



Toilet Learning

By Judy Arnall

Sometime between the ages of one year and four years of age, your toddler will be ready to tackle the toilet. This is a process that often is two steps forward and one step back. Be positive, proactive and encouraging and toilet training will go smoother.

Your child is ready

When he is uncomfortable in wet or dirty diapers.

When he notices he is peeing or having a BM.

When he can understand simple directions.

When he tells you by facial expressions that he needs to go.

When he is able to walk or run quickly to the bathroom.

When he is able to pull his pants up and down.

When he says and understands one-word statements – wet, dry, potty, go.

When his is able to stay dry for at least two hours or wakes up dry from a nap.

When there are a few well-formed stools a day rather than frequent little movements.

When he wants to be trained or asks to go or tells you when he is about to go.

When he is anxious to please you.

When he has a sense of social appropriateness (wet pants can be an embarrassment).

Your child is NOT ready

If there is a change in their life: new baby, move, new caregiver, or divorce. He is going through a negative stage and resists cooperation with you. You want to train due to outside pressures: family, preschool entrance, friends. He has no interest or curiosity yet.

Are you ready?

Can you drop everything when he needs to go to help with wiping, hand washing, etc?
Can you accept accidents and setbacks with patience and encouragement?
Is this a non-stressed time for you?

There is no magic window for toilet training. If it becomes too much for your child or you, there is nothing wrong with putting them back into diapers and trying again in a few weeks or months, when things are more positive in your lives.

Suggested Reading

Your baby and child, by Dr. Penelope Leach
Toilet Training, by Vicki Lansky

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