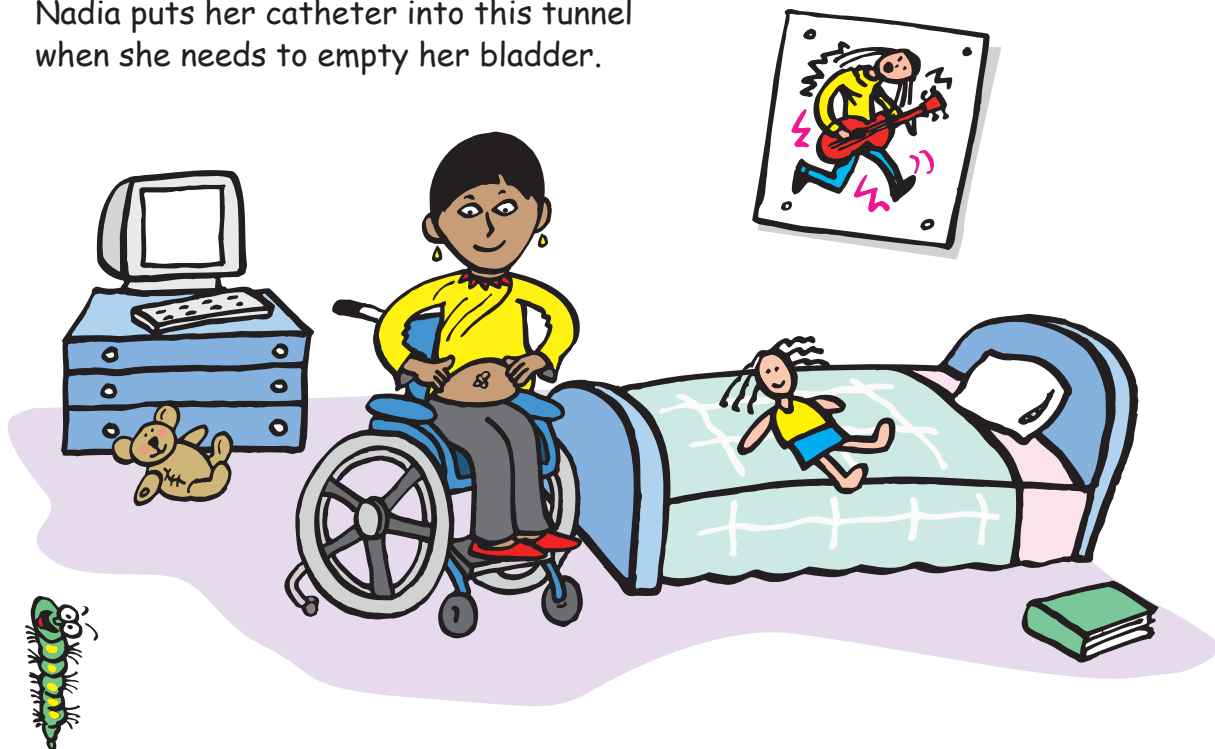
When the urine stops, she pulls the catheter out a little bit. Her mom reminds her there might be some urine left in her bladder, and she must wait until it all stops before she takes out her catheter.

Millie gently removes the catheter. Then she moves back into her wheelchair, washes her hands again and goes out to play with her friends. Using her catheter has only taken her a couple of minutes - they hardly missed her at all!



Millie has a friend Nadia. Nadia has spina bifida too and uses a catheter to empty her bladder, but in a different way. Nadia had an operation called a Mitrofanoff. The nice doctor at the hospital (called a urologist) thought this would work better for Nadia.

