



TOILET TRAINING

When are children ready for toilet training?

Every child is different. Children are often ready for toilet training between 2 and 4 years of age. Signs that your child may be ready include:

- Can stay dry for several hours
- Able to follow one- or two-step directions
- Recognize that they need to empty their bowels and bladder
- Use words or gestures to communicate they need to use the potty
- Can walk to the potty chair and sit on it
- Can pull their pants up and down
- Want to use the toilet or potty, and wear underwear

Toilet training strategies

- Devote a time when no major life changes are anticipated (e.g. birth of a sibling, starting a new daycare, moving homes).
- Use a potty that is easy for your child to sit on, with feet flat on the floor. If using a regular toilet use a toilet seat adapter and foot stool.
- Dress the child in clothes which are easy to pull up and down.
- Teach your child words to describe bodily fluid and body parts.
- Accidents will happen, it is important to remain supportive, and not punish them for accidents.

Child oriented approach (This is recommended by the Canadian Pediatric Society)

Start this when you see signs of readiness. The child initially sits on the potty while fully dressed. Then they may sit on the potty after a soiled diaper is changed. Next, develop a routine where your child sits on the potty first thing in the morning, after meals, and before naps and bedtime without the diaper or underwear on. Reward any success (positive reinforcement). The child may gain full bladder or bowel control within a few weeks with this method.

“3 Day” Potty Training Techniques/Parent Led Approach (This is not recommended by the Canadian Pediatric Society)

These methods involve dedicating about 3 consecutive days at home where the child is not wearing diapers. Encourage the child to drink lots of fluid. The child is walked to the potty frequently throughout the day (about every 15 minutes) over the 3 days. Praise is provided for any success. There are a variety of methods that vary slightly in the details, see two references below.



Refusal

If there is refusal to toilet or this is becoming a negative experience for your child, we recommend taking a 1-3 month break and starting again with positivity.

References

- https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/toilet_learning
- 3 Day Potty Training by Lora Jensen, 3daypottytraining.com
- Oh Crap! Potty Training: Everything Modern Parents Need to Know to Do It Once and Do It Right by Jamie Glowacki