

**Ready for toilet training?** Trial and error will be your best friend. Don't be afraid to experiment with different methods. Once you have found something that works for you and your child, stick with it and be as consistent as possible. There are nearly as many methods as children- so go with your heart and what feels right for you. In my opinion, the main focus of toilet training is independence. So often parents become over involved in their child's toileting. This results in the parents becoming "trained" while their child is along for the ride! And I might add, it can be a long ride! Encourage your child to dress and undress. Try to avoid reminders as much as possible. It is ideal if you can limit reminders to when you are leaving the house. Use diapers for nap and night when necessary. **NO PULL-UPS** Avoid the temptation of using diapers when it is convenient for you. I have included suggestions and guidelines (as though you haven't found enough!)

1. Set up a "dressing station" where he has extra clothes (include socks) and a plastic hamper for his wet clothes .

2. Get a plastic stool - this will serve two purposes:

a. Sometimes it is easier for children to sit on a stool when first dressing themselves. It makes it easier for them to see what they are doing and to get each leg in each hole. One of our parents came up with the idea of using boxer briefs found at Wal-Mart- (they look like little biking shorts). Her child was constantly putting both legs in one hole of his undies. The little boxers eliminated that struggle immediately!



b. As you progress through the training process, and you feel like he is getting it , but chooses to wet on your floor (or furniture!) you may want to implement consequences - In a very nice, calm voice, take him to the plastic stool and ask him to sit and wait a few minutes while you get set up for him to change himself. (look busy!) After just a few minutes, tell him to take off his wet clothes and put his clean clothes on. If poop, get him cleaned up and then ask him to put his clean clothes on. **WALK AWAY!** If they struggle dressing and undressing, it's OK. The idea is to let them gain their independence in this process. The less said, the better. You don't want children to get a lot of attention during this process and they've probably heard everything several times by now! You **DO** want them to get very bored with the "clean up " process and realize it is much easier just to go in the potty!

3. Consider a reasonable length of time for your child to take complete responsibility for his toileting. Oftentimes when we continue to remind and stay involved in the process it drags it out forever!

4. Use the suggestions of others that work for you and your family and throw out the rest! Mothers just have a way of knowing what works best for their child. The main thing is to pick a process that works for you and to be as consistent as possible. I am totally against reward and punishment (not to be confused with natural and logical consequences) for toilet training. However, I know of several boys who were successfully trained on Skittles! Speaking of boys... Please teach boys to stand to urinate as soon as possible. This makes life at school much simpler!

5. Avoid the excuse trap. Did not get enough sleep, cutting teeth, too busy having fun, his Grandmother spoils him, we were outside... none of these are reasons for peeing in ones pants! Stay consistent - if you do not accept excuses, you will receive less of them!

One last thing- If you remain aloof and uninvolved it may eliminate power struggles and take all of the fun out of driving you crazy! Be prepared for setbacks. They will test you in every way . It is always best, when possible, not to turn back once you have begun. Don't forget how smart he is. This will be a major step in his self confidence and pride. Push him to succeed. Push through the accidents and the temptation to give up or give in. **STAY CALM.** Having a younger child to care for during this process adds another dimension of challenges. Just keep your eyes on the prize of having only **ONE** child in diapers!