



## Occupational Therapy Parent Handout - Toilet Learning

Toilet learning should be started when both the child and parent are ready and able to participate.

Your child's readiness versus age is strong predictor in the success of any toilet learning, such as the ability to:

1. follow simple instructions
2. understand words about the toileting process
3. bladder control
4. Express a need to go
5. keep a diaper dry for 2 hours or more
6. get to the toilet, sit on it, and then get off when all done
7. pull down diaper, disposable training pants, or underpants

**If your child has irregular bowel or bladder issues, speak to your doctor before starting any toilet learning to make sure there are no medical issues that need to be addressed first.**

### Where to begin:

- On the tracking sheet provided, indicate each time your child is wet and has a bowel movement. After a week or so often a pattern emerges. Take your child to the toilet at the time that matches this pattern (see chart).
- Take your child to the washroom regularly, at certain times of the day, e.g. at point of arrival, mid-morning, after lunch, mid afternoon nap and snacks. Multiple trips that are unsuccessful can lead to frustration for both caregiver and child.
- Use a reducer insert on the toilet to help your child feels safe and secure when sitting on the toilet. Use a foot stool to make sure your child's feet are appropriately supported.

- Remove your child from the toilet if they haven't been successful within a few minutes.
- Praise any successes. Offer a hug, high five, clapping, even a sticker on a calendar.
- Try to use the same words for toileting each time e.g. "pee"/ "poo"
- If accidents happen, remain calm, clean up, try again!
- For a child who doesn't notice they are wet, try wearing underpants under a diaper to increase sensitivity.
- Eventually switch pull-ups for underwear during the day. Try to encourage your child to participate in the dressing and undressing routine.
- Try wipes versus toilet paper while learning to assist with clean up
- For girls teaching wiping from front to back
- Tell your child to wipe until there is "no more brown".
- BE CONSISTENT AND PERSISTENT!!!

**Please contact your occupational therapist if you have any questions about the above information**