



## System Offering Actions for Resilience In Early Childhood

# TOILET TRAINING



**Whether it is gender, brain development, motor skills or even emotional readiness, many factors determine when your child is ready for toilet training. Read below to learn how individual factors contribute to how well your child may respond.**

### **What are the biological factors?**

There are several things a child needs before they can start toilet training. First, the brain needs to protect its nerves. This helps it talk quickly to the other parts of the body. One muscle the brain talks to lets children know when they have to go and controls if the bowel or bladder opens or closes. It finishes developing around age two. Children use this muscle when they have to wait to go to the bathroom, but they cannot control this muscle until after 24 months because the connection to the brain is still getting stronger.

Around 2 years old, children learn the skills they need to sit still on a toilet and take off their training pants. Some skills come before others, though. For example, a child learns to control when they need to poop before they can control when they have to pee. This is because the bowel develops before the bladder. It is common for children below age five to have accidents during the day or night. That said, most children by 5 years of age can stay dry during the day.

### **What are the social-emotional factors?**

A child needs to be physically *and* emotionally ready for toilet training. They need to have good thinking skills and be able to talk to you before toilet training starts. They use these skills to know what it feels like to have to go and tell you about it. Around a year, toddlers learn when they need to go. They show this by squatting or pulling at their diapers.

It is normal for girls to be ready before boys are because their brains develop the thinking and language skills faster. However, the most important part to toilet training is helping your child have self-confidence. They will learn how to set goals and complete them when you allow them to do things at their own pace with support. This helps them become more confident, independent, and willing to try new things.



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# CONTINUED: TOILET TRAINING



**See below for tips on how to help your child learn to use the toilet and a general schedule of when skills are learned.**

### What are some tips for teaching toilet training?

- Decide which words to use/teach and share with family to be consistent
- Help them build an awareness of the feeling of needing to go
- Pick a potty chair (the child's feet should be able to touch the ground)
- Be a role model
- Know the signs of them needing to go
- Make trips to the potty a routine
- Teach them how to properly wipe and wash their hands
- Help them learn to dress and undress themselves
- Praise your child when they succeed. Treat it lightly when they do not
- Understand their potential fear that they are eliminating body parts
- When they are testing boundaries, reinstate rules and stand firmly behind them

### What is the timeline for toilet training?

Taken from Schum, Kolb, McAuliffe et. al.'s study on the timeline of learning toilet-training skills (2002), this table shows a general timeline for the skills a child learns during the process of toilet training.

<p>It is recommended to begin toilet training around 22 to 30 months of age. While some resources recommend beginning at 18 months, starting with this age interval allows for completed physical and social-emotional development.</p>	
Toilet-Training Period	Skills
Early	Understands words that relate to their body and using the toilet, shows an interest in learning, tells during or after having a bowel movement, stays dry for at least 2 hours, indicates a physical need to go, nighttime bowel movement control
Middle	This section of skills mostly refers to learned self-help skills: Flushes toilet by self, washes hands effectively, pulls training pants up and down by self
Late	Uses a regular toilet, stays bowel movement free during the day, tells before having to urinate, stays dry during the day, enters bathroom to urinate or have a bowel movement, stays dry overnight