



HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (HDS)/ CHILDREN'S CARE CONNECTION (C3) NEWSLETTER



NAVIGATING TOILET TRAINING TRENDS AND STRATEGIES

While HDS/C3 continues to support and explore the needs of families in a post-pandemic world, we are seeing some interesting trends. One of the biggest trends in our Behavior Services is around toilet training and challenges families face as they take on this important developmental endeavor. We are seeing unprecedented numbers of children still working on mastering toilet training skills as they head off for kindergarten and although we are not exactly sure why that is, we have seen some common themes.

For some families, the barrier may be a lack of information around readiness cues and implementation strategies, for others it could be a developmental delay such as speech or fine motor skills. At times the competing pressures of caregiving, work and other family stressors have made things hard and for many families it's simply about unhelpful habits that have developed over time.

When a caregiver comes to HDS/C3 asking for support with any area of need, we start by trying to understand their concerns and meet them where they are with readiness for change. This is especially important when we are talking about the intimate task of toilet training where readiness and routines are just as important as understanding fears or adverse toileting experiences.

In this newsletter, our team will offer some general information, strategies and support considerations we hope will provide you some confidence and considerations as you navigate next steps in service to a family. And remember, a referral to HDS or your pediatrician is always a good option if you or the family is feeling stuck!

ABOUT HDS

At HDS/C3, our mission is to provide no-cost, comprehensive support for the developmental, behavioral, and care coordination needs of prenatal caregivers and children age 0-5. Through our services, which encompass education, prevention, and care coordination support for obtaining diagnoses, we strive to ensure the optimal development of our clients and the well-being of their family during these crucial early years.

THIS ISSUE:

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READY, SET, GO! TOILET TRAINING!

Toilet training can be an exciting and challenging time in the life of your toddler (and the whole family!). Whether you choose a child-led approach over time, a short-term “boot camp” style approach or something in between, you will find tips in this article to support your child and family during the process. In all cases, planning ahead, assessing readiness of your child and their caregivers, and creating consistency in routine and between caregivers will create the best chance for success.

HDS/C3 is available to support with toilet training through our STEPS class or Individual Behavior Consultation, if families want to learn more!

Ready!

BENEFITS OF TOILET TRAINING

1. Increased opportunities for socialization, as some preschools require children to be toilet trained
2. Decreased cost for parents
3. Increased self-esteem surrounding independence
4. Decreased hygiene-related discomfort/infections

YOUR CHILD MAY BE READY FOR TOILET TRAINING WHEN...

1. They stay dry for significant periods of time (up to 2 hours)
2. They show some regularity in their wetting/bowel movements (a fiber-rich diet may help with bowel movement consistency)
3. They show indications that they are wet or having a bowel movement (e.g. hiding to poop, consistently complaining of wetness/discomfort, showing awareness of being wet/poopy)
4. They are able to pull pants up and down with little assistance
5. They have words, sounds, or signs for pee and poop
6. They show interest in other's experience on the toilet
7. They are physically able to sit on the toilet with or without adaptations

**Some children are “ready” around 2 years old, others not until 3 years old. The age of your child is not as important as you might think. Toilet training is a developmental process unique to each child that cannot be rushed. If you push too much too soon, it can set toilet training back.



READY, SET, GO! TOILET TRAINING!

The HDS/C3 team shares insights on preparing both families and environments for this significant developmental milestone in order to successfully execute the toilet training process.

Set!

CREATING A ROUTINE

1. Use words that talk about going potty – pee, poop, potty, or whatever your family chooses. When you see the child going, ask them “are you going poop?” Ask them to tell you if their diaper is wet or poopy so they start to understand the words and actions together.
2. Create a routine around the bathroom. Invite your child to the bathroom with you. Talk about what you are doing, how your body feels, etc. Wash hands together.
3. Spend time checking your child's diaper to identify patterns. Determine when to ask your child to try on the toilet.
4. Move all diaper changes to the bathroom (move wipes, diapers, etc.) and change while standing up whenever possible. This will help your child learn “this is where and how toileting happens”
5. If possible, dump your child's poop in the toilet. Allow them to flush if they would like.
6. Introduce a “play toilet” into your child's pretend play activities. When you are pretending to be a character in play, have that toy use the toilet!
7. There are lots of children's books about toilet training. They can be a great way to normalize a new, and sometimes intimidating activity!
8. Visit public restrooms to get used to the sounds, bright lights, etc. – just for fun, not to go at first unless they are interested.

