



Tips for Successful Toilet Independence (Potty Training)

Here are some helpful ways to teach your child to be successful in this process. To do so, you need all parents/guardians to be on the same page and as consistent as possible with follow through at home.

1. Don't rush! Some children learn early and some later.
2. Give friendly reminders to encourage success.
3. Get ready by telling them that urine (pee) and feces (poop) come from our body. Help your child learn to make the connection between the feelings of elimination. Use proper words for body parts.
4. Have several opportunities for "potty time" everyday. Remove the diaper/pull up and request (do not ask, as answer will probably be "no") the child to sit on the toilet. We recommend not using pull ups with the sides that don't open. It gives the child a false sense of "underwear"- it still feels the same (like a diaper).
5. Praise them for trying such as "good try", "high five", "awesome job". Never scold or punish, even facial expressions and body language can appear negative. Encourage "trying", be positive even when accidents occur.
6. Accidents do happen-it is okay, expect them!!!! They are the best way for a child to learn without a diaper. They don't like to be icky and wet. Limit diapers as they progress. A diaper/pull up reminds them it's okay to "do potty" vs. "going potty".
7. Please make sure your child has extra clothes (pants, shirts, socks, underwear and shoes)-3 sets are ideal to have on hand (and weather appropriate). Make sure shoes are washable.

8. “Tell” your child they need to use the washroom vs “asking”. Doing this every 15 minutes to half hour allows them to recognize the urge when it does come and to know to use the bathroom and prepare themselves in a timely fashion. As they progress in the process, learning to “wait” while someone is using the washroom becomes important too.
9. Help your child become familiar and comfortable with public restrooms, become aware of where they are in every store and restaurant you visit.
10. Talk about what the toilet is used for: peeing, pooping and flushing.
11. Use diapers for nap and bedtime until they wake up dry (be prepared to change bedding many times as they learn to “wake up” to use the washroom in the middle of the night. Limit excessive liquids prior to these times.
12. Teach your child to wipe themselves (girls, front-to-back) with toilet paper not wipes. This is messy but an imperative lesson to be potty trained. It will take time but unless they practice, they will not learn. This is “the” hardest part of the whole process. Remember, there are no wipes in public restrooms.
13. As parents and guardians, we often get caught up in the rush and tidiness of our day and think it is just easier for “us” to do the work for them. Give your child the opportunity to learn-it builds their self-esteem and will make your life a lot easier in the end (and cheaper).
14. Teach your child to pull up and down their own underwear and pants (self-help skills). Also teach them how to zip and snap as you go along. “I can do it myself” is so important to them. Have them practice dressing and undressing themselves properly.
15. Teach proper hand washing after every toilet use - use using soap and water always.
16. Work with your child’s teacher(s) to keep communication open during this trying transition. Also, communicate to each care giver outside of school to do the same thing so as not to confuse your child.
17. Be patient and know that all children will become potty trained at some point if given the proper tools and encouragement. Give your child the tools to succeed!!

Consistency, Patience and Encouragement are the key to be Successful.