

One Right Way to Toilet Train

The concept of toilet training is for the child to tell us "I want go pee" when his bladder is about 80-90% full [just like we adults would feel that we have to go in 5 minutes, or else...] and not at 100% full bladder, telling us one second before the urine flows. If we let him learn on his own when he is more mature, this will take weeks or months to : 1. tell us 2. hold his bladder long enough to remove the clothing 3. want to go to the potty every time on his own later.

So, do we want an early potty training? In our practice we tell parents starting at the 18 month well visit :

1. To start telling the child "let's go pee pee" when he might have urine, e.g. when waking up in the morning, waking from naps, 2-3 hours after a meal and routinely at bed time or before going out for a short trip to places that have restrooms.
2. Use correct incentive which is the praising method; rewarding with toys, money or food does not work. Praise the child every time he has tried, even if at first there were no urine or we hadn't caught it in time. Kids this young want to please their parents. Very soon he will try to "tell" you that he wants to sit and pee [OK and easier for boys at first]. No scolding, punishing, just proper praising.

From our experience, the success rates depend a lot on **parental effort** at the beginning of training, the **frequency and consistency** of reminding, praising and later taking time to help your child **each time** he wants to go pee. We have seen kids less than 15 months old, who has already walked, making meaningful sounds/words got potty trained in a very short time because mom did not miss the opportunity to train her kid 5-6 times/day, everyday for 2 weeks.

Training for the elimination #2 can be done at the same setting.

1. Do not change diaper until after your baby has sit at the potty chair for few minutes, just to learn that sitting is relaxing, easy to pass more gas, more urine, more bowel movements.
2. Praise her because she has tried to sit at the commode or potty chair.
3. Rinse/clean and tell her that next time it's OK tell mom or dad when she wants to do #2. Soon she will want to sit passing BMs because it's no pain, no one complains.

We mention to parents that it is much easier if one parent supervises, others in the family should help leading the toddlers to toilet/potty chair. An already trained preschooler can be an example for younger sibling to try voiding at the same time [being a big boy].

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