GETTING THE CAREGIVERS AND ENVIRONMENT READY

Potty Preparation:

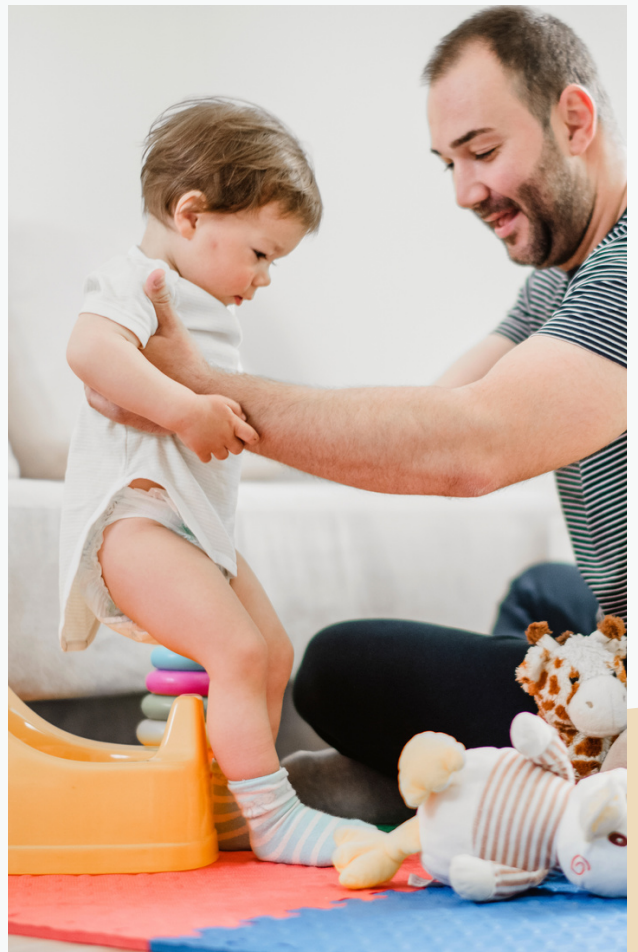
- Decide on using a potty chair or the toilet for your child.
- Consider the need for a stool for foot stability or comfort.
- Create a relaxing bathroom environment with books or toys.

Clothing Considerations:

- Ensure your child's clothing is adaptable to toilet training.
- Avoid long dresses, overalls, or shirts that snap in the crotch.
- Choose clothing that facilitates quick and easy use of the toilet.

Communication and Coordination:

- Communicate your toilet training plans to all caregivers.
- Discuss underwear vs. pullup (or some combination of both – children will most likely need pullup or diaper support while sleeping at first)
- Prepare the environment for the inevitable accidents.
- Coordinate with preschool or daycare for consistency in routine.
- Time home potty trips with school hours.



READY, SET, GO! TOILET TRAINING!

The HDS/C3 Team offers insights on what to do to facilitate the process when the big day is here and ways to support children through various challenges that may arise during the process.

Go!

THE BIG DAY IS HERE!

- Start at a relatively stress-free time for you and your child.
- While caregivers are often excited about this transition, keeping the environment calm and positive will set your child up for success.
- Introduce toilet breaks and incorporate them to your daily routine, such as when waking up, after meals, during regular patterns and before bath or bedtime.
- Sometimes asking children to “try” too often will cause frustration and they may not want to participate. If you can make it a step in your routine/something the whole family does, they will be more encouraged.
- When your child poops in their diaper, dispose of it in the toilet and reinforce "poop goes in the potty."
- Reward your child for successful potty use with small enjoyable incentives. If you decide to use a rewards system for motivation, it is important that the reward is immediate and specific to toilet use (not a build up to a reward). If no success in 10 minutes, have them pull up pants and try again later.
- Expect accidents and clean up calmly. Reassure your child that it's okay, accidents happen, and you can try again.
- Remember that this is a skill that most children eventually master. Be patient with your child and yourself. Know that this phase will not last forever, and soon you will be proud of your child's growing independence!



01. POTENTIAL SENSORY CONNECTIONS

- Sensitivity to certain textures or tactile stimulation can impact toilet training. For example, for some children, the movement of clothing during toileting can be very uncomfortable
- Some children are less aware of the sensations in their body, causing them to not be aware of their need to pee/poop
- Noises in some bathrooms can be overwhelming for some children. One trick is to use a piece of toilet paper or sticky notes to cover the auto-flush sensory on the toilet for your child when you are in public.

