



Potty Training Ages and Stages

Potty Training Children with Down syndrome

KIM YAEGER, LITTLE LEAF LEARNING CENTER

ANGIE WILLEY, SIGNING TIME INSTRUCTOR

Welcome

When to get started

How to Prepare/Practice

How to help build Potty Language

How to encourage, motivate and celebrate



Are You Ready?

You've got
this!



Common Professional Mindset

- ▶ 1. Age - The child has reached an appropriate age. It is recommended to wait until after the second birthday to begin considering toilet training. For children with Down syndrome, it has been found beneficial to wait until after the third birthday to begin the process. While age is an important component of readiness, parents should consider other factors as well when considering toilet training.
- ▶ 2. Bladder Control - The child completely empties his or her bladder when voiding and remains dry for at least one and one half hours during the day.
- ▶ 3. Predictable Stooling Patterns - The child's bowel movements follow a regular and predictable pattern.
- ▶ Karen Summar, MD



Common Professional Mindset

- ▶ 4. Motor Skills - The child demonstrates the abilities to walk to and from the bathroom independently and to pick up objects.
- ▶ 5. Behavior - The child can sit on the toilet (or potty chair) comfortably for two to five minutes. He or she may be allowed to look at preferred books or play with preferred toys while sitting on the toilet.
- ▶ 6. Instructional Readiness - The child can follow a few simple directions (e.g. sit down).
- ▶ 7. Indicates Needs - Through facial expressions, postures, gestures, pictures or words, the child indicates needing to go to the bathroom.
- ▶ Karen Summar, MD





Common Professional Mindset



- ▶ **The American Academy of Pediatrics** (2006) has published a checklist of signs to help you determine when to start potty training. Here is an excerpt:
 - Your child stays dry at least 2 hours at a time during the day or is dry after naps.
 - Bowel movements become regular and predictable.
 - Facial expressions, posture, or words reveal that your child is about to urinate or have a bowel movement.
 - Your child can follow simple instructions.
 - Your child can walk to and from the bathroom and help undress.
 - Your child seems uncomfortable with soiled diapers and wants to be changed.
 - Your child asks to use the toilet or potty chair.
 - Your child asks to wear “grown-up underwear.”
 - Your child can imitate your behavior
 - Your child can put things where they belong
 - Your child can demonstrate independence by saying “no.”
 - Your child can express interest in toilet training (e.g., following you to the bathroom)
 - Your child can walk and is ready to sit down
 - Your child can indicate first when he is “going” (urinating or defecating) and then when he needs to “go.”
 - Your child is able to pull clothes up and down (on and off)



Our Mindset

- ▶ 1. Age - The child has reached an appropriate age. It is recommended to wait until after the second birthday to begin considering toilet training. It has been found beneficial for children with Down syndrome to wait until after the third birthday to begin the process. While age is an important component of readiness, parents should consider other factors as well when considering toilet training.
 - ▶  Don't wait. Starting early can mean your child can be potty trained in their 3-year-old year. In my experience, if a child starts at three years, it is likely they will be potty trained at four or worse. Parents will try and decide they are not ready. This could mean they may not be potty trained until five years.
- ▶ 2. Bladder Control - The child completely empties his or her bladder when voiding and remains dry for at least one and one-half hours during the day.
 - ▶  Bladder Control can be built. We work with children to build their muscles, like tummy time for neck strength.

Our Mindset Continued

- ▶ 3. Predictable Stooling Patterns - The child's bowel movements follow a regular and predictable pattern.
 - ▶  Constipation can cause problems with predictable bowel movements. Setting on the toilet helps to improve bowel movements.
- ▶ 4. Motor Skills - The child demonstrates the ability to walk to and from the bathroom independently and pick up objects.
 - ▶  Not all people who use the toilet can walk. I do not see why a delay in walking should cause a delay in toilet training. I feel it is unfair to predetermine their ability in another area of life.

Why Underwear 4 Kindergarten Works

- ▶ We don't wait for children with Ds to naturally acquire skills
- ▶ We pre-teach to help the children develop the muscles and skills needed for success (46-73% of kids with Down syndrome experience urinary incontinence)
- ▶ Kids with Ds often tend to do well in structured environments.
- ▶ We move all toileting related activities to the bathroom
- ▶ We rely on data to make decisions
- ▶ We know that children with Ds deserve to be taught this skill at or around the same time as their peers.

Step 1. Set yourself up for Success

Keep Track of when you take your child to the potty and what happens while you are in the bathroom.

Toilet Training Data Sheet

Day				
	Time	Wet Dry Potty Poo	Time	Wet Dry Potty Poo
	Time	Wet Dry Potty Poo	Time	Wet Dry Potty Poo
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Special Considerations for Potty Training Children with Down syndrome (Ds)



- ▶ Hypotonia
- ▶ Urinary Incontinence
- ▶ Language Delay
- ▶ Learning Differences
- ▶ Physical Needs

Step 2 – Getting the Right Stuff

Because of hypotonia in children with Ds it is also important to support the physical needs of children with Ds by providing equipment and tools for success....

