

Dudley Children's Occupational Therapy Service
The Sunflower Centre
John Corbett Drive
Stourbridge
DY8 4HZ

Tel: (01384) 366912 or (01384) 361369

E Mail: bchft.childrensot@nhs.net

Toileting Resource Pack

The information below has been compiled from various sources listed at the bottom of this document.

The following advice should be tailored for each individual child, based on their needs, as there is no one procedure that is guaranteed to work.

1. Children with additional needs may need more support and take longer to become toilet trained so it is recommended not to delay and to get support early.
2. Concentrate on changing one behaviour at a time, it can be difficult to change two behaviours at once. Consider what the main priority is for the family at the current time.
3. Toilet training requires time, effort, consistency and perseverance. It is important that the timing is right, consider what else is happening in the child's life, e.g. holidays, new siblings, change to education setting etc.
4. Make sure there are no physical or medical reasons why a child should not commence toilet training. For a child with constipation or diarrhoea, advice may need to be sought from a GP or Paediatrician.
5. Consider other issues that may impact on a child's ability to be toilet trained.
6. For children displaying no awareness over 4 years of age a toileting programme may help to create this awareness.

Step one: Setting the scene

1. Look out for any signs of awareness from the child that they have a wet or dirty nappy/clothing: do they change what they are doing/behaviour or appear distracted or fidgety when wet/soiled? Are there any signs that they know weeing or pooing has started or stopped?
2. Try to see whether there is any routine to their toileting habits and whether they can keep their nappy dry/clean for periods of 1-2 hours in relation to normal and regular fluid intake.
3. Ensure sensible fluid and food intake – although providing extra drinks when toilet training may increase how often a child needs to wee which makes them feel full and gives more opportunity to learn.
4. Start doing nappy changes in the bathroom so they start to associate it with toileting.
5. If they take themselves away to do a poo then try using a spot for them to stand on and gradually over time move the spot closer to the bathroom until they are doing a poo in their nappy in the bathroom.
6. Put poo from their nappy into the toilet and flush it away so that they understand where it goes.
7. Read children's books or social stories about weeing and pooing and using the toilet with pictures to outline the sequence.

8. There are videos/short cartoons on YouTube for toilet training such as Princess Polly but you will need to check these to ensure they are suitable for your child.
9. Use words wee, poo, dirty, wet, dry in context.
10. Use pretend play to support the process e.g. play with dollies or teddies on the toilet.
11. Sit the child on the toilet while clothed and play games such as tickling, singing or reading stories to build up a positive association with the toilet.
12. Some children may find watching others such as parents or siblings using the toilet helpful.
13. Make sure the child is able to sit on the toilet comfortably without your physical support, with their hips and knees positioned at a 90 degree angle and their feet on a flat surface. You may need to buy a toilet step/foot stool to help them do this or try a ring reducer or child toilet seat on the toilet seat if required.
14. Be aware that as you change your child's routine they may become more anxious and their behaviour may change as a result. Let others who help look after your child know why their behaviour may change.

Step Two: Develop the skills needed

1. Consider going straight onto the toilet rather than using a potty as using a potty may introduce another difficult change later down the line.
2. Decide how you will praise your child, some children may find verbal praise difficult to cope with so may just prefer a calm routine with a preferred activity afterwards.
3. Make sure a consistent approach is used across settings – discuss this with nursery/pre-school so you can agree an approach.
4. Start sitting on the toilet and increase how long and how often they do this.
5. Consider activities to do while they are on the toilet to encourage them to feel relaxed and spend longer on the toilet. Try blowing bubbles or blowing up balloons to encourage opening their bowels. They may like to have certain books/toys for when they are sitting on the toilet. This should be different to the reward.
6. Prepare for the toilet training period by making sure your child wears loose fitting clothing with elasticated waists.
7. Practice pulling trousers/pants up and down.
8. Buying underwear with the child's favourite cartoon or TV characters on may help motivate them.
9. Practice hand washing and toilet flushing (if they will tolerate this).
10. Give praise for sitting still.

Step Three: Raising awareness

1. Check the nappy regularly and encourage the child to join in.
2. Keep a record of wee and poo over a few days to help provide a timeframe for toileting schedule times and routines. See example below.
3. Establish regular times for toileting e.g. take the child to the toilet at the start of the day, then at regular intervals throughout the day, including after drinks or mealtimes and just before going to bed.
4. Try putting a non-absorbent liner in the child's nappy or use cloth washable nappies or trainer pants nappy so they start to feel wet.

