

Potty Time: A Journey to Successful Toilet Training

Lina Patel, Psy.D.
Sie Center for Down Syndrome
Children's Hospital Colorado
University of Colorado School of Medicine

Financial Disclosure





Objectives

- ❖ Readiness and Challenges to Readiness for Children with Down syndrome
- ❖ Steps to Get Started with Toilet Training
- ❖ Troubleshooting Areas of Challenge for Children with Down syndrome



Necessities of Toilet Training (BabyCenter)

Medical/Physical

- Is coordinated enough to walk, and even run, steadily.
- Urinates a fair amount at one time.
- Has regular, well-formed bowel movements at relatively predictable times.
- Has "dry" periods of at least two hours or during naps, which shows that his bladder muscles are developed enough to hold urine

Behavioral

- Can sit down quietly in one position for two to five minutes.
- Can pull his pants up and down.
- Dislikes the feeling of wearing a wet or dirty diaper.
- Shows interest in others' bathroom habits (wants to watch you go to the bathroom or wear underwear).
- Gives a physical or verbal sign when he's having a bowel movement such as grunting, squatting, or telling you.
- Demonstrates a desire for independence.
- Takes pride in his accomplishments.
- Isn't resistant to learning to use the toilet.
- Is in a generally cooperative stage, not a negative or contrary one.

Cognitive

- Understands the physical signals that mean he has to go and can tell you before it happens or even hold it until he has time to get to the potty.
- Can follow simple instructions, such as "go get the toy."
- Understands the value of putting things where they belong.
- Has words for urine and stool.



collaborative



Challenges in Down Syndrome

Medical/Physical

- Delays in motor control.
- Low tone.
- Constipation (Ano-Rectal malformations, including Hirschsprung's Disease).
- Chronic GI issues (Celiac, diet related differences).
- Differences in stature may cause challenges with reaching toilet seat and cleaning up.
- Fine motor challenges.

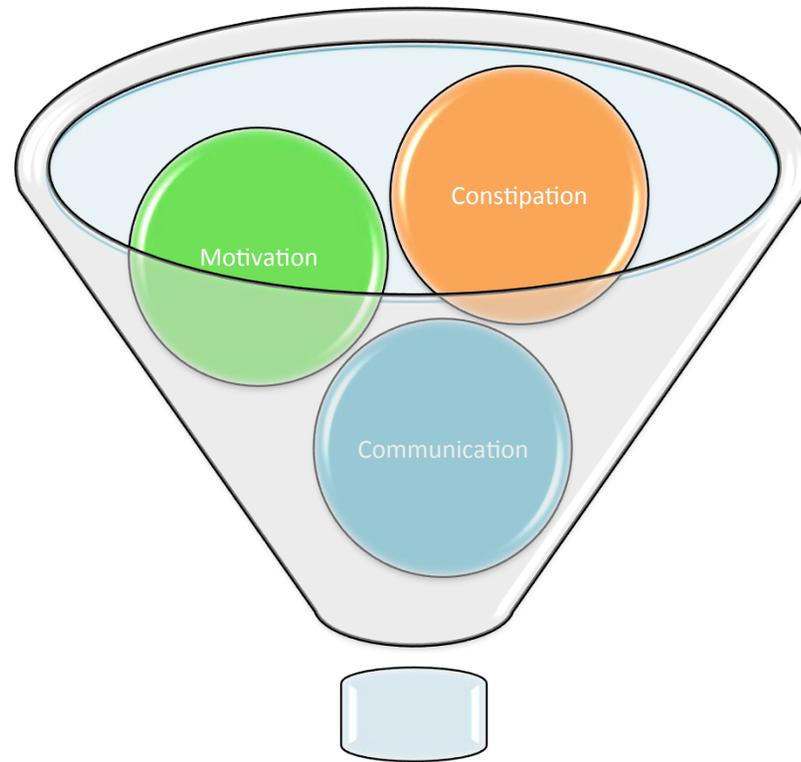
Behavioral

- Delays in impulse control and attention span.
- Motivation and lack of concern with soiled or wet diaper.
- Demonstrates a desire for independence but related to own interests.
- Willfulness.
- Breaking an old routine.
- Family readiness related to prioritization.
- Anxiety.
- Sensory issues.

