

My ABC Checklist

For Potty Training

ABC



My ABC Checklist For Potty Training

On average, most children begin learning to use a potty by around their second birthday, but, as with everything in children's development, each child is different.

Up to the age of 20 months, toddlers' bladders need to empty often, and their muscles aren't always fully developed which makes it difficult for them to master holding on for the loo. Coupled with their lack of dexterity as they haven't yet developed how to master their clothing going to the loo is still a tricky and difficult skill to manage.

Some parents find it easier to toilet train their children during the summer, when toddlers can run around with fewer clothes on but if your child is a winter baby then this might not be the right time for your child, however old they are.

The secret to toilet training is your child's readiness for it and your relaxed and positive state of mind.

Just trust your instinct and intuition and always go with your toddler's readiness.

It can take longer for boys to learn, especially as they also have to master the act of going while standing up and most boys learn to go sitting down first and then Dad, mum or an older brother can then show them how to do it the other way.

Here is the ABC of potty training

A -- Assess your child's readiness

B -- Buy the right equipment

C -- Create a routine

D -- Ditch the nappy

E -- Explain the process

F -- Foster independence

G -- Grab some training pants

H -- Handle setbacks gracefully

I -- Introduce night training

J -- Jump for joy -- you're done!

So is my child ready?

Start to notice if they:

- Stay dry for a couple of hours each day
- Take an interest when you, your partner or older siblings go to the toilet
- Have a bowel movement at regular times of the day, say, after breakfast or when they've eaten a meal
- Can understand when a bowel movement is taking place, by squatting or making a grunting sound for example
- Let you know they want to be changed when their nappy is dirty

When to wait

It's usually best not to start toilet training your child during times of stress, such as:

- The arrival of a new baby in the family
- Starting a new childcare arrangement
- Moving from a cot to a bed
- Moving house
- Family relationship problems
- When a family member is ill

Potty pointers and points to ponder

- Be positive and upbeat - present the change from nappies as something exciting.
- Give lots of praise whenever your child manages to do something in the potty - stress how

grown up and clever they are. Give them a sticker; sing very loudly, dance about – and just make the whole thing special and fun.

- Don't rush things - sometimes if you start teaching later it takes less time, and some children when they are a bit older can skip the potty stage and move straight onto using the loo, which makes life easier.
- Expect setbacks - learning to use the toilet is just like other skills your toddler learns and you didn't expect him to learn to walk without a lot of falls.
- Easy outfits. Give your toddler clothes that can be pulled down and up easily to help them create lots of success at the beginning. You might also find using training pants helpful at first, to cope with those inevitable accidents.
- Never force your child to sit on the potty, as this will only upset them and make the whole experience negative and stressful and won't make the process any faster.
- Get them to choose. Some toddlers enjoy picking out their own potty and toilet seat to make them feel important and grown up.
- Many toddlers are afraid of the sound of the toilet flushing or they don't like to see the poo being flushed away so be sensitive and sensible and just wait until they have gone off to play and then flush.
- It always takes longer for a child to learn to stay dry at night - when they start having the occasional dry nappy in the morning, it's a good sign the time is right to try going without a nappy but again don't rush it.
- Accidents do happen. It's often a case of two steps forward and often one step back. So be prepared and do your best not to be angry with your child if they have an accident - just say, cheerfully, "never mind, you'll get there next time, let's get you some dry pants". Your toddler takes their lead from you so be positive, grounded and calm to help them feel relaxed while they are learning a brand new skill.

- Remember to get your toddler to wash their hands afterwards, so that using the potty or toilet is associated with hand washing from the beginning. It will stop battles and prepare them for school later on.
- Wee targets. As any mum of young boys knows, it's hard to keep the bathroom clean all the time! Too often boys get distracted and wee hits the lid, the wall, the floor, in fact almost anywhere except the bowl. Wee Targets are a fun way for little boys to learn how to aim correctly.

Wee Targets are plastic targets that you stick to the inside rim of the toilet to give your little boy something to aim for as they are heat sensitive and they have a picture that gets revealed as the wee hits the spot. The targets go back to black once the toilet is flushed, ready for next time. So it makes training fun and enjoyable and a bit easier! Their website is http://www.etgeurope.com/wee_target.html

The secret to success is for you to be relaxed, positive and upbeat while enjoying and supporting your little one through a new stage in their development.

Bed Wetting

Bedwetting continues to be common issue amongst children. Even if they have completely mastered going to the loo during the day, going to the loo at night can still be another story.

It is important for you to remember that bedwetting is common in children and is part of their physical and emotional development - it is not a sign of laziness or illness, so it is certainly not something your child should be punished for.

This is especially important, as your child is likely to feel upset and embarrassed after each bedwetting incident and you can really damage their confidence and self esteem at an important time.

- After each time, be patient, calm and relaxed and don't make a fuss even if it's the 3rd time that week. Use a special mattress. Some people wake their sleeping child to take them to the toilet but it's not totally proven that this works and can stress you out rather than your child.

- If you get anxious talk to your health visitor or doctor and they may offer you an alarm system where a buzzer goes off and wakes your child once the pad they sleep on is wet.