02. ADDRESSING SPECIFIC FEARS

Fear of toilets:

- Engage in fun playtime in the bathroom every day (bubbles, playing with water in the sink, etc.). This can help your child get more exposure to the bathroom without forcing them to sit on the toilet.
- Pair sitting on the toilet with a positive experiences, such as calming sensory input, playing a favorite song, or playing with a preferred toy.
- If your child insists on going in their diaper, you can start by sitting them on the potty with diaper and clothes on at first.

Fear of falling in:

- Cover up the hole with cardboard or a towel and slowly make the hole larger as they get more comfortable.

Fear of flushing:

- Do it when the child is away, inform them in advance, or let them control the flush if they would like.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION LIBRARY

Our favorite DEI books to learn about toilet training



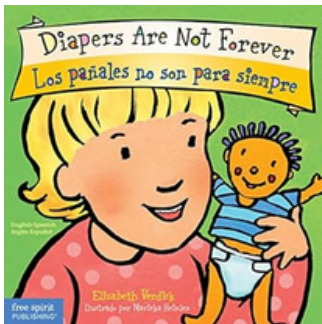
Once Upon a Potty

by Alona Frankel

The story follows a little boy or girl (depending on the edition) as they learn about using the potty for the first time. Through delightful illustrations and simple language, the book introduces the concept of potty training, illustrating the steps involved and emphasizing the importance of independence and personal hygiene.

English read aloud: For [Boys](#) | For [Girls](#)

Spanish read aloud: For [Boys](#) | For [Girls](#)

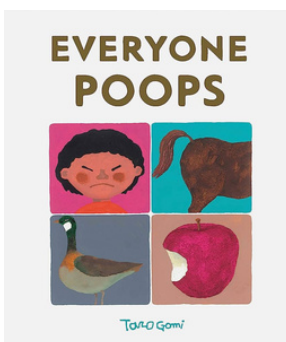


Diapers Are Not Forever

by Elizabeth Verdick

Learning to use the potty takes patience and practice, and this straightforward book helps pave the way. Young children learn how to use the potty and why it's time to do so, while gaining the courage and confidence to face this important milestone in their lives. This book is a bilingual English and Spanish book, and includes tips for caregivers from a children's health specialist.

Read aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNt55-fuQLc>



Everyone Poops

by Taro Gomi

This book dives into how it's not just people that poop but also other animals too. It encourages young kids to feel comfortable with going to the toilet by talking about the different types of poops.

Read aloud: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)



CURRENT SERVICE WAIT TIMES

INTAKE & REGISTRATION

2 WEEKS

Upon receiving the referral, our team will contact family to complete registration and schedule client for a 90-minute developmental screening.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

1 WEEK

During this appointment, a Developmental Specialist will utilize the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 and SE-2 to determine if there are any delays. M-CHAT (if applicable) and a Caregiver Well Being Checklist will also be administered. Recommendations for further assessments and/or community resources will be provided at the end of appointment.

IN THE COMMUNITY

RADY CHILDREN'S ICE RINK

November 16 2023 - January 7, 2024, 10AM-10PM
ARTS DISTRICT Liberty Station; on Legacy Plaza, near 2875 Dewey Road

Net proceeds from the ice rink support the THRIVING AFTER CANCER PROGRAM at the Peckham Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego
<https://rchicerink.org/>

TOYS FOR TOTS

Naval Marine Corps Reserve Center
9955 Pomerado Rd. San Diego, CA 92131
October 1, 2023 until December 26, 2023
Visit [San Diego County Toys for Tots](#) for more details

SAN DIEGO FOOD BANK 2023 TURKEY DRIVE

Contribute to putting delicious food on the table of our neighbors in need by visiting the [website](#)

FEEDING SAN DIEGO POP-UP HOLIDAY FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS

Sorrento Valley: Feeding San Diego; December 16, 10AM-12PM
Registration through [website](#) is required to receive free holiday meals

FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN WARRIORS HOLIDAY DRIVE 2023

October 31, 8AM until December 9, 5PM
Support women veterans by donating toys, clothes and baby items:
<https://foundationforwomenwarriors.org/event/holiday-drive-2023/>



For more information about
Healthy Development Services/C3:

WWW.RCHSD.ORG/HDS