

Supporting Toileting in Early Years

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The underlying reasons to toileting problems include the following:

- Food intolerance
- Opioid excess – metabolic disorder
- Lack of social awareness
- Fear of bodily functions
- Fear of the toilet
- Poor decision-making skills
- Comfort of nappies restricts the feeling of being wet
- Lack of control
- Unaware of own bodily functions
- Developmental delay
- Poor Motor Control
- Physical or Medical reason

→ Refer to GP/Paediatrician for a consultation to discuss

Strategies that have been found to be useful include the following:

• Take the nappy off for periods of time, so the child can connect wet feeling with urinating
• Teach the connection between passing urine and the toilet/potty. For example: produce the potty to catch the urine rather than sitting on the potty waiting for the urine
• Modelling from older children
• Once the child understands, reward all attempts
• Deal with accidents in a very low-key manner, so they are not rewarded by lots of attention
• Give a young boy something to aim at as a further incentive, e.g. a ping-pong ball
• If the child is only comfortable to toilet in the nappy, sit the child on the toilet with the nappy on and stage by stage, open the nappy, and eventually remove it
• Provide a PECs symbol to support requesting toilet – difficulties with language can be supported using signs, simples, gestures/simple language
• Social Story https://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx
• Books (there are a wide variety available from libraries, online and high-street stores)
• Songs (Change the words to familiar tunes to create flexible songs by changing the words to suit the situation: 'Here we go round the Mulberry Bush' – This is the way we go to toilet ...). The repetition and use of dramatic pauses to allow the child opportunities to take the lead, change the pace, volume and create a variety in the routine.
• Visual Schedules
• Consider suitable clothing – with ease of pulling down/up – restrictive or challenging clothing may be inhibiting child's attempts
• If children experience a fear of the toilet, expose gradually to sounds of toilet flushing/toilet seats closing
• A consistent routine – schedule toilet breaks – using a visual schedule
• Support the development of awareness of body feelings using books/simple language – children who experience sensory processing difficulties may not be aware that they are wet/soiled/need to go to the toilet – yoga and relaxation techniques, alongside support from visual prompts, gestures and Makaton signs, in a calm consistent holistic approach

Resources

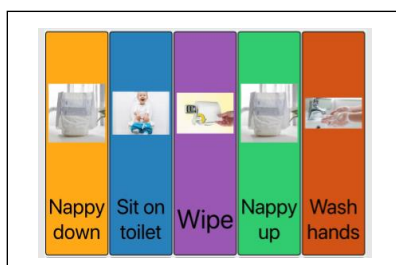
- Potty training information and tips from the experts to guide <https://www.eric.org.uk/pages/category/potty-training>
- Books – a wide variety available from libraries, online and high-street stores...



- Social Stories

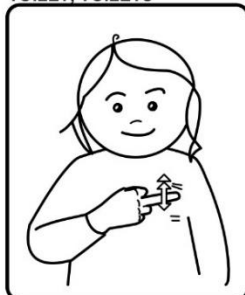
<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx>

- Visual Schedules



- Makaton Signs

TOILET, TOILETS



Tip of middle finger rubs up and down on left side of chest.

WEE WEE



Fingers form fingerspelt 'W' with two movements.

POTTY



R. index finger pointing down moves in circle above and to the right of L. fist.