



## Potty Training Parent Tips

Potty training is one of those topics that get parents talking! Everyone has issues with it in one way or another and every child is different. Potty training is social, emotional, physical, verbal, and psychological. Lots of pieces need to come together so watch for readiness on all fronts. Try these strategies for toilet training your child.

- Choose time to work on potty training when the child is well rested, feeling well, and there is time to focus on training.
- If the diaper is dry after a nap, give the child a chance to use the toilet. It's a good readiness cue and the child will most likely need to go.
- Plan a shopping trip to pick out "big kid" underpants. (Children typically cannot bear the thought of having an accident and getting Spiderman wet or worse. Plus, there is the benefit of having a super hero or princess back you up!)
- Try dedicating a day for potty training. Feed the child salty foods to promote thirst. The child will spend a lot of time "practicing" with that much liquid in his system! Give a small treat when the child is successful.
- Fear can set in after a bout of constipation. Yogurt and high fiber foods help soften the stool and take the pain out of the experience. A warm bath will help too. Keep the child's mind otherwise occupied with a basket of books in the bathroom.
- Sticker charts work well for some children. When the child is successful, award a sticker. When 10 stickers (or any predetermined amount) are earned, reward your child. The reward doesn't have to be a material thing. Extra reading time with Mom or Dad, making snow angels in the backyard, or a trip to the park are great rewards. Increase the number of times the child is dry, then proceed to the number of dry days.
- Have your child contact Grandma or a special friend to report on the potty progress.
- Purchase a doll that wets so the child can see how the body works...in one end and out the other. Some children are frightened by the thought of something coming out of their body and being flushed away. Tell child every living thing poops. The body uses food for energy. The waste needs to be eliminated.
- Pull-Ups are not necessary and can delay the toilet training process. Move directly from diapers to underpants.
- Most importantly, avoid power struggles. Your child *will* be successful with toilet training!

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