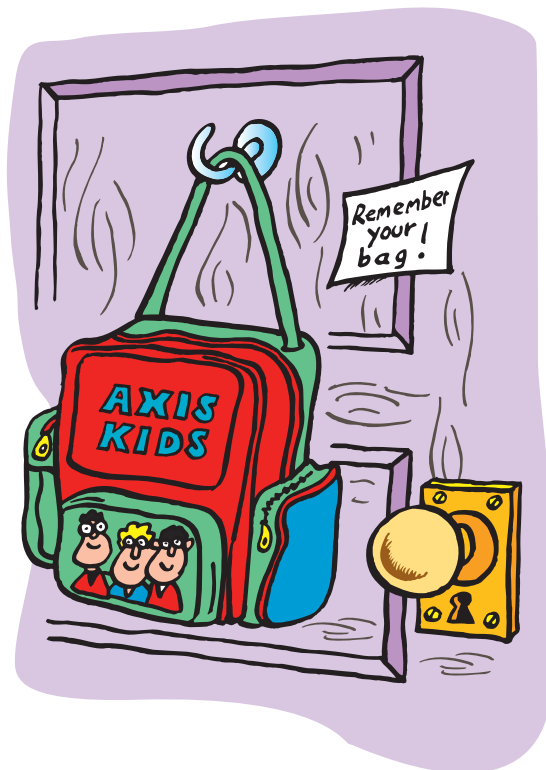
Nadia doesn't put her catheter into her urethra. She has a little opening (called a stoma) in her belly button, which has a tunnel to her bladder. Nadia puts her catheter into this tunnel when she needs to empty her bladder.

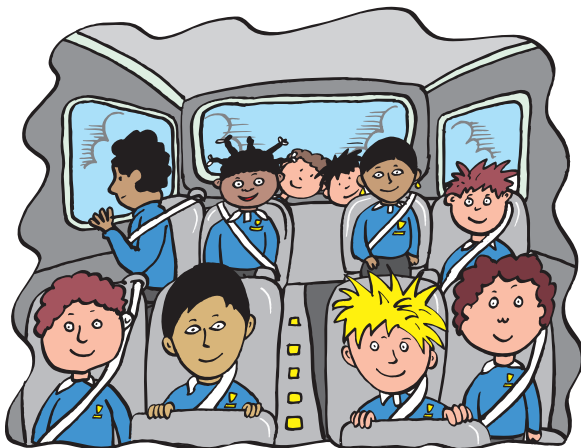


Millie must remember to take her catheters and wet wipes with her wherever she goes and she must remember to catheterize herself every 3 hours.

Millie makes sure to pack her supplies in her special bag each day after school. She hangs her bag on her hook in the hall, ready for the morning.

Millie has a watch to remind her when it is time to catheterize. Her watch vibrates so only she knows it is time for her to go to the bathroom. Before she goes to the bathroom, she makes sure she has a drink.





One weekend Millie and Nadia were excited because they were going to camp. It was important that Millie remembered everything her Mom had told her about using her catheter to stay dry.

They stayed with lots of other kids at an adventure center and slept in bunk beds in a room with six other girls.

Millie and Nadia and their friends had a great time at camp!





They played games in the woods, and went on nature trails.



They sat around the campfire in the dark!



And the only time Millie was wet  
was when she learned how to sail.





Millie was so happy she had managed her catheter all by herself! She was happy she remembered to use it even when she went to bed very late.

She couldn't wait for her Mom and Dad to pick her up! They are going to be so proud she can use her catheter and stay dry.

Perhaps next time she can stay away longer!



