

# Toilet Training to Toilet Learning

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- ***Toilet training is not a question of making the child do something for you. It is a matter of helping him do something for himself.- P. Leach***



# From toilet training to toilet learning:

- In toilet training it is the parent that wants the child to use the potty. In toilet learning the child wants to use the potty.





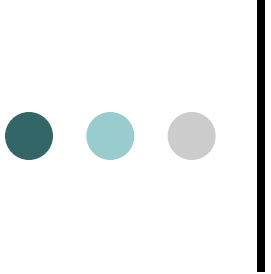
# Readiness for toilet learning: How the child shows the way:

Three areas of readiness ( Davis & Keyser)

1. **Physically-** They can hold their urine and feces and release at will- Usually after 15 or 18 months.

## ***Signs:***

- Their diapers will stay dry for longer periods
- They will have learned that the urine comes from their own body (Watch their response when they pee naked. Do they stop and look?) He must make the connection between what he feels and what happens.

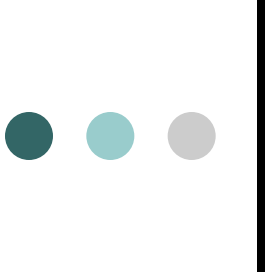


2. **Cognitively-** Children must be able to understand where the urine and feces should go.

- Children learn this by watching others go.
- It will be difficult for them to keep their body sensations in mind when they are doing others things. Accidents are bound to happen!

***Signs:***

- He will begin to understand where things go. He will like to order things.



3. **Emotionally-** When children are emotionally ready to learn, they *want* to use the potty.

- This is what really distinguishes toilet training from toilet learning.

***Signs:***

- Using the toilet will be his idea and not yours.
- Sometimes children are hesitant to use the potty because they do not want to give up their nice familiar diapers- or they may be a bit hesitant to grow up. The more they are pushed the scarier it gets.



# *Readiness Continued*

Often one or two of the above is in place but not the third. A child can be physically and cognitively ready but not emotionally ready (refuses to give up diaper). Or a child may be emotionally and physically ready but not physically ready (forgets to use the potty during play).

- **All areas must be mastered for success to result.**

# Brazelton's signs of readiness



- 18 -24 months (may be too early). Do not be fooled by early signs of readiness- Some two year olds are ready- some are not ready until three or even four.





# Brazelton's readiness signs

- She is not as excited about walking or being on her feet all of the time (physical)- 18 months
- She has receptive language (cognitive)
- She can say “NO” (emotional/cognitive)
- She will start putting things where they belong and getting dressed and undressed (cognitive)



## Brazelton Continued:

- She can imitate behavior (cognitive)
- She can urinate and move her bowels at predictable times (physical)- 2 years
- She has become aware of her body and awareness of how others use the potty (cognitive)

# ● ● ● | Is she ready?

- According to Brazelton it is premature to try and potty train a child who does not have all of these readiness signs.





# What happens when training is too early?

- Feelings of failure
- Power struggles- Parents can help by telling the child that toileting is up to them
- An extended period of training- When potty training is started too early, it takes much longer than waiting until a child is ready.
- Constipation



# REMEMBER what drives toddlers-

- **Independence and control!** The more insistent you are about your child using the toilet, the more he will resist.
- Toilet training can only succeed through a child's voluntary cooperation- otherwise there is sure to be a power struggle.

# The parent's role in potty training:





# ***What parents should do***

- Initiate predictable daily routines
- Involve the child in the diapering process.
- Provide language. Name body parts and name the products of the child's body. Try not to show disgust when changing a diaper.
- Provide information about how the body works, how poop comes out and where it goes later.
- Look for signs of readiness- Let the child take the lead!



## ***What parents should do***

- Be a model- Let your child be a “visitor” when you use the toilet.
- Provide an appropriate potty for the child along with other tools she may need (easy off underwear, plastic pants).
- Provide encouragement but not coercions such as rewards. Praise, but do not over-do it. Success is its own reward.





# What Parents should NOT do

- Think their child's toileting is in their control- it is not!
- Pressure the child
- Punish the child or ridicule her (or allow others to ridicule a child)
- Offer BIG rewards for using the potty
- Bow to pressure from grandparents or schools for the child to be trained too early

● ● ● | **When your child shows he is ready:**



# When your child shows he is ready:



- Let your child select a potty at the store. Put it in his play area and tell him that *when he is ready he can use it as his potty.*

# When your child shows she is ready:

- If your child shows an interest in it, let her sit on it with her **diaper on**. (Read her a book as she sits there, if she want to.) Do not make her take her diaper off. Just let her get used to sitting on it. (Suggest that her teddy bear may like to try it.) Let her sit on her potty chair as you use the toilet (you may want to do this once per day).



# When your child shows she is ready:

- Let your child play without pants or diapers. Nakedness helps children learn about their bodies and where the pee comes from.



