

Excerpt from

# PROMOTING A HEALTHY BLADDER AND BOWEL

## Toilet training



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Created by



Contribution from

Paediatric Continence  
Scotland



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# Toilet training

Toilet training involves your child learning a set of skills and we need to help them learn. Children are able to control their bladder and bowels when they're physically ready and when they want to be dry and clean. Every child is different, so don't compare your child with others.

Most children can control their bowels before their bladder.

Some figures for you:



by age 1, most babies have stopped doing poos at night



by age 2, with the right support, most children have the ability to be dry during the day



by age 3, children will be becoming increasingly independent with toileting

There may still be occasional accidents, especially when they're excited, upset or absorbed in something else



by age 4, most children are independent with toileting

**Some children may have accidents so this should be accepted and toileting reinforced. Your child should not be berated for this.**

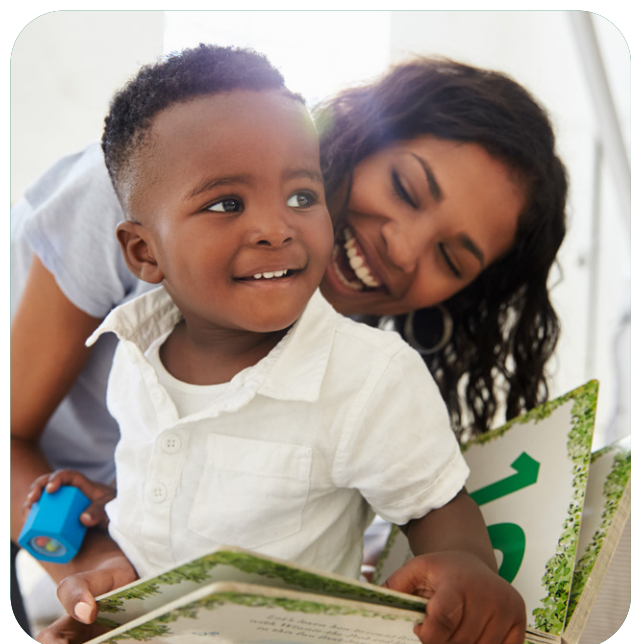
## When is the right time?

Remember, you should not force your child to use a potty or the toilet but you can form a toileting routine early on. A good toileting routine will most times eventually work.

Introduction to the toileting routine can begin in the early months of life. You can hold your child over the potty before they can sit and encourage them to practice sitting there when they can sit independently. Many will then open their bowels or pass urine if we sit them at the correct time for their body. Children are more likely to wee or poo after a sleep, meal or drink.

Some people believe that their child will show 'signs' before they should start toilet training. However, it is now known that we should not depend on these, as many will not show these signs, so early routine forming is key to success.

If this is not working, speak to your health visitor about how you can adjust your approach.





## Consistency is key

If you go out, take the potty or seat with you, it's important that the routine stays the same wherever your child is, including nursery or with other family members. It is equally important that whoever is looking after your child at any point in toilet training are doing the same thing. **CONSISTENCY** is what works.

Your child may become more aware and indicate to you:

- when they've got a wet or dirty nappy
- they may tell you, use a picture cue card, or sign or indicate that they need to wee or poo, or need the potty
- they may show they need to wee by fidgeting or going somewhere quiet or hidden

All of this is great if it happens but often it does not. This is why the routine and consistency are important for all children.





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