

# STEPS TO TOILET TRAINING SUCCESS

Complete Parents' Guide

Volume 1



 little beginnings  
FERNHILL ROAD

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# Introduction

Welcome to our Complete Parents' Guide Series of Ebooks!

These guides have been designed with the aim of assisting families who are currently clients utilising one of our childcare centres, families that may attend at sometime in the future, or any parent for that matter seeking a little extra knowledge.

The information contained within our **Complete Parents' Guide Series**, has been collated and organised in a manner that supports the policies and practices that are undertaken within our child care centres.

We see these guides not only as a valuable resource for families, but also as a useful tool for our Little Beginnings Educators, to extend the support we provide outside of the Centre's physical environment and positively impact the communities to which we belong.

We hope you enjoy!



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# Steps to Toilet Training Success

There's so many memories that you'll cherish when it comes to raising your child. The moment they come into this world, you treasure them. You love them. You would do anything for them. Still, we have yet to find a parent that is the least bit sentimental about changing their child's nappy. Toilet training is an important time in each child's life and the amount of time that it takes and the age to start will vary from child to child.

There's no need to rush. Feel free to take your time. Work at a pace that is comfortable for both you and your child, don't be overly frustrated by setbacks. They will happen. To best prepare yourself for what lies ahead of you and your child, remember:-  
**Knowledge is power.**

After reading this e-book you will have the knowledge to move forward with increased confidence.



*Toilet training is an important time in each child's life and the amount of time that it takes may vary from child to child*

Like most important lessons in a young child's life, it is best to begin when your child is already showing an interest in using the toilet. Multiple studies have shown that beginning the toilet training process before your child is ready, only extends the process longer than necessary. To determine whether or not your child is ready, take a look at this developmental checklist and compare to the traits you can identify in your own child.

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## **Physical Development**

If a child is to use the toilet by themselves, there are a few physical capabilities that the child must have. First, the child should be able to walk or even run without the risk of falling. Having this coordination will be important in making sure that the child will be able to get to the toilet on their own.

Second, you should check for signs that your child's bladder has developed to the point that urine can be held for extended periods of time. A standard sign of bladder development is the development of consistent urination patterns. You should see high volume urinations taking place once every two to three hours or longer. This should be coupled with the ability to stay dry during naps on a somewhat consistent basis. Finally, bowel movements should be well-formed and predictable to prevent any embarrassing accidents.

## **Behavioural Development**

If the child is ready to begin toilet training, there are also several behaviour signs you should see. One of the biggest indicators is that the child will develop an obvious dislike of wearing a soiled nappy. Many times your child will be able to physically or verbally communicate with you that he or she is experiencing a bowel movement. These can vary from child to child but many children squat or grunt. If sufficient cognitive development exists, your child may even be able to communicate this to you



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verbally. Either way, these are generally encouraging signs that you may want to begin toilet training with your child. You may begin by offering the opportunity to toilet train and see if your child shows any resistance to the idea. If he or she seems to cooperate, then you should be ready to proceed. If your child is uncooperative, simply wait until he or she becomes more cooperative to learning other skills as resistance to 'growing up' comes and goes in phases, especially in small children. However, if you sense a desire for independence in your child, it may be time to capitalise.

When it comes to toilet training, many children seek their independence by first showing interest in his or her parents' bathroom habits. Your child may want to watch you and your spouse use the toilet. Your child may want to wear underwear instead of nappies. Both are generally encouraging signs that the child is developing bathroom independence.

Finally, all children can be a bit apprehensive. It is natural for children to be full of energy. It must be communicated to the child however, that the toilet is not a place for foolish behaviour. Your child should be able to sit still for as long as it takes him or her to finish using the toilet. You can make this into a game for your child by asking him or her to sit as still as possible in a chair for as long as possible. If your child is able to last two to five minutes, they should be ready to sit still on the toilet.



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## **Cognitive Development**

In addition to physical and behavioural signs, there are several cognitive milestones that must be reached before a child is ready to begin toilet training. First, your child must understand the physical signs that are associated with bowel movements. He or she should be able to alert you of these sensations before a bowel movement occurs or reach the toilet themselves.

For the purpose of toilet training, it is also imperative that a child be able to understand and obey simple commands. Understanding the concept of urine and stool is also very important. The child must value that all things in the house, including urine and stool have a proper place. When your child demonstrates at least this level of cognitive development, he or she might be ready to begin toilet training.

## **So You Think Your Child Is Ready to Begin Toilet Training**

Wonderful! This is an exciting time for both yourself and your child! It's not as simple as sitting the child down on the toilet, however. If you've sourced this e-book, you're probably well aware that a well-thought toilet training approach can make the entire process much less painful. Fortunately, you are in luck. Follow these steps and you will see your child using the toilet on his or her own in no time!



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## Give Your Child a Role Model

Many studies have shown that young children learn best by example. Watching his or her parents using the bathroom themselves can offer significant encouragement to the toilet training child. Your child may realise that you and your spouse use the bathroom differently.

This can be a great time to discuss how your child's sex uses the bathroom if age and stage appropriate for the child to understand. When discussing the genitals, make sure to use anatomically correct names to avoid communicating that these body parts are somehow embarrassing or to be made out to be trivial.