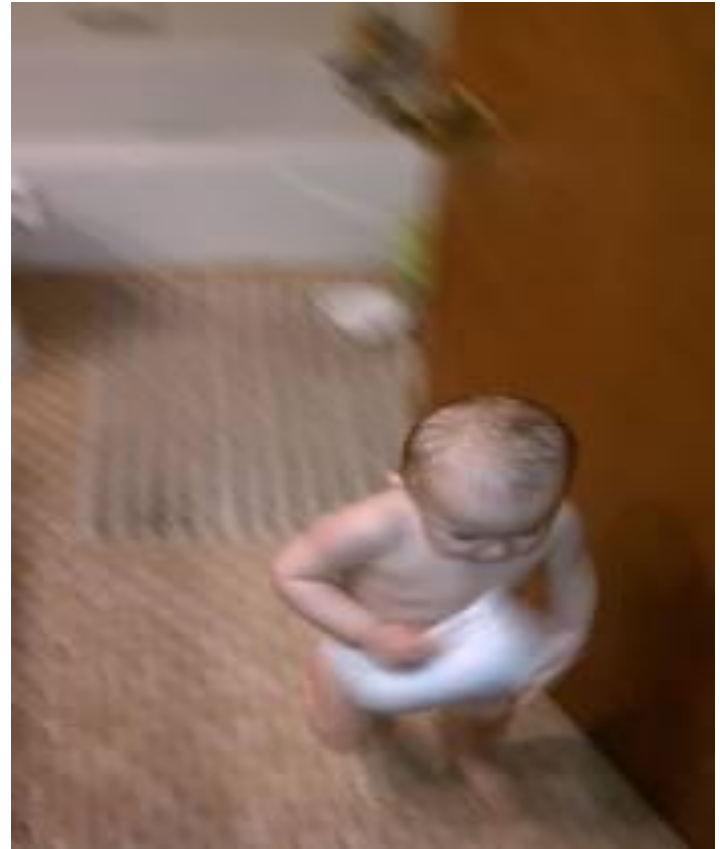


# When your child shows she is ready:

- After your child has become accustomed to sitting on the potty with her clothes on, empty the contents of her soiled diaper (or put her wet diaper) into her potty. If she resists this do not push it. If she is willing, do this once or twice per day. Talk about what you are doing. Tell her that when she is ready she can choose to sit here to wee wee and poop.

# When your child shows she is ready:

- Along with this step, allow her to have time to run around without her diaper. Make sure the toilet is where she can get to it. Tell her she can use the potty if she needs to pee or poop. Do this sort of play regularly. When she has an accident you can ask her to help wipe it up with you, but don't force this.



# When your child shows she is ready:

- If she is successful in going on the potty- make sure you keep your excitement and praise in line with hers. **Do not overdo the praise.**





# When your child shows she is ready:

- Once he manages to use the potty with some regularity, purchase some terry-lined plastic training pants. Use diapers for naps, night and trips.





# **When your child shows she is ready:**

- Parents must communicate their toilet training practices to child care providers
- Parents must make extra pants available in case of accidents



# The Child care Provider's Role...



# Child Care Provider's Role

- Be consistent with what the parent is doing
- Look for signs the child may need to go to the bathroom (Also known as the “Potty Dance”) and Provide reminders....
- Schedule regular toilet time as part of the schedule
- Praise the child's success and praise other children in the learner's presence
- Teach good toilet habits such as hand washing and flushing and correct wiping (front to back)
- Communicate child's toilet practices to the parent



# When there are problems...

- Discuss issues with the parent
- Try to understand the source of the problem-such as a new bathroom, a loud flusher, being away from home, feeling pressure, not yet ready
- Try a social story
- Above all be calm and reassuring; when in doubt **Back Off!**

# ***Trouble Spots:***

- One step forwards one step back. **Expect regression** when a big event occurs like a new baby or a move. Reassure the child that when she is ready she will be successful again.
- May want to let her wear diapers if she wants to.. but be careful not to loose too much ground if the child is age three or older and has been trained for a while





# ***Trouble Spots:***

- **Staying dry at night-** Let her wear a diaper at night until you are pretty sure she can stay dry. Wait until she is able to go 3 hours without using the potty during the day. It takes time to stay dry at night. 12-20% of children still wet the bed at age 5.

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**Support**  
**Independence and**  
**self esteem**







# Support Independence and self esteem

- Do not nag your child about using the potty. When you nag and constantly remind you are doing the thinking for your child. Remember this is his work. (An occasional reminder if he is at play is okay.) Too much nagging may be upsetting to him and make him want to wear good old diapers again.
- Avoid power struggles. **Because the two year old is working on issues of autonomy and is driven to make his own decisions- toilet use has to be *his own decision*.**

# Support Independence and self esteem

- Regard accidents as opportunities that your child can learn from. Never scold or punish. Talk about what the child can do to be successful next time.
- Never offer huge rewards for toileting. Success is its own reward
- Never scold if she is slow to learn or has frequent accidents. The more patient you are the sooner she will be successful.





# Support Independence and self esteem

- Do not be too quick to dump or flush away your child's products. He may want to revisit it. Let him flush or flush much later. If she starts to be successful then regresses or loses interest, back off.
- Remember she has to want to be successful for herself. If you push she will push back. Be supportive but do not push or coerce



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