Cognitive

- Communication challenges with letting someone know that they need to go.
 - Lack of understanding about why toileting in the potty is important.
 - Generalization of skills.
- 

Toilet Training





Step 1:

Track when pants are wet, dry, or soiled at 15 minute intervals for three consecutive days.

KEY		
W=Wet	P=Poop	D=Dry

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
5:00 am			
5:15 am			
5:30 am			
5:45 am			
6:00 am			
6:15 am			
6:30 am			
6:45 am			
7:00 am			
7:15 am			
7:30 am			
7:45 am			
8:00 am			
8:15 am			
8:30 am			
8:45 am			
9:00 am			
9:15 am			
9:30 am			
9:45 am			





Step 2:

Create a schedule for when to take your child to the bathroom based on data collected. Time intervals should be just short of time intervals determined on the tracking sheet for when your child is wet or soiled. Natural transitions work best!





Step 3:

Pick a three to four week time span when you don't have major events or vacations planned. That way you can commit to the intensity of the program. Remember that this time frame may vary depending on your child's own personality style.

January 2016

Su 	M 	Tu 	W 	Th 	Fri 	Sa 
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						





Step 4:

Identify child, family, and system strengths





Step 5:

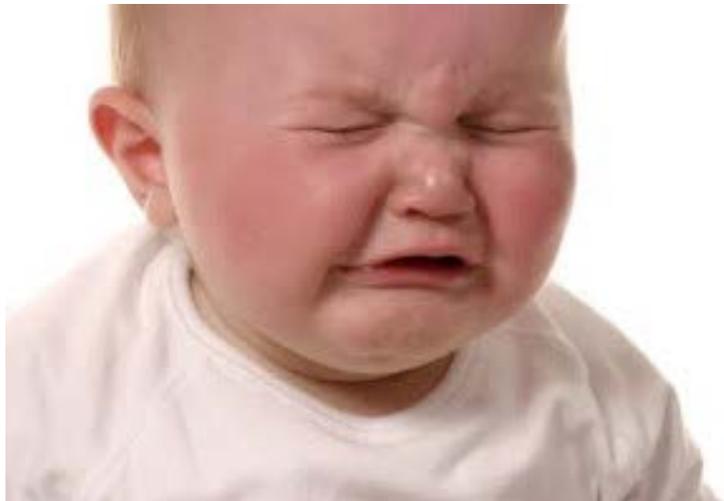
Anticipate challenges and set up for success!!!!





Troubleshooting Medical/Physical

- Address constipation
 - Talk to your PCP.
 - Clean out if necessary.
 - Proactive strategies for remaining constipation free.





Troubleshooting Medical/Physical

- Address physical challenges
 - Legs should comfortably rest on a stool with knees above hips.
 - Clothing should be easy to pull off and on.
 - Whichever type of seat you use should provide confidence in stability.
 - Flushable wipes may be more helpful than using toilet paper.



Troubleshooting Medical/Physical



Potty chair

Potty seat



squatty potty :)[®]



Troubleshooting Behavior

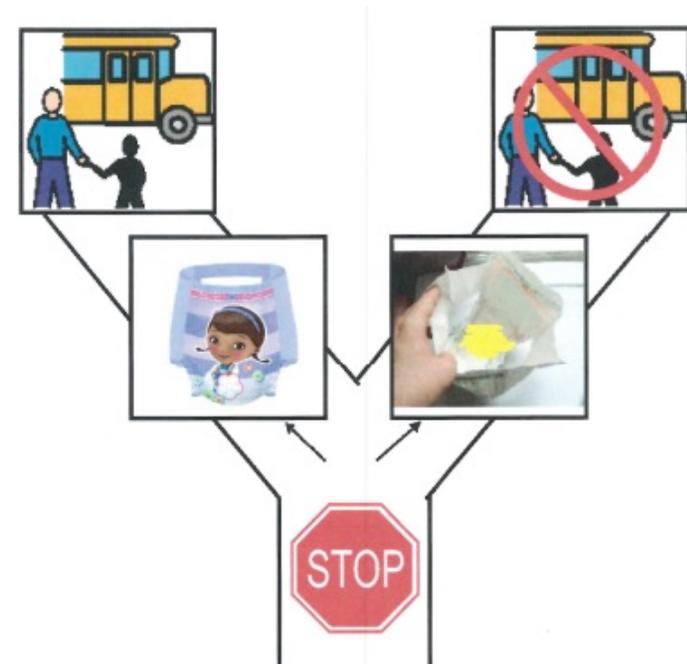
- Address impulse control and attention span
 - Use a visual timer to indicate how long a child has to sit. Start with a very small amount of time and gradually increase.
 - Place toilet paper and other distractors out of reach or remove.
 - Utilize a motivating toy or book that your child only gets to have when they are going potty. Choices work even better!



