

# Toileting Getting started



## IS YOUR CHILD READY?

- Shows an interest in the process
- Able to help dress and undress self
- Imitates the behaviour of others
- Remains dry for longer periods and has larger pees
- Able to understand and follow some simple directions
- Shows discomfort with a wet or soiled diaper/pull up
- Has some consistency to when they have a BM or urinate
- Recognizes when they need to or are going, i.e. hides
- Can communicate they need to go or that they have gone

The toileting process is unique to each child. Not all of these need to be true for a child to be ready. You know your child best.



## ARE YOU READY?

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



## CONSIDER:

- Whether to start with using a toilet or a potty
- Whether to start boys sitting or standing
- Can your child access the bathroom/toilet easily and independently
- If you will use pull ups, padded underwear, etc. during the process
- What parts of your day are most consistent to start building your routine



## PREP MATERIALS

- Reinforcement to motivate: Small toys, small pieces of candy/treats, favourite activities, games, shows to offer once they have sat, flushable targets (cheerios) or targets that suction cup to the bowl etc.
- Make the bathroom exciting: read books, sing songs, decorate, play music, etc. to make your child comfortable and happy while there
- Post visuals of the toileting routine to support your child's understanding
- Potty, potty seat for toilet, stool, etc. depending on your plan



## REMEMBER:

- Be patient with your child and give yourself grace. You've got this!
- Some children take more time than others
- Accidents can happen for years after training begins, it isn't failure
- Success at night may take longer
- Success with bowel movements may come later
- Major changes in routine, major transitions, and illness can cause regressions - keep going!

# Toileting General Tips

- Consider when you are asking your child to use the bathroom - if you are removing them from their favourite activity it can become a negative experience, building it into existing transitions can help to avoid this.
- Be clear when you approach your child: asking if they're ready or if they need to go to the bathroom allows them the choice to say no, especially while they're new learners, it can be more effective to say 'it is time for the bathroom'.
- Stay with your child - encourage, entertain, and monitor their success - if your child prefers to be left alone, turn your attention away, or stand just outside the door/out of sight.
- Offer a stool for your child to rest their feet on comfortably so they are able to use the resistance and keep balanced.
- Use a seat insert on the toilet to keep your child relaxed and comfortable so they do not need to tense their muscles to sit.
- If your child is afraid or struggles with being in the bathroom, begin by encouraging positive time spent in the room with no expectation - start small, and slowly build on
- Always pair reinforcement with specific and sincere praise - tell them how well they're doing, why you're happy/proud, and that they should be proud.
- For reinforcement to remain motivating, try to limit items to during/after toileting. This is especially important during the first stages of learning. Try to use reinforcement with a clear end so your child will be satisfied but will still want more later, i.e. one piece of candy, one short show, etc.
- Having a variety of reinforcement available can help to keep your child motivated. Plan to fade out tangible reinforcement once successes are consistent, praise is always great!



## REMEMBER: ALL CHILDREN LEARN DIFFERENTLY

- Other families may start slower by choosing one or two times during their day that they are able to keep consistent and will bring their child to the bathroom at these times, i.e. first thing in the morning, whenever they return to their home, before a bath, and/or right before bedtime then adding on more opportunities throughout the day as successes increase. .
- Some families have success when they begin to do all changes in the bathroom and encourage their child to sit on the toilet each time, all throughout the day.
- Some families prefer using a potty in the home where the child spends the most time, (i.e. bedroom/living room, or on a floor of the house with no bathroom). This helps provide immediate opportunities to prompt the child to sit and use the potty. The presence of the potty also provides a prompt to your child, whereas a toilet in a bathroom can be out of sight out of mind. As your child's successes build, moving the potty closer to the bathroom, at a pace that works for your child, can support the transition to using the toilet.
- Some families see great results by choosing a day to start putting their child in underwear and getting rid of diapers/pull ups all together.

YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD BEST!