Toilet Training Guidance

Phases of the potty-training journey

We understand that all children have accidents, and we recognize those when they occur however we also know that there are stages of potty training.

Phase I is being urine/pee trained

Phase II is being stool/poop trained

Unwittingly "Parent Trained" happens when the adults are providing reminders and trying to keep children on a schedule. There is a fine balance, and we have successfully supported many families during these transitions. We just ask for open, honest communication along with trust.

Readiness Signs

Physical signs: Indicators that bladder muscles are developed enough to hold and release urine as needed. Remember this is what the first stage is all about; learning to hold in and release on demand. If you have waited to see "the potty dance" chances are you're too late.

Watch for these independent markers with minimal reminders from adults for 10 consecutive days while using pull ups or in home training pants.

- Have regular, well-formed bowel movements at relatively predictable times
- Have "dry" periods of at least two hours (typically excluding naps),
- Voids urine entirely at one time (voids entire bladder)

You may need to experiment in underwear or training pants a few times in order to gather this data. Tracking is a helpful tool.

Behavioral signs:

Can sit down independently in one position for two to five minutes.
Can pull pants up and down independently, pinching the waistband of pants/underwear.
Dislikes the feeling and recognizes a wet or soiled diaper.
Shows interest in others' bathroom habits (watches parents use the bathroom)
Gives a physical or verbal sign when having a bowel movement such as grunting, squatting, goes to hide or tells you.
Demonstrates a desire for independence.
Takes pride in accomplishments.
Isn't resistant to learning to use the toilet.
Is in a generally cooperative stage, not a negative or contrary one.

Cognitive signs:

Understands the physical signals to go and can tell you before it happens or even hold it until there is time to get to the potty.
Can follow simple instructions, such as "go get the toy."
Have words for urine (pee) and stool (poop).

Tips for potty training

Be consistent (consider a long weekend when you can be home)

- Set a timer and send your child to the potty every hour. Say to your child; "it is time to sit on the potty" vs asking "do you want to sit on the potty"
- Limit activities so that your child is close to a toilet. Don't go back and forth into/out of pullups for convenience.
- If after a long weekend you have more misses than successes, wait at least two weeks and try again.

Clothing choices

- cotton underwear that they can pull up and push down without any adult assistance
- elastic-waist pants (no jeans or tights) that they can navigate with minimal adult assistance
- shirts are hitting at their waist (not too long so as to interfere with dressing/pants)
- model for your child how to pinch the waistband (top) to pull their clothing up. You will need to stand behind them and let them see you aka "co-doing". It is helpful to do this in front of a mirror using as few words as possible.

Tracking

- Keep a log of urine voiding and bowel evacuation. Remember that your child is learning how to hold and release on demand and there is a tendency to do more holding than needed.
- You want to continue regular bowel movements vs becoming constipated.
- If your child has daily accidents after 3 full days, please stop the potty training and wait at least 10 days to resume.

Please do not hesitate to reach out for additional help.
We have supported hundreds of families and want to ensure success for you and your child.