

## Toilet training

As we watch our children grow and develop it's great to see them reach important milestones in their lives, such as taking their first steps, saying their first words and learning to use the toilet.

Nine out of ten children aged three are toilet trained in the day, although they may have occasional accidents. Being dry at night comes up to a year after day time success.

It is important to take your time and toilet train your child when they are ready. If you start too early you, and your child, can become frustrated or bored, this will make them harder to toilet train once their development is right for bladder and bowel control.

Here are the signs you can look for to see if your child is ready to be potty trained.

Your child will need the balance and co-ordination to stoop and sit on the potty seat and get up again. They'll need to be able to pull down their pants and pull them up again. Lastly your child should be able to tell you, in words or signs, when they are just about to wee or poo.

Once you've decided to go ahead let your child spend time out of their nappy. Putting them into cloth nappies can help as your child will feel when they're wet, disposable nappies tend to feel dry to the skin even after a wee.

Make sure you keep the potty nearby, it may be needed in a hurry.

Try putting your child on the potty at about the times of day you used to have to change their nappy, only have them sit there a few minutes before they go back to playing.

Make sure the seat your child uses feels safe to them, for example use a child's insert seat in adult size toilets. When your child feels comfortable and stable on the toilet or potty they can relax which makes it easier to wee or poo.

Give you child plenty to drink when you're toilet training, the more fluids they have the more they'll need to use the toilet and the more practice they'll get.

It's important to keep toilet training positive, lots of hugs and praise for sitting on the potty, even if it's not used. Star charts and stickers can be good ways to encourage your child.

Expect your child to have accidents, when these happen avoid telling them off just clean up in a matter of fact way. Children are often sensitive about these accidents and do best with your support and encouragement to keep trying.

Toilet training can be a messy business but it will certainly be easier if you can keep the pressure off and stay relaxed.

If you feel in need of support or ideas on toilet training contact your Health Visitor who will have some practical tips for you.

### Parents' tips:

Caroline, mother of Aaron, aged five from Tunstall says: "You need to wait until children are ready, make it fun, and make children feel grown up for using the toilet."

Mandy, mother of Bradly, aged two from Tunstall says: " The best time for potty training is the summer, children can go without nappies and it's easier to wipe up any little messes."



For more information on  
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