

# Toilet Training Tips

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**A+ SOLUTIONS**  
*Solutions to Life's Challenges*

# When should you think about starting toileting training?

- Medical rule out/contraindications
- Interest or curiosity about the bathroom
  - flushing toilet, playing with toilet paper, observe others, etc
- Assists with, or independently change their clothing
- Recognize the need to change clothing/diaper
- Understands bathroom terminology
- Has observed periods of dryness, or can “hold it”



# Where to start

- Medical exam
- Toileting patterns/history
- Communication skills
- Sensory needs
- Activities of daily living and personal care skills
- Checklist/Milestones



# Sample toileting pattern tracking

| Elimination Patterns  |      |     |     |        |             |              | Daily Intake  |      |                       |
|---|------|-----|-----|--------|-------------|--------------|---|------|-----------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Check diaper every 30 minutes (or a duration that works for you)</li> <li>* Take child to the bathroom to check the diaper</li> <li>* If dry, practice sitting on the toilet</li> <li>* Record findings</li> </ul> |      |     |     |        |             |              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Make a note of what the child eats/drinks</li> </ul> |      |                       |
| Date  | Time | Dry | Wet | Soiled | U in toilet | BM in toilet | Date  | Time | Food & drink consumed |
|   |      |     |     |        |             |              |   |      |                       |
|   |      |     |     |        |             |              |   |      |                       |
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# Scheduling

- Establish predictable times of day for using the bathroom
  - For example: when waking up, before & after naps/sleep, before & after activities, before & after leaving the house, before & after meals, before bed
- Use first then contingencies to establish motivation
  - For example: first go to the bathroom then we can go outside to play
  - This will build in natural reinforcement and routines around using the bathroom
- Create routines
  - Ex: “Sit for 6”
    - Sit on the toilet 6 times per day at least 5 seconds per sit
- Use timers
- Use consistent language for bathroom related topics and activities



# Communication

- When working with children on toilet training:
  - Be supportive
  - Use consistent words and phrases
  - Be calm and matter of fact
  - Give the child time to process and respond
  - Praise and reinforce
  - Don't spend a lot of time talking about or attending to "accidents"
    - Avoid scolding the child
    - Avoid inadvertently paying more attention and time to accidents versus successes
  - Ensure consistency across family members, caregivers, staff, etc
    - With the schedule, routine, phrases used, etc



# Routines

- Diet?
  - Increase fluids or fiber to help feel the urge to use the toilet
- Easy to remove clothes
- Waste from diapers in toilets
- Comfort in the bathroom
  - Address sensory needs
  - Pair the bathroom with preferred items
- Spare clothes
- Stick to a routine/schedule
- Use multiple bathrooms
  - When in the community, enter multiple bathrooms to establish comfort
- All elements of toileting should be easy and convenient, including clean up from accidents



# Motivation

- If your child is interested in the bathroom...
- Ex: likes to use the stool to wash their hands in the big bathroom, or flushing the toilet...
- Use this interest or motivation to pair with specific behaviors in the bathroom
- Ex: you can use that sink after you sit on the toilet
- Ex: you can flush the toilet, after you go to the bathroom in the toilet





# Visual supports

- Observation
- Social stories
- Picture schedules
- Video model
- Toys/dolls



# Toileting Steps, milestones

- Enter bathroom
- Close the door
- Pull down pants
- Sit on the toilet
- Go to the bathroom
- Get toilet paper
- Wipe
- Throw paper in the toilet
- Stand up
- Pull up pants
- Flush
- Wash hands
- Dry hands
- Leave the bathroom



# Shaping

- If your child is not ready to go to the bathroom, you can begin by reinforcing other bathroom behaviors
- Examples:
  - Walking into the bathroom
  - Sitting on toilet
  - Start with a small potty



# Reinforcing

- It is important to reinforce specific behaviors of using the bathroom
  - Ex: sitting on the toilet
- Choose a valuable reinforcer that is only available contingent on a behavior you choose related to using the bathroom
- Celebrate small successes



# Welcoming bathroom environment

- Sensory factors (scents, noise, lights)
- Specific books & toys
- Calming music
- Sing a special song
- Stool for feet
- Wipes instead of toilet paper
- Types of soap (foaming, bar)



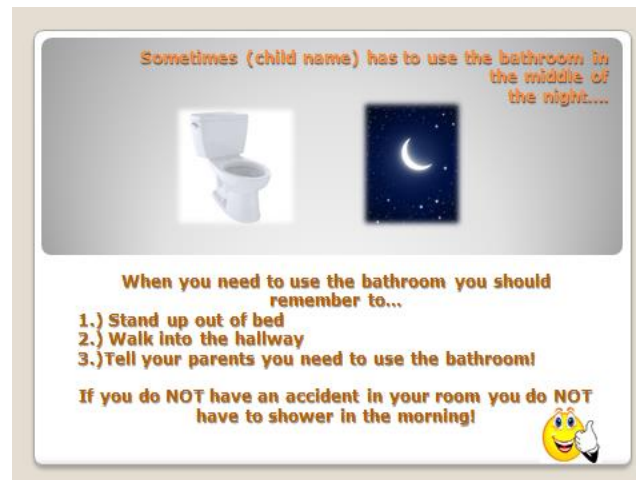
# Diapers?

- Most sources encourage underwear
- Diapers over night
- Fade plans
  - Diaper over underwear
    - Gradually cut the diaper away beginning in the crotch area
  - Loosen diaper over underwear
  - Reinforce increments of time in underwear
  - Place less social attention paired with wearing a diaper



# Toilet training over night

- Use antecedent controls to proactively support the child
- Choose a time to begin reducing food and fluids
- Establish a consistent bedtime and routine
- Toilet before going to bed
- Toilet each time the child wakes up during the night
- Toilet upon waking in the morning



# Habit training

- Habit training is a highly routinized and scheduled program with a goal to teach an individual/child to be aware of the need to eliminate
  - Create a visually supported toileting routine and schedule for the individual to follow every day
  - <http://milestones.org/online-resources/tool-kits/toileting-tool-kit/part-5-habit-training/>





# Accidents

- Do not over react to an accident, stay calm
- Have the child feel the clothing to confirm that it is wet
- Pair what the routine should look like
  - For example, “... goes in the toilet”
- Redirect the child to complete the steps of the toileting routine following an accident
- Reinforce the completion of the routine
- Participate in cleaning up....



# Resources

- Milestones
  - <http://milestones.org/online-resources/tool-kits/toileting-tool-kit/>
- Autism speaks toilet training guide
  - <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/atnair-p-toilet-training-guide>
- Materials & resources
  - <https://bedwettingstore.com/>
  - Teacherspayteachers.com



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