# Some words you may not know:

**Bladder:** this is where urine is stored.

**Catheter:** a special tube that you put into your bladder to drain the urine.

**Catheterize:** using your catheter.

**Germs:** little creatures so small that no one can see them, but will make you sick.

**Hydrocephalus:** this is when the brain produces too much fluid or the fluid does not drain properly.

**Kidneys:** place where urine is made.

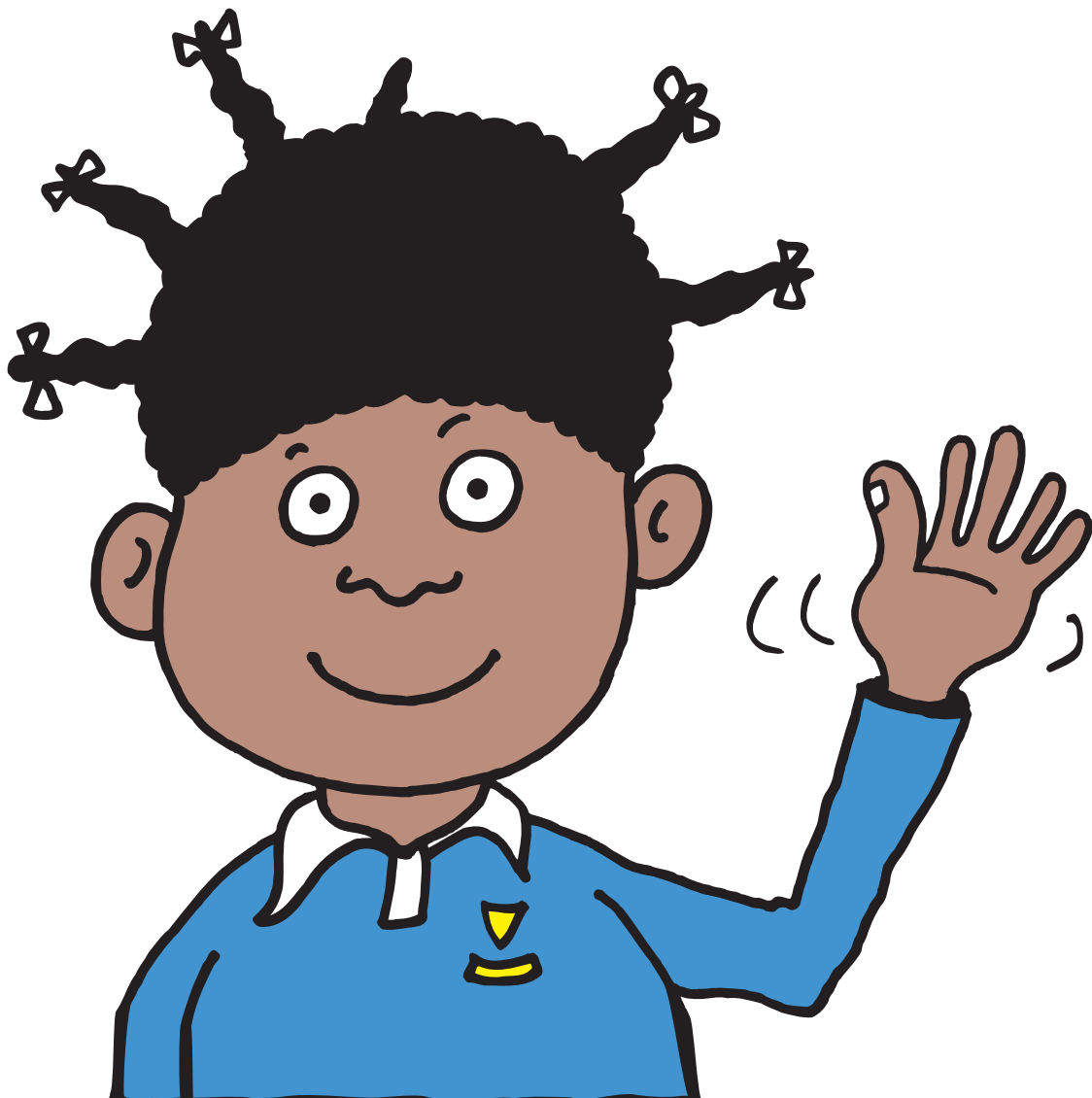
**Mitrofanoff:** an operation to let you drain your bladder through a tunnel in your belly button.

**Spina bifida:** a condition that some babies have when born. The bones of the spine are not formed properly and the child's legs, bladder and bowel do not work properly.

**Urologist:** a doctor who works in a hospital and specializes in problems that happen to people's kidneys and bladder.

**Stoma:** an opening on the outside of the body with a tunnel to the inside.









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