Toilet Training your child with Autism

Presented by: Cori Wickett, M.S. BCBA
LeafWing Center
Plan for today

- Is your child ready?
- Are you ready?
- Preparing for toilet training
- Day-by-day “Potty Party” guidelines
- How to handle accidents
- Bowel movements
- Questions
Is your child ready?

- There is no right age
- Physical development and readiness skills typically occur between 18 mo and 2.5 yrs

LeafWing Center
Is your child ready?

Physical signs:

- Your child can walk
- Your child urinates a large amount each time throughout the day
- Your child has dry periods of at least 2 hours, or during naps
Is your child ready?

• Behavioral signs:
  • Can sit in one place for at least 5 minutes
  • Can imitate your behaviors
  • Shows some sign when he/she has a BM
  • Has basic compliance skills
  • Responds to basic instructions
  • Puts things where they belong
  • Understands words for urine and stool
Are you ready?

- Time needed
- Emotional energy needed
- No big life changes
Preparing for toilet training

- Buy regular underwear
- Buy lots of your child’s favorite drink, and salty foods
- Buy a toilet seat that sits on top of the regular toilet seat, and a stool
- Prepare potty activities
Preparing for toilet training cont.

- Teach the words “toilet” and “bathroom”
- Make sure there is no aversion to the bathroom or sitting on the toilet
  - If so, teach tolerance
- Take data on your child’s urination schedule (in diaper)
- Identify and limit reinforcers for your child
- Identify and limit reinforcers for YOU

LeafWing Center
Potty Party- Day 1

- Set up potty area
  - Before your child wakes up
  - Have potty seat on toilet
  - Have reinforcers in bathroom but out of reach
  - Have fun activities in bathroom
  - Have drinks and salty foods in the bathroom
Potty Party- Day 1

• When your child wakes up, dress them in:
  • Shirt
  • If your child does not like being soiled, wear underwear
  • If your child does not mind being soiled, no underwear
  • Socks if cold
Potty Party- Day 1

- When your child wakes up,
  - Allow him/her to drink for 5-10 minutes
  - Use small bits of salty foods to increase liquid consumption
Potty Party- Day 1

- Toilet time #1!!
  - Sit your child on the toilet
  - Underwear pulled down or taken off
  - Continue to give salty foods and liquids
  - Keep your child entertained
    - DVD player
    - Music
    - Games/puzzles/coloring
Potty Party- Day 1

• Toilet time #1!!
  • Stay on the toilet until urination
  • This could be a long time!
  • This time is your “baseline” for day 1
Potty Party- Day 1

- When your child urinates
  - Lots of verbal praise (make it a “party!”)
  - Give reinforcer
  - Allow 10 minutes off the toilet, in or near the bathroom
    - Continue fluids
    - If your child has an accident, follow accident guidelines discussed later
Potty Party- Day 1

- Toilet time #2
  - Return to the toilet after the 10 minute break
  - Continue with salty foods and liquids
  - Keep on toilet until urination, or until the baseline time is up
  - If no urination when baseline is up, allow a 3 minute break in the bathroom
  - If your child urinates, REINFORCE!!

LeafWing Center
Potty Party- Day 1

• Toilet time
  • Continue until your child has 3 successes, consecutive or not
  • After 3 successes, decrease fluids and increase time off the toilet by 3-5 minutes with success (staying dry on break and eliminating in toilet)
  • Continue during the rest of your child’s waking hours
Parent time- Day 1

- If you can follow all of the guidelines for day 1, be sure to indulge in the reinforcer you have identified for yourself.
Potty Party- Day 2

- Restart the procedure as done on Day 1 to get a new “baseline”
- Goal for the day: your child should urinate immediately when put on the toilet
- Continue with salty foods and liquids
- Continue all of your child’s waking hours
Parent time - Day 2

- If you can follow all of the guidelines for day 2, be sure to indulge in the reinforcer you have identified for yourself.
Potty Party- Day 3

• Restart the procedure as done on day 1 and 2 to get a new “baseline”
  • This time should decrease each day

Use the “off-potty” time from day 2 for day 3

Return fluids to normal
Accidents

- Remain neutral
- Do not make this process aversive, or fun
- Help your child (hand-over-hand) clean up the accident with rags
- Help your child (hand-over-hand) rinse out his or her clothes
- Put your child back on the toilet and add 10 minutes before starting baseline
Bowel Movements

• When to start:
  • Wait to train this skill until well after urination is mastered on the toilet
  • This skill occurs at a later developmental stage than urination control
  • Your child should have regular bowel movements each day around the same time
Bowel Movements

- Before BM training
  - To avoid BM accidents, write down the times when your child has a BM each day
  - Notice signs he may show before having a BM
  - Attempt to “catch” your child by putting him on the toilet or place him in a diaper
  - Use a highly preferred reinforcer for going on the toilet
Bowel Movements

• Starting BM training
  • Use the same procedures as the urination training, although have your child sit only during the typical “bowel” period
  • For example, if your child typically goes between 4-6 every day, have him sit on the toilet starting at 3:30
  • You may use natural laxatives (prunes, figs, raisins, lentils)
Bowel Movements

- Starting BM training
  - This process can be scary and difficult for your child
  - Re-establish a positive routine in the bathroom, playing in or around the bathroom with no demands to use the toilet
  - Pair a highly preferred reinforcer with success on the toilet
Bowel Movements

- Dependence on a diaper for comfort
  - Reinforce eliminating in the diaper while in the bathroom.
  - Reinforce eliminating in the diaper while on the toilet.
  - Cut an increasingly larger hole in the diaper with each success of eliminating on the toilet while wearing the diaper
Bowel Movements

- Remember, this can be a scary and difficult process for your child
- Wait at least a few months after urination training to begin bowel movement training

LeafWing Center
Summary

• Child readiness skills
• Parent readiness
• Preparing for toilet training
• Day-by-day “Potty Party” guidelines
• How to handle accidents
• Bowel movements
Questions?

Thank You!!

Cori Wickett, M.S., BCBA
cwickett@leafwingcenter.org