



Top Tips: Toileting

Teaching your child to use the toilet can be a difficult task. This guide provides some helpful steps that should help your toilet training to be a success.

When should I start toilet training my child?

When your child is ready, they will let you know. They may begin to become aware of their bowel movements and indicate they need changing by fidgeting or tugging on their nappy when they are wet or have soiled; let you know when they need changing verbally; show an interest in using the toilet on their own terms. If you have observed one or more of these signs, then it may be time.

Top Tip: Choose a time when you have no big plans such as holidays or special occasions that may alter the usual daily routine.

Top Tip: Begin to introduce the idea through role play or books.



Consistency is key

To minimise any distress ensure everyone who cares for your child is aware your child is toilet training and follows your approach. It is so important to stay consistent with the toileting routine for example, if your child is visiting a friend, relative or attends nursery make sure you take any equipment or resources with them. This could be a toilet seat they may use to make the seat smaller, visuals to support with communication, a particular brand of wipes (scents and texture can vary causing distress). Also remember to send a few changes of clothes, shoes (crocs or jelly shoes are best) and a plastic bag to put any wet clothes in. For some children it may also be important to keep language consistent. For this reason, agree on what terms/phrases will be used before, during and after the toileting experience.



Creating a visual toileting routine

Use images to create a visual sequence beside the toilet to help your child understand what they need to do and what is coming next, for example: pants down, sit on the toilet, wee/poo in the toilet, wipe, pants up, flush toilet, wash hands, dry hands. The images will be more realistic and relatable to your child if photographs are used, however you can use clipart images or written words if this would be more suitable and motivating for your child. You may need to create a way of removing or covering over each symbol as the step is completed to show that it is finished and to move on to the next step.

Top Tip: Laminating the visual sequence can help to make sure it stays clean and dry as the images may get wet easily while in the bathroom.

Top Tip: If your child dislikes flushing the toilet due to the loud sound, you may wish to remove this from the visual sequence and leave it until the end of the routine. You can then flush the toilet while they are still in close proximity until they become familiar with the noise and can gradually stand closer until they are able to flush themselves.

Environment

Ensure the bathroom is a calm, relaxing space. Remove all distractions which are not associated with toileting and think about your child's sensory needs. You may need to consider the smell of the soap, avoid using air freshener, are there any unusual sounds like an extractor fan or dripping tap, are the lights too bright etc. You may also want to make sure that everything in the bathroom is at the right level for your child i.e., toilet roll, soap and towel.