Step Four: Using the toilet for wee and poo

1. Take the nappy off and do not put it back on (except at night and naps)!
2. If your child is resistant to having the nappy off then start getting them used to sitting on the toilet with the nappy on. Then you can start cutting a hole in the bottom of the nappy so the poo can fall into the toilet. They will still feel the comfort of the nappy

around their waist. You can cut away a bigger portion of the nappy each time until they no longer need it.

3. If your child likes the feeling of having a full nappy then try providing some deep pressure input at regular intervals e.g. bear hugs or wrapping them in a blanket like a sausage roll.
4. Use equipment such as car seat protectors or bed liners to keep pushchair seat dry and washable trainer pants.
5. Ensure extra clothes are taken everywhere with the child.
6. Use the same sequence each time the child visits the toilet so the child learns what to expect as this is likely to reduce resistance to the activity.
7. Use a visual sequence chart in the bathroom. This will help the child to understand the requirements and remember/plan the next part of the sequence, see example below.
8. Show your child a photo or drawing of the toilet and say '*child's name*, toilet', take them to the toilet, follow your visual sequence for undressing and sit your child on the toilet. Even if they do not open their bowel or bladder, continue to follow the visual sequence as if they had.
9. For children with more profound communication/intellectual disabilities who cannot follow visual/picture schedules, use an object of reference (a real life item the child can associate with the activity) such as a toilet roll. Keep this in the same place. Give the object to the child to hold and take to toilet. When the child has completed toileting return the object of reference to its usual place.
10. Remember to build dressing and hand washing into toileting routines to ensure building up a normal sequence of behaviours.
11. If your child is scared of flushing the toilet then remove it from the visual sequence and leave it until the end of the toileting routine; after they have washed and dried their hands. Initially the child may want to stand in the doorway while you flush the toilet and gradually stand closer each time until they are able to flush the toilet. It may help to play music over the sound of the flush or show pictures/book to explain the flushing noise.
12. Encourage the child to count to ten before getting off the toilet when they have finished weeing to avoid accidents.
13. Do not punish them for having an accident. Deal with it calmly, it is all part of the learning process and your reaction may shape their future success with toileting.
14. If they have an accident, if possible try to get them to the toilet to get some wee/poo in the toilet then provide positive reinforcement for the wee/poo that has gone into the toilet. Continue with the rest of the routine.
15. Boys may want to stand up to wee. To do this they need to know the difference between when they need to wee or poo and have the coordination and control needed to aim. Try using something in the bowl for them to aim at, you could use a piece of cereal or you can get toilet stickers/blocks for them to aim at. If you are teaching him to stand and wee then make sure the pictures on the visual timetable show someone standing to wee, see below.
16. A pants alarm could be used for children who find it difficult to tell when they are full. The alarm makes a sound as soon as they start to wee so you can get them to the toilet. This also helps the child to identify the feeling of fullness with needing a wee and using the toilet.
17. If your child is resistant to change or following instructions then using a reward may be useful. This would need to be sufficiently motivating for the child to want to complete the action again to get the reward. Think of the thing your child would choose over all other things. It would need to be kept for toileting only and not given at other times so

they only associate it with toileting. It should also be an immediate reward and something that can be given on an ongoing basis.

18. Backward chaining can be used to teach the child the individual tasks that make up the whole toileting sequence. For example teaching the child how to wash hands, then when they have mastered this they flush the toilet and wash their hands. Then when they have mastered both of those steps they pull up their pants, flush the toilet and wash their hands. They would always have their reward at the same point, once the sequence has finished. By the end of the process they would be completing the whole toileting sequence.
19. Older children may benefit from using apps or watches set to vibrate at certain times throughout the day to remind them to go to the toilet.
20. When visiting new places, show your child where the toilets are and use the same routine as you do at home. Use the same picture and toy or book they may have for toileting at home.
21. Use visual charts, positive reinforcement, incentive charts/stickers etc.

Step Five: Night time training

1. Having a set bedtime routine which is consistent over weekends and holidays is beneficial.
2. Give your child normal drinks during the day but restrict their intake for up to an hour before bed time.
3. Avoid sugary drinks such as blackcurrant squash or fizzy drinks in the evening.
4. Make sure they can access the toilet at night – they may need you to go with them.
5. Before bed take the child to the toilet. They may need to be taken again during the night.
6. Try aids to protect bedding. See below.

