



# David E. Simai M.D.

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## Toilet Training

There is no specific “right” way to potty train your child; to help your child learn to use the potty depends on how ready the child is and your own beliefs about toilet training.

**Signs that your child is ready to be trained:** your child can be ready anywhere from 18 months to 3 years old

1. he/she stays dry for at least 2 hours at a time, or after naps
2. Recognizes that he is urinating or having a bowel movement
3. Develops physical skills critical to potty training- ability to walk, pull pants up and down and get on and off the potty somewhat on his own
4. Can follow simple instructions
5. Want to use the potty
6. Shows interest in wearing underwear

### How do I prepare my child for toilet training?

1. Let your child feel comfortable in the bathroom and allow him to see urine and bowel movements in the toilet; talk to them about what is happening
2. Get a training potty seat or a potty chair and keep it in the child’s normal living and play area so he becomes familiar with it. Let your child observe, touch and become used to the potty chair
3. **Never force your child to spend time sitting on the chair if he doesn't want to**
4. Once he is used to the chair have him sit on it without a diaper and get comfortable with it

### How do I teach my child to use the toilet?

- Keep your child in loose, easy removable pants so you can hurry to the potty without worry
- Place your child on the potty chair whenever he or she signals the need to go to the bathroom- the signals may be a facial expression or him stopping to play with toys
- **Take note of your child’s bathroom schedule-** most children have a bowel movement once a day usually an hour after eating and urinate within an hour of having a large drink.
- Place your child on the potty at regular intervals
- Help him relax by staying with him and/or reading to him
- **Praise your child when he goes to the bathroom in the potty, don’t express disappointment if they don’t. Be patient.**
- Teach boys to urinate sitting down first, once they learn to control their bladder better you can move to standing up and practice aim

### How long will it take to toilet train my child?

- Every child is different, it could take as long as three to six months. If your child is resisting or won’t use the bathroom after that time period, call your doctor, it could be he or she just isn’t ready to potty train yet.

### What if my child has an accident:

- This is a normal occurrence with potty training. He or she may have an occasional accident even after he learns how to use the toilet. Sometimes children get too involved in activities and forget they need the bathroom. Suggesting regular trips to the bathroom may help prevent some accidents.
- **Stay calm if your child has an accident, don't punish your child. Continue positive encouragement.**