



Taking the Panic out of Toilet Training!

Starting to toilet train your child can be a daunting process for both parent and child. We have put together some tips to help you along the way.

Step 1 - Make sure your child is ready- don't rush into it!

Toilet training is more complicated than you may think, it's not only a physical process but also a mental, emotional and psychological one, so it is imperative that you start **when your child is really ready and not when you are or when you can fit it into the ever increasing busy lives that us Mums now lead, as tempting as it may be!** Children potty train at different ages, so don't be pressured by friends or relatives into starting before your child is ready, it's not a race or a competition and you know your child best!

Waiting until your child is ready will make the whole process a lot easier and faster for the both of you!

Step 2 – Introducing the equipment!

Buy a potty and a toilet training seat a few months before you think your child might be ready and keep them visible in the bathroom and see if your child is interested in using one or other before they get into the bath. If they are then great, make it a routine at bath time, it doesn't matter if nothing happens, it's about getting them comfortable just sitting on the potty or toilet. Try not to be tempted to ask them if they have done a wee etc. you are not potty training yet, just familiarising your child with the equipment. If they are resistant then **DO NOT** force it, just leave them visible and try mentioning it again in a few weeks. **Constant nagging will just make them more resistant.**

Step 3 – Picking the right time to start!

This step is so important as it's essential your child does not feel rushed or pressured, choose a time where you can both stay at home for at least the first 2 -3 days (barring any small trips to the shops etc.) and when you are able to give full attention to the process. Ideally, your child should start to be aware that they are wet and/or dirty and be showing an interest in using the toilet or potty. Don't be tempted to offer a shiny sticker, chocolate or toy as an incentive. If your child is really not ready this can lead to feelings of disappointment.



Step 4 - Getting started!

Pants are often a highlight of potty training so take your child to choose the ones they would like; you may need a few pairs to begin with so try to opt for the cheapest where possible!

Some children can transition from nappies straight into pants successfully, but most can't! We find the most successful way to start training is to leave your child without anything on the bottom half of their body for the first day or so. This gives them the freedom to use the potty or toilet immediately without having to fiddle with clothing etc. and gets them used to the sensation that they are no longer wearing a nappy. If you are able to time it in the summer month's then being outside in the garden is ideal.

Once you start the process it's imperative that you take your child's nappy off first thing in the morning and put it back on last thing at night so there is no confusion.

Leave the potty or toilet seat in plain view and explain to your child that they are not wearing a nappy and need to do their wee's and poo's on the potty/toilet. It is virtually guaranteed that the first few wee's will be on the floor until they start to recognise the body's response that the wee is coming. Reassure your child that it's Ok and remind them that the potty/toilet is there for them to use.

Step 5 – Encouraging independence!

The whole idea of potty training is to train your child to recognise their bodies signals which tell them they need to wee or poo. Taking them to try at regular intervals which can be successful in avoiding accidents when they are with you, just makes them reliant on you, and when you aren't there they will resort to accidents. If they are really ready, they should pick it up fairly quickly once they have the first few accidents and are reminded about the potty.

If after 24 -48 hours there is no success without full support from you then they probably aren't ready and it's best to leave it and try again in a few weeks. Once they transition into pants make sure they are wearing suitable clothing which they can remove easily- especially at nursery etc.

Obviously, they will need lots of reassurance and support when removing clothes to begin with but it's imperative they learn to recognise their body's signals to have the best and quickest success in potty training.

Step 6 – Out and about and at Nursery

When your child is showing more independence in going to the toilet, then you may want to try at nursery. Please ensure that you put plenty of spare clothes in your child's changing bag as you may find they have more accidents than they do at home. **THIS IS NORMAL.** and may be for a few reasons. Fear of a new/different toilet, not wanting someone other than you to support them, too busy playing, they don't want to leave a toy they are playing with in case someone else takes it! This is all normal and we will do our best to help your child overcome these insecurities etc.

Each day a dedicated person is allocated to support children with their personal hygiene, and we ensure that children are reminded to go to the bathroom regularly.



Is it really that easy?! What's normal and what's not?! Trouble shooting!

There is no such thing as normal or not normal every child is very different, and some will sail through potty training and others may have some difficulties or anxieties, this is no reflection on your child! Most children if they are ready will pick up the wee's quietly easily, for some the poo is more difficult.

When children poo in a nappy they stand up, suddenly having to sit down can be quite daunting and unnatural to them.

The feeling they get when they poo on a potty or toilet can make them feel like they are losing a part of themselves and that's a bit scary.

When you change their nappy, they never get to see the poo, so to suddenly see this come out of them can also be quite scary.

Try not to comment on the poo when you are changing their nappy, as to refer to it as stinky or yucky can impact on them when they come to poo on the potty/toilet.

Don't panic if they won't poo on the potty/toilet, it's very common. Stay calm, don't scold them, just reassure them that it's OK and next time they can try to do it on the potty/toilet.

Your child may hold on to their poo for fear of going and this may make them constipated, try to give them lots of fluids and suitable foods to keep things flowing as much as possible, and keep reassuring them.

Once your child is dry and clean during the day it may take a while to happen at night, sometimes as old as 6 or 7 years old. This is normal and every child is different so don't be concerned if it doesn't happen straight away.

Unfortunately, there is no magic wand if they are struggling, it's trial and error to find something that works and reassures your child, however, becoming anxious or blaming yourself is a sure way to make it worse. Just stay calm and you will get through it. If your child is really struggling despite all the above tips, please don't hesitate to contact us for more support, there are lots of different tactics you can try than might work for your child!

GOOD LUCK! YOU CAN DO THIS!