



## Tips and Resources for No Drama Potty Training

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Training your child how to use the potty requires time and patience on your part, collaboration with your child's teacher and other caregivers and a substantial degree of cooperation and motivation from your child. To make potty training as smooth a process as possible for you and your child, take a few moments to review the following tips.

1. Look for signs of readiness: for a child to be ready for potty training they need to master the necessary physical, behavioral and cognitive skills and show interest in being trained. These necessary skills usually start developing between 18 and 24 months of age. By age 2 1/2 to 3 years old, daytime bladder control usually becomes more reliable but some children don't show interest in potty training until they're closer to 3, or even 4. Following is a check list of readiness signs:

### Physical signs

Coordination: child can walk and run steadily and can pull pants up and down

Bladder Control: Child gives a fair amount of urination at one time

Bladder Control: Child has demonstrate at least two hours of "dry" time (or during naps) indicating that the bladder muscles are developed enough to hold urine

Regularity: Bowel movements are well formed and occur at predictable times

### Behavioral signs

Sensitivity: Child demonstrate awareness of wearing a wet or dirty diaper

Interest: Child shows interest in others' bathroom habits (wants to watch others go to the bathroom, read books or watch videos).

Communication: child gives a physical or verbal sign when having a bowel movement such as grunting, squatting, or telling you

Independence: Child demonstrates a general desire for independence

Pride: Child takes pride in own accomplishments

Cooperation: Child is not resistant to learning to use the toilet

### Cognitive signs



Sustained attention: child can sit quietly in one position for two to five minutes

Control: Child is aware of the physical signals prior to using the potty, can tell you before it happens and even hold it until he/she can get to the potty

Following instructions: Child can follow simple instructions, such as "go get the yellow toy."

Organization: Child understands the value of putting things where they belong

Communication: child can use words for urine and stool

2. Introduce the process and let your child practice. Use books and videos to introduce your child to all the different steps in the process; teach the signs for needing to go; and provide opportunities for practicing the process with a doll or a stuffed animal step by step.
3. Ease the pressure and avoid power struggles: children follow their own individual timelines and will potty train when they are ready. The more pressure parents put on a child during this process the more resistance the child will develop and the longer the process will be. When children feel powerless they try to hold on to anything that makes them feel in control, mainly what they put in (food and drinks) and how it comes out (urine and bowel movement). Use the following tips to reduce the risk of this process becoming a power struggle:
  - a. Make it fun and playful – design a “special individual” toilet paper with your child, leave enjoyable reading materials for your child to read while using the potty or use flushable targets to “hit”
  - b. Use a timer to reduce the need for prompting coming directly from you. Let your child set the timer for regular intervals to prompt them to go
  - c. Give choices – “Do you want to go before or after I go?”
  - d. Invite your child to challenge themselves – “I bet I can beat you to the potty”
  - e. Don’t ask your child if he/she need to go – announce “It’s potty time. Let’s go” or use a timer.
  - f. Try not to show disappointment or anger – remember that after all, it's only recently that your child’s nervous system has matured enough to perceive the sensation of “needing” to go to the potty and much practice and repetition are needed.
  - g. Provide your child with opportunities to play with clay or soft playdough as well as wet sand and water. Use different containers for the child to practice squeezing and moving liquids.



4. Wait for a time that works for the family. Potty training can be a stressful process and therefore is best to be scheduled for times that are relatively quiet in the family and do not involve other major transitions or stress (such as the birth of a new sibling, a move to a new house, the beginning of a new school year, separation or divorce etc.). Long weekends or holiday breaks can be helpful for working on a focused, dedicated potty training program (usually require between 3-7 dedicated days)
5. Don't aim for perfection – Set realistic expectations so that you and your child can feel successful and competent. Try to accept that “accidents” are a part of the process, normalize them for your child and help them take steps to engage in changing their cloths and cleaning up. When your toddler has an accident, calmly suggest that next time we should try using the potty instead.
6. Celebrate success – Your child will respond to positive reinforcement throughout this process. Make up a potty song or dance and praise any effort from your child to be engaged in the process or whenever your child moves on to a new step (even if it wasn't quite succeed).
7. Notice signs of constipation or withholding as well as unusual fear and anxiety related to the process and seek professional medical and/or behavioral guidance to provide your child with effective interventions

**Ways our school can support your potty training efforts:**

It is our goal to support you and your child as you engage in this process. Please provide us with updated information about the progress your child is making so we can most effectively support the process:

1. We can use timers and help your child remain on a regular schedule for using the potty
2. We can read books and provide opportunities to practice with dolls by breaking the process to simple steps and repeating the stpes
3. We can provide simple visuals of the different steps of the process
4. We can provide you with updates about the progress your child is making in school
5. We can provide verbal praise and celebrate your child's success



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**List of resources for parents:**

1. Oh Crap! Potty Training by Jamie Glowaki
2. Easy Peasy Potty Training by Julia Schooler

**List of books for children:**

1. A Potty for Me by Karen Katz
2. Potty by Leslie Patricelli
3. P is for Potty by Sesame Street
4. Potty Superhero by Parragon Books
5. Once Upon a Potty by Alona Frankel
6. The Potty Train by Ruth Kennison
7. Where's the Poop by Jullie Markes
8. Softy the Poop by Thomas DuHamel
9. Super Pooper by Monika Sloan