

Activities of Daily Living

Toileting

Children show readiness for toilet training at different ages. Some signs may include:

- Showing interest in the toilet
- Dry nappy for 2 hours
- Dislikes having wet nappy
- Requests to have nappy changed

Using the toilet requires gross and fine motor skills, bilateral coordination and regulation skills. Toilet training can take days, weeks or months. So, remember to be patient and encouraging with your child.

Before starting toilet training, consider your toileting environment.

- Can your child reach the toilet or do they need a step or assistance from an adult? Consider using a potty chair if your child is very small.
- When your child is on the toilet do they fall in or can they remain seated without assistance?
- What smells/ sounds/ lights are in the toilet/ bathroom? Consideration of the sensory experience can be very important for children with specific sensitivities.
- Does your child use one toilet in the house or will they need to be able to use multiple different toilets? This is important to consider when toilet training across different environments i.e. school, day care, grandparents house, public bathrooms.



You may also need to consider the following in preparation for toilet training

- Your child's undressing and redressing skills. They will need to be able to pull their pants/ underwear/ nappy down, and back up as part of the sequence.
- Can your child communicate when they need the toilet/ when they are finished on the toilet. and can they orient themselves to the toilet when needed.
- Consider your child's interoceptive skills in being able to recognise when they need to use the toilet, and with enough notice to make it there, undress and sit down. This can take a lot of practice.
- It is important that the toileting experience is positive and that we limit any feelings of shame or embarrassment. In order to maintain a healthy relationship with toileting, children need a lot of positive reinforcement and praise. They will have accidents while they are learning and we need to consider how we respond i.e. 'Well done for trying to get to the toilet', 'Can I help you to get clean and changed?', 'We can try again tomorrow'



STRATEGIES

- Try to start toilet training when there are not big changes occurring in the family.
- Include going to the toilet as part of your child’s everyday routine.
- Provide lots of praise and encouragement for trying e.g. “Well done for sitting on the toilet!”
- Support your child to learn about toileting through songs, videos and books.
- Start to teach your child words for the toilet- ‘wee’, ‘poo’, ‘toilet’
- Complete activities on the toilet to support children to feel comfortable sitting e.g. reading books, singing songs, blowing bubbles.
- Talk to your children about what you’re doing and allow child to observe trusted adults.
- Use underwear or nappy pants to help your child to understand the feeling of ‘wet.’
- Trial using underwear under nappy to allow child to feel wet, without accidents on the floor.
- Trial wearing no underwear during summer months.
- Let your child pick a pair of underwear with their favourite character to support motivation
- Use visual schedule to show steps of toileting e.g. pull pants down, sit on toilet, wee etc..
- Try to watch for signs of your children needing to use the toilet e.g. wriggling around, passing wind, going quiet or moving away from you and encourage your child to go.
- Take them to the toilet regularly e.g. every 1-2 hours. Encourage your child to sit on toilet.
- Ensure adequate food and water intake during the day
- Boys may benefit from learning to sit to wee, before learning to stand to wee.
- If teaching your son to stand to wee, use visual in the toilet to support them to aim e.g. ‘wee target’ or ping pong ball.
- Provide reassurance when your child has an accident. Help them to understand that they don’t need to worry and that it is a normal part of learning.
- Trial use of reward system e.g. toy, food, stickers. Have clear goals on when your child will receive the reward e.g. for sitting on the toilet, pooing in the toilet, or weeing in the toilet
- Teach your child about feeling when needing to use toilet e.g. passing wind might mean need to poo.
- Empty poo from nappy into toilet and show your child to support them to understand poo goes in the toilet.
- Use equipment such as potty, toilet stepping stool, smaller seat on big toilet.
- Ensure child is positioned properly on the toilet- ideally knees should be higher than hips
- Dress your child in looser pants with elastic that are easy to take off/ pull up.
- Remember daytime toileting occurs before remaining dry overnight.