Troubleshooting Behavior

- Address motivation
 - Use a “first-then” directive to have your child earn a reward for first sitting on the toilet, then producing something, and eventually asking to go. The “reward” must be something that cannot be earned any other time.
 - If a child is already playing, place your hand on the toy and say “first potty, then come back to play.”
 - Use a visual roadmap.

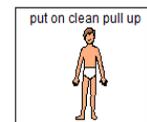
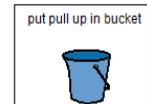
FIRST	 TOILET	THEN	 BLOCKS
FIRST	 WASH HANDS	THEN	 TRUCK



Troubleshooting Behavior

- Address old routine
 - Use a visual schedule to establish a new routine of when to go.
 - Keep times for toileting the same.
 - Teach how to use a potty watch.
 - Break an old routine with gradual change.
 - Give minimal attention during clean up routine.
 - As developmentally appropriate, have the child participate in clean up.

If I have an accident, I can...





Troubleshooting Behavior

- Address parental readiness
 - Ask yourself, “Why am I doing this now?”
 - Do I have the time to give this my full attention?
 - Generally, how do I approach teaching new skills to my child? Do I get nervous even before starting?
 - How will I handle obstacles along the way?





Troubleshooting Behavior

- Address anxiety
 - Keep things in a predictable routine.
 - Use the same language each time.
 - Don't push your child to do a step they are not ready for.
 - Give choices. Control is the underlying function of anxiety.
 - Slow and steady wins the race!



Troubleshooting Behavior

- Address sensory issues
 - Keep bathroom quiet.
 - Avoid toilets that automatically flush. A sticky note works great if you are in a pickle.
 - For home toilets, you may need to get a different toilet seat.
 - Wipes can be a good or a bad thing.
 - Avoid using potpourri or air fresheners with strong smells.





Troubleshooting Cognitive

- Address communication
 - Use a visual schedule. Photos are best.
 - When you say it's time for the potty, sign potty to help create an association.
 - Start using "first-then" directives in general.





Troubleshooting Cognitive

- Address comprehension
 - Social story

_____’s Story About Staying Dry at Night

- My name is _____ and I am a big kid!
- I can do things that big kids do!
- Now that I am big, I am learning to wear big kid underwear even at night!
- Only big kids get to wear big kid underwear all day and all night!
- Every day, I go to sleep in my bed. Sometimes when I am asleep, I want to go pee-pee.
- The rule is: When I’m asleep and want to go pee-pee, I wake up.
- I take of the hose for my breathing machine and I go to the bathroom. I pee pee in the bathroom only.
- Then, I go back to my bed, put the hose back on my breathing machine and sleep again.
- In the morning, my underwear is dry.
- When I stay dry, daddy will walk me to the bus after I get ready.
- I am a big girl now. I stay dry. Mommy and daddy feel so proud when I wear my big kid underwear!
- I feel so proud too!





Troubleshooting Cognitive

- Address generalization
 - Use similar tools in all settings.
 - Help others understand the importance of routine.
 - Use the same language.





Step 6:

Try it out!





Quick Tips

- ✓ Have your child sit for 2 to 4 minutes
- ✓ If your child cannot tolerate sitting that long, start out with smaller increments of time and build up
- ✓ Reward should be given after toileting so as not to create a distraction. Toilet is only for going potty!
- ✓ If your child has an accident, minimize eye contact, talking, and facial expressions during clean up.
- ✓ Have your child participate in clean up when developmentally appropriate.
- ✓ Slow and steady wins the race!





Frequently Asked Questions....

- Should I only worry about toilet training when all of the readiness skills are in place and the challenges have resolved?
- Should I put my child in underwear?
- How long is this going to take?
- What do I do if my child is chronically constipated?
- Should the reward be during or after toileting?
- What if my child refuses?
- How do I create consistency across settings?





Name Your Challenge





Thank you!!!!!!

Lina Patel, Psy.D.

Assistant Professor

Sie Center for Down Syndrome

Children's Hospital Colorado

University of Colorado Health Science Center

