

# Toileting Tips

## When to start?

### Your child...

- Can stay dry for about 1 ½ - 2 hours during the day
- Soaks diaper, rather than dampen
- Can communicate (in some way) if he/ she is wet or dirty
- Can understand and follow simple instructions
- Shows signs that they are wet or soiled/does not like to be wet or soiled

- Is able to help dress/undress self
- Is physically well (not ill, not constipated, no diarrhea)

### You (parent/caregiver)

- Can provide consistency
- Can remain calm and patient
- Can provide sincere and positive reinforcement
- Can respond neutrally to an accident

## First Steps:

- Consider whether to use the toilet or a potty
- Consider sitting or standing for boys
- Ensure your child can access the toilet comfortably
- Consider pull ups, or padded underwear
- Complete all changes in the bathroom
- Develop a consistent routine

## Tips:

- Provide your child with the help they need to be successful
- Consider when you're asking your child to use the bathroom
- If you are removing your child from they're favourite activity to toilet it can become a negative experience.
- Use visuals
- Make the bathroom exciting
- Stay with your child
- Read books, sing songs
- Decorate the toilet / walls
- Play music that your child likes
- Targets in the toilet
- Taking a favourite doll to the toilet with your child
- Offer a stool or something for your child to rest their feet on comfortably
- Use a seat insert to keep your child relaxed and comfortable

## Reinforcing(Rewarding) Attempts and Success:

- Reward your child for spending time closer to the toilet, or for sitting calmly
- Always pair with specific praise, not just general (tell them what they did right, why you're happy/proud)
- Provide tangible reinforcement if necessary

- Reinforcement can be faded slowly

**Tangible reinforcement/rewards\* ideas:**

- Small toys for each time
- Toy accessed only while in the bathroom
- Short periods of screen time
- Can be Candy/treats (small pieces – m&m, skittle, bite sized cookie)
- Token system (sticker chart, jar, etc.) to work towards earning bigger items

\*\*Reinforcement must be valued by your child, if they are not motivated, try something different/increase offering. The point is to motivate your child, then as toileting becomes more normal/easier for them (consistent successes) begin to fade the tangible reinforcement – continue to praise your child for attempts/successes.

**Keep in mind:**

- that some children take more time than others
- accidents can occur for years after training begins
- success at night may take longer
- success with bowel movements may come after success with urinating in the toilet
- changes in routine, major transitions, and illness can cause regressions.
- Even 'small' steps are still success!

