

15 Steps To Successful Potty Training by Jan Faull

Preparing

1. At 18 months, buy a potty chair and place it in the bathroom. When your child sits on it, take notice, establish eye contact and say, "Look at you, you're sitting on the potty just like mommy and daddy."
2. Bring the potty out of the bathroom. Your child can sit on it when watching TV. Put dolls and teddy bears on it too.
3. Establish the routine of having your child sit on the potty before climbing into the bathtub. Don't expect any results. This is just time to get your child familiar with sitting on the toilet.
4. Once your child turns two, work to establish a potty routine where your child sits on the potty twice a day, once before bath time and again before putting pajamas on.
5. Don't ask your child, "Do you want to sit on the potty?" Any two-year-old will automatically say "No!" Just say, "It's time to sit on the potty."

Getting Started

6. Notice if your child is dry up to 1-½ hours and stops playing or walking to poop. These are signs of control; it's time to start teaching your child to use the toilet.
7. Put your child in disposable training pants and then take her every 2 hours or so to use the toilet. Once on the toilet encourage the child to go, but don't show disappointment if she doesn't perform. Practice is an important step on the road to potty training.
8. Once your child starts performing on the toilet put her in panties when at home. Use a disposable training pant when going to the grocery store or to visit at Grandmas.
9. Be sure to consult with your childcare provider as to how she proceeds with toilet training. Usually experienced caregivers are skilled at teaching children to use the toilet. Both parent and caregiver should work together and communicate regularly as to the child's progress.
10. Be prepared to deal with accidents. Don't be horrified when a child poops or pees in panties. Clean the child and the floor with a matter-of-fact attitude. Then put her on the toilet so the child eventually makes the connection that urine and stool goes in there.

Resistance

11. If your child meets with no success, keep her in disposable training pants full time. Take a break from any rigorous training. Wait a couple of months and try again.
12. If potty training becomes an emotional battle between parent and child over who is in control, drop back and give it a rest. Adjust your frame of mind and try again later.
13. Your role in the potty training process is to positively influence your child to use the toilet when the child's body is physically developed to the point where the child can hold in the urine and stool, and then release it into the toilet. But the ultimate control lies with the child. Avoid coercing, forcing or manipulating a child to use the toilet.
14. If you find yourself in a potty training power struggle tell your child this: "Your job is to learn to use the toilet, my job is to help you learn. It's your body. Someday you'll pee and poop in the toilet. If you want to wear underpants that's fine. If you want to wear a training pant that's fine, too. You decide. When you want to use the toilet is up to you, I'll help you."
15. If your child becomes constipated, retains bowel movements or develops encopresis, seek medical help. If your child is approaching four years old and continues to have numerous wetting accidents, talk to your doctor.

To order Jan Faull's book, *Mommy I Have to Go Potty*, call Parenting Press at 1-800-992-6657.