

Helping your child at home

Potty training



In order for children to manage the transition from nappies to potty successfully, care must be taken to make it a stress free experience. Often parents feel 'pressure' from other parents with similar aged children, who are potty trained. It is important to keep in mind that children reach the point at which they are 'ready' to be toilet trained at different ages and stages, so try not to compare your child and find yourself in a place where you are passing on any pressure to your child.

Other factors determine whether you are ready to introduce your child to potty training - your work and family circumstances, whether the weather is warm etc. Consider these key factors that might indicate if your child is ready to try potty training:

- Is your child dry for a couple of hours at a time? This shows that they have some control over their bladder.
- Are they showing any interest? This often happens spontaneously as they see other children at nursery using the toilet or potty. We will tell you if they are showing an interest – not to pressure you – just to inform you!
- Does your child have regular times of bowel movements?
- Does your child let you know when they need to be changed?

Some do's:

- When you decide that your child is showing some or all of the above, explain that you think s/he is able to learn how to use the potty, just like (name a friend....)
- Let him/her choose the potty and help buy their underwear.
- Make this an exciting prospect *before* you start.
- Begin on a day when you know you will be at home for a few days.
- Make it part of the daily routine, such as when s/he gets up and , before s/he gets dressed, before his/her bath time, after breakfast, snack, meals etc.
- Make it fun and exciting maybe collect a favourite soft toy and pretend it needs to sit on the potty.
- Celebrate that s/he has sat on it and 'tried' (regardless of whether there is a success).

- Dress him/her in clothes that are quick & easy to pull down.
- Make using the toilet a regular routine. Expect him/her to sit on it every half hour.
- Always ask them to wash their hands afterwards and move onto something else.

Some don'ts:

- Don't give up – it is a good idea to try for at least a week before deciding s/he is not yet ready.
- Don't use pull-ups when going out as it is very confusing for children. Pull-ups *feel like* a nappy to a child. Just take plenty of spare clothes and their potty!
- Don't panic!
- Don't show disgust, refer to the 'mess' you are clearing up, or discuss the negatives in their hearing.
- Don't force it or make it a stressful experience for them.
- Try not to become obsessive about it.

And remember...you *will* get there!