*Watching his or her parents using the bathroom themselves can offer significant encouragement to the toilet training child*

## Make the Toilet Child-Friendly

You wouldn't expect your child to learn to ride a bicycle without training wheels, would you? Similarly, you should approach toilet training understanding that using the bathroom may be intimidating for your child. With this in mind, purchasing a child-size toilet or toilet attachment can help your child feel much safer while using the bathroom. The standalone child's toilet has the advantage of being less intimidating for the child. The smaller toilet is also something that the child can be proud of using by him or herself. The toilet attachment can be just as comfortable and safe, but a stool should be provided to make the bathroom more accessible to the child.

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Experts have also recommended that parents purchase picture books to help their children better understand the importance of toilet training. Many of these books are very well known and are readily available in the digital format.

## **Work to Alleviate Your Child's Toilet Anxiety**

At this point in the toilet training process, your child may still be hesitant about using the bathroom on his or her own. That's completely normal and you shouldn't be too worried. A good place to start is to communicate to your child that the toilet is his or her own special place. Some parents place the child's name on a standalone training toilet. Others allow the child to decorate the toilet with stickers. Different methods may yield various results from child to child.

Once personal ownership is established, have your child practice sitting on the toilet with his or her clothes on. This will build familiarity. After a week or so of practicing, see if the child will sit on the toilet with his or her pants down. Some children will not be comfortable with this. Avoid any temptation to push your child beyond what he or she is able to handle.

Any forcefulness in the toilet training process could actually make your child resistant to the entire process, making it unnecessarily difficult. If your child has a favourite toy, you might find it useful to use the toy in toilet use examples. Find a small chair or stool

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*Let your child know that toilet training comes with some privileges*

to place the toy on while your child uses the toilet. Having the favourite toy learning to use the toilet the same as the child may make your child more comfortable and confident while using the bathroom.

## **Make Underwear Fun**

Let your child know that toilet training comes with some privileges. Part of using the toilet like a big person is wearing underwear like a big person too. Take your child shopping and let him or her choose whatever underwear they'd like. (Favourite cartoon characters and fun designs are usually a great start).

Give your child advanced notice of the shopping trip. Let him or her know that being old enough to use the toilet also means being old enough to wear underwear like older siblings and parents. If the child is resistant to wearing underwear by themselves, see if he or she is willing to wear it over a nappy. After becoming more familiar with underwear, your child will likely ask to get rid of the nappies.

## **Establish a Schedule**

If your child is in a childcare centre, this will take a coordinated effort with his or her Educator. Some parents prefer to slowly transition their children from nappies to training pants to underwear. Training pants allow the child to feel wet right away without urine leaking out. These are essentially nappies, but are pulled up like



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underwear. Some parents prefer to skip this middle step and put their children into underwear straight away. Of course there will be messes to clean, but your child will become comfortable with underwear more quickly. Your child's Educator or doctor may recommend you go one specific route over another. This will vary from child to child.

## Teach the Basic Procedure

Both boys and girls should begin their toilet training by sitting on the toilet. Make sure to emphasise to your child that both urine and stool belong in the toilet. While the process of using the toilet may take much longer than expected, especially at first avoid the temptation of letting your child sit for too long. If your child stays on the toilet

*Both boys and girls should begin their toilet training by sitting on the toilet*



for more than 15 minutes, you might actually be taking a step backward in the toilet training process. Some parents allow their child to watch TV while using the toilet. This turns the toilet into a place to be entertained as opposed to taking care of the task at hand.

If you are toilet training a little boy, he will also need to learn to use the toilet standing up. There's no need to rush this. Your son may continue to use the toilet sitting down for as long as he wants. In teaching a boy to urinate while standing, it is often helpful for the boy to watch his father, uncle or good family friend using the bathroom standing up. It is possible that the child may show some level of hesitation. If this is the



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case, place a ping pong ball or some small flushable items in the toilet that can serve as targets to practice his aim. If you're comfortable with your son urinating in the yard, paint or tape some targets on a tree where he can also practice his aim.

Girls require a little extra training. Be sure to teach your daughter how to clean herself properly. It is crucial that you explain to her that toilet paper is to go from front to back. This helps her to avoid getting an infection. She will also need to pat the area dry after each time that she urinates.

## **Help Your Child Get Used to Going Nappy-less**

Spending a little time without pants will help your child recognise when he or she needs to use the toilet. This is a time when the child-sized training toilet really comes in handy. Put the toilet in an accessible place near where your child plays. Encourage your son or daughter to sit on the toilet every couple of hours or so.

Watch for physical signs that your child has to use the toilet such as jumping, crossing the legs, hands on genitals or swaying from side to side. Use these cues to suggest that the child sits on the toilet. This obviously is not a feasible thing to do all of the time. Make a decision to do this at the same time each week, whenever is most convenient for you and your family.



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## **Celebrate your Child's Successes**

No child is perfect. There will definitely be accidents. But before long, your son or daughter will successfully use the toilet. Reward your child with something that they associate with being grown up, such as a new pair of underwear. Be sure not to blow every trip to the toilet out of proportion. This will place unnecessary pressure on your child that could be an extra roadblock to successful toilet training.

## **Don't Be Discouraged by Failures**

Just like anything else, the more your child uses the toilet the easier it will become. While this is true, there are some things you can do as a parent to make things easier. Dress your child in loose fitting clothes that are easy to remove. Buy underwear a size too big that is easy to pull up and down.

If your child is still having accidents, resist any urge you may have to punish them. As with any new skill, a fear of failure will make your child become less willing to try to use the toilet. From time to time, young children will occasionally have accidents when distracted by an activity. Remember to respond and act out of love instead of anger.

## **Make Toilet Training Fun!**