The idea is that over a period of a few weeks, your child will gain greater bladder control until they are capable of getting out of bed and going to the toilet by themselves. But if your child is a deep sleeper these devices may just wake you up instead!

- Changes. If your child has been dry for a while and then starts to wet the bed again, this may be a sign of stress or anxiety. So just reflect on some of the changes that may have happened recently - have you just had a new baby, have they started new childcare, has one of you been away or have they recently been ill? Once you have worked out the source of the upset and dealt with the problem the bedwetting should stop.

- Offer sips of drinks from about 4pm and nothing at all to drink one and a half hours before bedtime.

- Leave a low light on so your child can see their way to the toilet.

- Discipline yourself to only notice the successes and don't allow yourself to dwell on the failures. It keeps you motivated, positive and moving forward on your toileting journey!

Getting into a positive habit

In the majority of bedwetting cases the cause is simple – habit.

Somehow over the months your child has got into a habit of wearing pull up pants or a similar protection and has just never learnt how to stay dry all night.

It's as simple as that.

And often you then find yourself caught in a “Catch 22” situation of never feeling quite confident enough to stop using the protection and never allowing your child the opportunity to develop their own successful “auto-pilot” to waking up or going to the loo.

Quite a few of the bedwetting problems come from our change in lifestyle.

Grandparents often proudly announce that they never had problems toilet-training their young babies – and often they throw in for good measure “all before 12 months old!” Just what you need to feel better and more confident!

Times have changed, our lifestyles are very different than they were 30 years ago, and most mums and dads know that those memories may well be an urban myth and they take the comments with a pinch of salt !!

Before disposable nappies you can imagine why they had such an incentive to get their babies dry quickly! Cleaning, boiling, drying sterilising and washing terry nappies wasn't fun. Also many mothers “stayed at home” and didn't work making it much easier to anticipate “accidents” and to get into a regular toilet routine.

Disposable nappies make our lives almost “too easy” so it's no wonder potty training has become a bit of an uphill struggle.

Toddlers who avoid accidents miss out on the learning opportunities and the “unpleasant” wet, warm then cold experiences of having an accident which teaches them far quicker than just relaxing knowing they have a snug, comfortable pull up or nappy on.

So bare that in mind as you embark on toilet training your toddler – allow them to make mistakes and have little accidents to see if they are ready to master this new stage in their development naturally themselves.

The danger of a label.

You toddler's own self image is important at this time too. If they get the idea, from you that they are a “bedwetter,” it will be a lot harder to change their pattern of behaviour as it has become a label.

It becomes a self fulfilling prophecy if you are not careful – so avoid giving your child the “Bedwetter” label.

“That was easy” – My Confidence Technique

We all want our kids to grow up happy and confident free from the crippling effects of low self esteem that leads to lack of success at school, at work and in life generally.

Expert studies have shown, time and time again, that low self esteem in children leads to low academic achievement, depression, violent behaviour, binge drinking and drug talking

.
So just imagine a really simple idea that could completely transform your child’s confidence and success in life that is quick, easy, inexpensive and fun!

The “That was easy” idea was born while I was creating my ~Beat Bullying~ Confidence Classes for Kids. Helping children feel good about themselves workshop as a way to anchor confidence for the kids while they were trying new things by simply pushing a button that said “That was easy”

They laughed, relaxed and completely loved the idea while easily building their confidence muscles.

Now just imagine that your family had a “That was Easy” button in your kitchen, nursery, school, ballet or football club and your kids ran over and pressed it anytime they did something new, overcame something difficult, achieved something wonderful or out of their comfort zone and just had a go!

Just think of the power to their confidence as they learnt their 7x tables, learnt to tie their shoelaces, use the potty, wrote their coursework, answered the phone and took a message, tidied their room, put away their toys – the list is endless and only limited by your imagination and pressed the “That was Easy” button !

What a wonderfully simple way to boost your child’s self esteem and develop the “have a go” mentality so important to success in Life.

Just imagine if you and your family started to do this fun thing from the moment your kids were born..... just think how much more relaxed, optimistic and happy your kids would be.

I am passionate about helping kids grow up free from the crippling effects of low self-esteem so if you think this is a great idea start to use your “Easy” button when your child goes to the toilet, indicates that they want the loo, or goes to the potty and sits down – just whenever they get something right.

Reward them with banging their “easy” button – as it anchors in fun, being successful and getting things right.

Let’s make growing up positive, full of confidence and fun and go out and buy your “Easy” button from Staples now.

Join my campaign for building confident kids in all sorts of places..... as it sounds like it could be great fun and very, very “easy” and I’d LOVE to hear your stories of how you get on so post them up on my Positive Parents Club to inspire, support and make us smile.

I hope you have enjoyed this Checklist and have found it practical and helpful.

Please feel free to tell all your friends about my Parenting Club on www.theSueAtkins.com so they can join too and discover their own parenting confidence, style and rhythm, helping them feel less stressed, more energised and in control of their family life which I think is absolutely vital for bringing up happy, confident, well-balanced adults - today’s toddlers but tomorrow’s future.

