

Toilet Training Top Tips



This document is a guide that accompanies Lifestart's *Tackling Toilet Training* webinar: <https://vimeo.com/425712692/c2080d33d6>

1. Skills

- Is your child ready? Discuss with your Key Worker and look at a toilet training readiness checklist.

2. Sensory preferences and environment

- Your child will feel more relaxed and comfortable on the toilet if the bathroom is a welcoming environment that suits their sensory preferences.
- Change nappies in the bathroom so your child associates the bathroom with wees and poos.

3. Routines

- Watching Mum or Dad on the toilet will help your child to understand and learn the toileting routine.
- Do all the steps the same way each time you take your child to the toilet. For example, pull down pants, sit, do wee or poo, wipe, stand, pull up pants, flush, wash hands and dry hands.
- Collect data to find out if your child's toileting habits have a pattern or are regular.
- You can use this information to develop a toileting schedule and decide on set times in the day to sit your child on the toilet.

4. Position on the toilet

- Use a toilet seat insert if needed. Some children may be worried if they feel like they may 'fall' into the toilet.
- Your child's feet need to be supported with their knees higher than their hips. Use a foot stool if needed.

5. Constipation

- If your child is constipated, it will be very difficult for them to toilet train, so this needs to be treated first if it's an issue.
- Signs of constipation can include hard poos or regular leaking of poo, pain or straining when doing poos. Children may experience stomach pain.

6. Clothing

- Try underpants only, pull up style training pants, a pull up nappy with paper towel, cloth insert or undies underneath to allow your child to feel the sensation of being wet or dirty.
- Loose elastic pants over undies make it easier to pull their pants up and down.

7. Communication

- Avoid asking if they need to go to the toilet. Tell your child that it is toilet time and take them at regular intervals throughout the day. This will build a toileting routine.
- Visual supports, social stories and gestures might help them prepare for toilet times and understand the routine.
- Use the same language each time, e.g. “It’s toilet time”, “poo goes in the toilet”.

8. Strategies for sitting

- Start off by encouraging your child to sit on the toilet for 1-2 minutes at a time.
- Think about things that they like that might encourage them to sit e.g. singing a song, blowing bubbles, using a visual timer.

9. Praising and rewarding every step

- Praise every step and notice small accomplishments. Even if the goal is as simple as “for your child to feel comfortable in the bathroom environment and cooperative when being taken to the toilet”.
- After sitting on the toilet, encourage them to look inside the toilet. If they haven’t done a poo or wee just say, “no wee, no poo”.
- When they do start to pass wee or poo in the toilet provide them with lots of praise and encouragement.
- Make sure any reward is immediate and only used for toileting.

10. When accidents happen

- Stay calm - use a calm voice, make minimal fuss and pay minimal attention to their accident. Do not scold or use an angry tone.
- Help them go to the bathroom to clean up.
- Make sure that you have a clean change of clothes ready.
- Involve them in the routine by getting them to place soiled clothing in a designated bucket to soak. Finish the rest of the routine as usual - flush, dress, wash hands, etc.

Remember

Learning a new routine takes time. Try to persist for 3-4 weeks. Consistency is the key. You are not alone! Your Key Worker is here to help you and answer any questions.

References and Resources

Your Key Worker can provide you with more information:

- Data collection handouts and to help you look for signs your child is ready or developing toileting patterns.
- Visual supports and schedules that can help your child understand more about the toileting routine.
- Simple stories about going to the toilet.
- Videos that help child understand more about the toileting routine.
- Toilet training information sheets and apps e.g. [Victorian Continence Resource Centre resources](#).