



Toilet Training

1. Ready

Children are usually ready for toilet training sometime around their second birthday. This is also called potty training. Children may be ready when they are able to do most of the following:

- are able to delay going for a few minutes
- can pull down their pants and get on and off the potty
- can say a few words and understand simple directions
- want to “do it myself”
- are interested in the toilet, for example, will follow you into the bathroom to see how a toilet is used
- stay dry for a few hours
- have regular poos, also called bowel movements
- can tell you if they need to use the toilet or potty – by using words or actions.



Children love to copy their parents, older brothers, sisters and friends. They want to be grown up. These feelings help toilet training. Don't force your child to sit on the potty. If your child is not ready, wait and try again in a few weeks. Let your child know he will succeed eventually and he does not need to hurry.

2. Set

You can prepare your child by:



- teaching names of body parts and functions by commenting as it happens, such as ‘bowel movement’
- helping child get used to the potty. Some children are afraid of falling from the toilet seat. To help, you can start with a potty chair on the floor. If you decide to use a seat that goes over the toilet, use a footrest.
- having child flush the toilet
- having child wear clothes that are easy to take off.

It's better not to start toilet training if:

- your child or a family member is ill
- you are travelling
- there is a new baby in the family
- your child is at the “no” stage.



3. Go

Once you have decided the time is right and you have set the stage, you are ready to begin.

Have your child sit on the potty several times during the day:

- before and after naps
- before and after bedtime
- ½ hour after meals
- after being dry for 2 hours.

You can read a short story to help your child sit longer on the potty. Don't worry if your child just sits on the potty without pooing or peeing as she is getting used to this idea.

4. You are on your way!!

Every child is unique in when he is ready to start and how long it takes him to learn.

If your child is successful, give lots of praise. If not – do not punish.

Even when children are toilet trained, they may have accidents! They may forget when excited, playing, sick, or upset. Be patient.

Children often learn to control their pooing or bowels before their peeing or bladder. They learn daytime control before nighttime control. Most children are toilet trained by 3 to 4 years of age.

Talk to your public health nurse or health care provider if your child is:

- older than 4 and is not toilet trained during the day
- older than 7 and does not stay dry at night.



Helpful Website

www.aboutkidshealth.ca and search: toilet training

www.caringforkids.cps.ca and search: toilet learning

Other Fact Sheets in the Parenting Your Preschooler series include:

- Positive Discipline for Preschoolers
- Separation Anxiety
- Toddlers & Temper Tantrums
- Toilet Training
- The Morning Struggle, 2 - 5 Years

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**For more information,
contact a Public Health Nurses at
Vancouver Coastal Health
www.vch.ca
or visit the VCH Parenting Website
<http://parenting.vch.ca/>**

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