

GOAL: FULLY POTTY TRAINED

Definition: A child is fully potty trained when they are dry and wearing underwear at all awake times. They are also self-sufficient in the potty, including pulling pants up and down, wiping, flushing and washing hands.

When to start:

- between age 2 and 3
- language is developed enough to talk about the potty

How to start:

- Take your child to sit on potty at consistent times, about every 2 hours
- Wear comfortable, easy clothing. No onesies, snaps, buckles or overalls.
- When your child understands concept and has the *ability* to stay dry between potty trips, transition from diaper/pull-up to underwear. Every diaper/pull-up does not need to be dry to make the transition to underwear.
- Once in underwear, take more trips to the potty to help stay dry, about every 30 minutes.

Things to Remember:

- Often children become *interested* in the potty *before* they have the ability to be trained.
- Most children are fully potty-trained within a few months of starting and usually finished by the time they turn 3 years old.
- Children are more likely to stay dry in underwear than a diaper/pull-up.
- The first few days in underwear are usually frequented with many accidents. This is normal experimentation and to be expected.
- Children are usually able to control their bladder before their bowels.

Frequently Asked Questions

My child is interested in the bathroom but I don't know if they are ready for underwear. Should I use pull-ups?

Pull-ups can add more expense and work to potty training. They work great for extra night-time protection for a fully potty trained child. Pull-ups can help your child remain confident overnight because s/he can do the

whole process without assistance. However, when potty training, transitioning your child from a diaper to a pull-up and then to underwear can be confusing and an unnecessary extra step. Changing a pull-up requires more time since all clothing and shoes must be removed. This can be frustrating for your child if s/he are trying to get back to playing and may deter your child from wanting to use the potty. Overall, Pull-ups are not necessary to successfully potty train.

Why doesn't my child tell me when they need to go potty?

When children are still in diapers or pull-ups, they are usually content to continue playing while wet just like they did before they began potty training. When your child is in underwear, they still need to be *sent* to the bathroom regularly. In order to rely on your child asking to go to the bathroom, s/he needs to be able to hold his/her bladder long enough to recognize the need to go, ask to go, and make it to the bathroom, all before having an accident. This skill will come in time, for now, in order to avoid accidents, continue sending your child regularly.

My child has been potty-training for a while, why do they now refuse to use the potty?

The novelty of going to the bathroom quickly becomes an interruption of playtime. Sticking to a consistent routine (approx every 2 hours) will help them learn to go at predictable times and be able to return to playing. One way to *avoid* this problem is to be aware of the potty training window of opportunity. If you take a long time to train, your child may become bored and remain content to stay in a diaper. .

My child will not go potty for a whole day. Is something wrong?

It is normal for your child to experiment with waiting to go for a long time. Drinking fluids throughout the day and encouraging a consistent routine of potty trips will help. Many children will hold a bowel movement for a long time or refuse to use the bathroom out of fear it will hurt. Altering your child's diet to help soften a bowel movement and allowing ample time to stay on the potty will help. If the problem persists or become severe, talk to your doctor.