Wiping following toileting

1. Observe the child wiping their bottom so you can see exactly how they are managing the task.
2. Try initially using verbal prompting to talk them through the task rather than doing it for them.
3. Ensure the child can reach the toilet paper or wipes so that they are not over balancing when they stretch.
4. Check the child knows how much paper/how many wipes to use. Make sure this is on their visual chart to encourage independence.
5. Check the child knows where and how to wipe and how to hold the paper.
6. Some children experience difficulty wiping as they may lack the dexterity to manipulate the toilet paper or lack body awareness. If this is the case wet wipes may be easier to use as they are easier to hold and manipulate. Make sure your child disposes of these appropriately in a bin.
7. Encourage the child to look at the paper/wipe in order to check whether it is clean and to wipe again if needed.
8. Use hand over hand support initially to guide them as they wipe.
9. Play games that require them to pass objects through their legs and then behind them, simulating the movement required when bottom wiping.
10. Have an adult start wiping and the child finish. Reduce the amount of support as their wiping skills improve.
11. For older children, encourage them to problem solve and think for themselves how they can adjust the task.
12. Use a mirror for the child to check whether they are clean.

13. Use visual sequencing charts as reminder of the stages required. Encourage the child to check the chart to self-correct, rather than telling them what to do next.
14. Using reward charts can help motivate children to ensure that they wipe effectively.

Handwashing

1. Follow a visual sequence each time, see example below. Encourage the child to use the chart rather than you verbally prompting them.
2. Try hand over hand guidance initially then reduce the support you offer.
3. Think about whether you want your child to just use the cold tap to avoid the risk of potential scalds in other settings under hot taps.

Smearing

1. The term smearing is used to describe children spreading poo on walls, furniture, themselves, or anywhere apart from the toilet/potty or pants/nappy.
2. The first time a child smears is likely to be their way of communicating with parent/carer, for example:
 - Constipation – the child may ease uncomfortable stool stuck in the anus/rectum.
 - The child may be aware of poo in their nappy, and reach inside to relieve discomfort or out of curiosity.
3. If the child is smearing then first of all go to your GP to ensure there are no physical reason why this is happening such as the child being in pain.
4. They may not understand wiping so may need help developing this (see advice below).
5. Some children enjoy the feeling of smearing, try providing other suitable activities like finger painting, or playdough or playing with cornflour and water mix.
6. Sometimes the parent clearing up after smearing may be rewarding for the child, particularly if they like water play and attention (even negative attention can be rewarding).
7. Instead use minimal interaction and alternative clean up methods such as tepid shower or flannel / wet wipes.
8. As with all behaviours which challenge, there is no magic wand available to change the child's behaviour; success will be the result of perseverance, consistency and positive interaction with carers.

Regression in toileting

1. Sometimes a child may regress and start to have accidents even though they were dry before.
2. Stay calm and reassure your child that he/she can and will succeed.
3. Consider whether there have been any changes recently. Life events such as moving school, a new baby in the family or even an illness can affect a child's toileting.
4. Assess whether there are any changes to the child's environment that can be made to support them.
5. Check the appropriate supports are in place in all settings, particularly following a change to staffing or when your child moves up a year at school.
6. You may need to revert back to some of the toilet training techniques you have already tried.

Appendix one

Toileting readiness chart

Time	Drinks/Meal	Wet	Bowel movement	Used toilet
05.00				
06.00				
07.00				
08.00				
09.00				
10.00				
11.00				
12.00				
13.00				
14.00				
15.00				
16.00				
17.00				
18.00				
19.00				
20.00				
21.00				
22.00				
23.00				
24.00				
Night				

Appendix Two

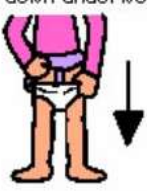

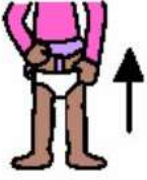

Example Toileting Plan

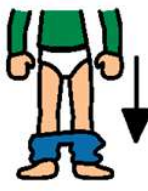




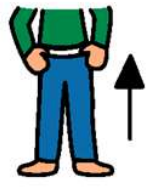




Childs Name: _____

Goal	George will go to the toilet 15 minutes after a meal and sit on the toilet for 5 seconds
Routine How often? How long doing what behaviour?	George goes to the toilet 15 minutes after every meal and drink. George goes to the toilet for 5 seconds and sits on the toilet.
Language	"Now we go to the toilet"
Place	Adult stands just outside of the door. The door is open and the lights are on.
Tools	Visual schedule George reads <i>The Gruffalo</i> in the bathroom.
Rewards	George receives 5 minutes of iPad/tablet time for every visit to the bathroom

