



## **EARLY YEARS – GETTING READY TO USE THE TOILET**

It is usually between 2 and 3 years that a child becomes aware of the sensation of needing the toileting before they need to go.

Between 2-3 years a child receives increased warning time of the need to pass urine, and bowel control becomes established.

### **SKILLS A CHILD NEEDS FOR TOILET TRAINING:**

#### **AWARENESS:**

Toilet training will be most effective if your child is aware of the difference between feeling wet and dry before he/she can be urine trained. In recent years, nappies have become more effective at making children feel dry and thus delaying awareness of feeling wet.

- Talk about wees and poos when you are changing a wet nappy and putting on a dry nappy.
- Alternatively, place folded, kitchen paper towel in the nappy to act as a liner. Once a child becomes aware of being wet they can be encouraged to sit on the toilet or potty regularly each day.
- Wearing pull up pants can help your child become aware of when they are wet and can be quickly pulled down.
- Read a story to your child regarding toileting.

It is also important for you, as the parent or carer, to become more aware of your child's toileting pattern. This can be done by keeping a record of your child's wees and poos. By doing this, you will be able to see if there is a pattern to your child's toileting and it will be a guide to let you know when you can take your child to the toilet.

#### **SITTING:**

Try using a ring reducer on the toilet. Try using a step to both get on/off and to rest feet. Try using a potty. High street stores have many different types. Trial one that suits your child best.

Your child needs to first learn to sit safely and securely on the toilet or potty before he/she can learn to open his bowels on the toilet.

Good times to try sitting on the toilet / potty are:

- Before or after meals and snacks – when you know they are more likely to empty their bladder.
- As a double act when toileting yourself.
- When coming in or leaving home.
- Before they usually empty their bowel or bladder.

If your child repeatedly refuses to go near the toilet or potty it is best to back right off and stop all attempts to train and try later. Then focus on sitting on the toilet or potty by gently and cunningly building up a good sitting habit. Most toddlers are happy to sit on the toilet or potty when there is calm, and their parents approach them in a confident and convincing manner.

It may be necessary to grade sitting on the toilet. Start where your child feels comfortable such as on the potty in front of the television, your child seated with trainer pants in place, reading a book, or singing songs. Then gradually moving to sitting with less fun distractions.

If your child sits – give encouragement. If your child rebels – try to ignore.

If your child happens to produce anything in the potty or toilet, comment on it and give lots of praise. Try to consider other ways to give your child positive reinforcement such as star charts, telling Dad, or treats.

### **DRESSING AND UNDRRESSING:**

- Children should be encouraged to assist with dressing and undressing.
- Use simple loose clothes with no fastenings.
- Start with teaching to pull trousers down.
- Place your hands over theirs to guide them with pulling down their trousers.
- Use simple words and always use the same words (e.g. 'Trousers down')
- Carry out the steps in the same way each time.  
Once they are able to pull down their trousers, get them to practice pulling up their trousers using the same steps.
- Praise your child when he/she does well.



## **Potty or Toilet?**

Most toddlers prefer a potty to the toilet. The great advantage is that it is portable, so it can be taken from room to room. The disadvantage is that if you forget to take it out with you, your child may have to use a toilet which might confuse them. If your child prefers the toilet, a small child's toilet seat should be placed inside the adult one. Any additional support should be provided (e.g. a step for your child to place his feet on, a toilet reducer seat) to provide stability and dispel any fears of falling.

## **GETTING STARTED USING THE TOILET**

Let us know that you have started toilet training and we will reinforce this at Nursery.

- Use pull up pants initially and then progress to knickers/underpants.
- When you take your child to the toilet, remind them of the steps.
- When your child does make a wee or poo, provide them with positive feedback by praising them, or keep a reward chart for him\her.
- Try to keep the routine at home, school and on outings the same. Keep using the pants or underwear so they are aware of any wet sensation.
- Allow your child to choose their own underwear as an incentive to wear them.