Appendix Three

Toileting schedules

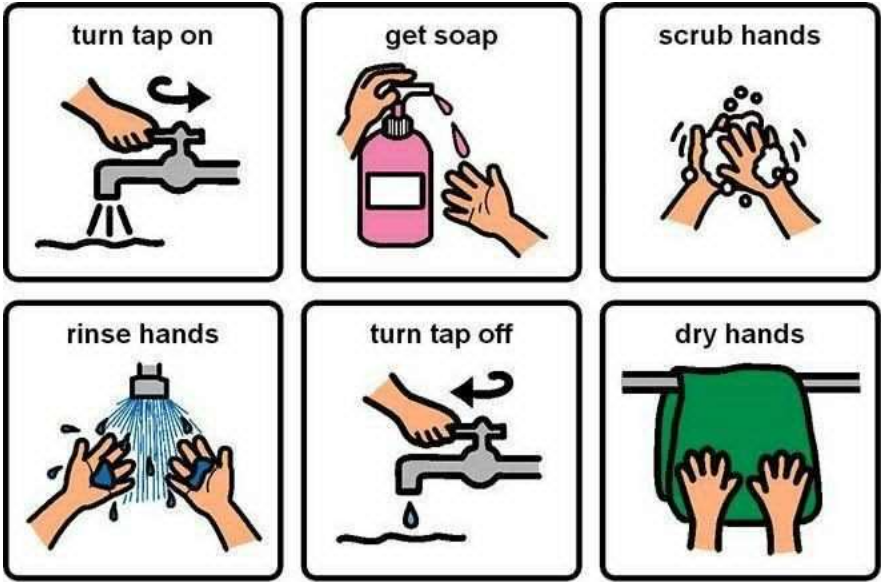
pull down pants 	pull down underwear 	sit down 	toilet paper 	I used the toilet! 
flush 	pull up underwear 	pull up pants 	finished 	wash hands 

pull down pants 	pull down underwear 	lift seat 	stand facing toilet 	pull up underwear 
pull up pants 	flush 	put down seat 	finished 	wash hands 

go to the bathroom 	pull down pants 	pull down underwear 
---	--	--

go to bathroom 	wipe 	pull up underwear 
---	---	--

Washing hands schedule



Appendix Four

Toileting reward chart for _____

Immediate reward will be _____

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Sat on the potty / toilet							
Pulled pants down							
Wee on the potty / toilet							
Poo on the potty / toilet							
Flushed the toilet							
Washed hands							

Appendix Five

Toileting aids and useful resources

This is not a comprehensive list however it gives a rough idea of what is available

Toilet seat with steps



www.amazon.co.uk

www.ebay.co.uk

www.argos.co.uk

Foot stool / step



www.ebay.co.uk

www.amazon.co.uk



www.ebay.co.uk

www.amazon.co.uk

www.argos.co.uk



www.ebay.co.uk

www.amazon.co.uk

www.argos.co.uk

Ring reducer three-in-one toilet seat



www.homebase.co.uk

www.nrshealthcare.co.uk

www.argos.co.uk

Ring reducer



www.mothercare.com

Padded ring reducer



www.nrshealthcare.co.uk



www.mothercare.com

Toileting urinal



www.ebay.co.uk

Washable training pants



www.mothercare.com

www.amazon.co.uk

Bed liners



www.mothercare.com

www.amazon.co.uk

www.ebay.co.uk

Car seat protector



www.halfords.com

Carry potty



www.mothercare.com

www.amazon.co.uk

www.ebay.co.uk

www.argos.co.uk

Disposable and washable nappies and liners: www.littlelambnappies.com

Pants alarm: www.tinkletoon.com/special_needs.html

Toilet inserts: www.argos.co.uk or www.amazon.co.uk

Steps / rails for toileting: www.completecareshop.co.uk

Sand timers: www.amazon.co.uk and www.cheapdisabilityaids.co.uk

References and useful resources

Toileting training – A guide for parents. <https://cerebra.org.uk/download/toilet-training-a-guide-for-parents/>

Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Incontinence (ERIC) – range of bedding protection, swimwear, absorbent pants and vibrating watches. <https://eric.org.uk/>
Also has a helpline for children, parents and professionals for advice on toileting 0845 370 8008 (Mon –Fri 10-4)

Bladder & Bowel UK - <https://www.bbuk.org.uk/children-young-people/>

Fledglings – charity which helps parents and carers of children with special needs to find simple solutions to practical problems.
<https://www.fledglings.org.uk/> or 0845 458 1124

National Autistic Society – includes social stories about toileting as well as other resources
<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/behaviour/toileting/parents>

<https://brighttots.com/toilet-training-children-with-autism/>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/health-wellbeing>

<https://www.dotolearn.com/picture-cards/> - visual symbols

Books