1. Supportive Potty Chair with high back and sides
2. Small table
3. iPad or Tablet
4. Reinforcers
5. Have visuals of the potty steps that can be reviewed often

Supportive Potty Chair

- Has high back and sides
- Placed on the floor
- Allows for ergonomic positioning of the child
- The adult can easily see the amount of potty in the toilet



Small Table/Chair



- Must slide over the child and potty chair so the child can lean forward and support weight on arms
- allows children to relax muscles that need to be relaxed to “go” potty and to contract the muscles that need to contract to “go” potty

Reinforcers

Mini m&ms



Bell



Bubbles



Wind Up Toys



Mini Marshmallows



Step 3. Getting Started

- ▶ Choose one or more times a day to put your child on the potty chair
- ▶ Have them sit 5-10 minutes before you think they need to go
- ▶ Allow them to sit for 20-30 minutes
- ▶ Do this one or more times a day to start

When to Get Started

- ▶ 18 months +
- ▶ Potty training is a marathon not a sprint
- ▶ Start working on Potty concepts
- ▶ Consistency is Key



iPad or Tablet

- ▶ **These are TOOLS (not rewards) that help...**
 - **Make potty time enjoyable**
 - **Encourages the child to stay on the potty long enough to go**
 - **Foster independence**
- ▶ **This has never become a problem for any of our students**



Step 4 – Keep it Positive

- ▶ Praise your child
- ▶ Don't Get Frustrated
- ▶ Continue to give them opportunities
- ▶ Eventually your child will go!!!!

Time



- ▶ Hypotonia can cause a slower reaction time. The brain may be sending out the correct command, but the body needs more time to respond.
- ▶ 18% of children with Down syndrome had a weak stream, prolonged, and intermittent urination, meaning that your child may have difficulty starting or maintaining a stream of urine it also means that your child might have trouble fully eliminating their bladder.

Step 5 – The Brain Body Connection

- ▶ It is likely your child may only go a tiny bit
- ▶ Make sure your child has up to 30 minutes to go
- ▶ Your child will get faster the more opportunities they have
- ▶ Now is a good time to find more opportunities to allow your child to use the potty
- ▶ Celebrate all wins.



Step 6. Increase the opportunity to go

- ▶ Keep up the good work.
- ▶ By giving your child more opportunities to use the potty, the brain-body connection gets stronger
- ▶ Your child eliminate faster
- ▶ At this point your child will be able to go within the first ten minutes of sitting on the potty.

Step 7- Focus on fully eliminating the bladder

- ▶ At this time I encourage the child to go more. It is almost always apparent that the child is concentrating on trying to make their body respond, then they go more.
- ▶ I ask a new potty trainer to go more 2 times for a total of 3 small potties.
- ▶ The goal is to increase the stream and volume of the potty.
- ▶ Your child will be ready to move on when they fully eliminate without verbal cues and without the need to go, stop, go, stop.

1st time going



After 10 minutes and extra prompts



Step 8 Keeping the diaper dry

- ▶ Now the goal is to stay dry between bathroom breaks.
- ▶ Most kids at this time can stay dry about 45 minutes.
- ▶ Make sure you praise your child for staying dry between bathroom breaks
- ▶ Never scold your child for being wet between bathroom break.
- ▶ Students will often start communicating their need to use the bathroom at this time by crawling or walking to the bathroom door, signing or saying potty
- ▶ Honor all communication attempts.

Step 9 – Make the Move to Underwear

- ▶ Practice wearing underwear for 2-4 hours at a time when you can fully support your child
- ▶ Continue to add more time in underwear as the child becomes more successful.
- ▶ Make sure whatever attempts you are making toward underwear are not cause you frustration
- ▶ Once your child can stay dry for 2 hours between potty breaks, it may be time to move to underwear full time.

Why Potty Training Boot Camp May not work: Hypotonia



- ▶ According to Niemczy (2018), a study of 317 participants, found that 46 -73 % of children with Down syndrome have urinary incontinence.
- ▶ According to Kitamura, Kondoh, Noguchi, & et al.(2014) a study with 55 participants found that 18% of children with Down syndrome had a weak stream, prolonged, and intermittent urination,
- ▶ meaning that your child may have difficulty starting or maintaining a stream of urine it also means that your child might have trouble fully eliminating their bladder.

Fading Supports

- Fade supports away when a child's body becomes more proficient at going potty
- May still need for BM
- Eventually will not need
- Only 2 students in the past 5 years have not gone to Kindergarten fully potty trained and independent



Language Delay

- ▶ Some children in the early stages will crawl to the restroom to communicate, some show other “tells” that they need to go. Watch for tells or attempts to go to the restroom
- ▶ Give language to the child, “you need to go potty! Let’s go potty, on the potty chair” while signing potty
- ▶ Carry the child to the potty and tell them if they are wet or dry
- ▶ Allow them to “go” or “go” more if wet
- ▶ Praise the child for going on the potty chair



Language Delay continued

- ▶ Kids will continue to walk/crawl to the restroom to communicate
- ▶ Most can either sign or say by the end of the 4 year old year
- ▶ Parents should not ask their kids, "Do you need to go?"
- ▶ Parents should tell the child you need to go potty and take them in to go potty.



Potty Time Signs

- ❖ Accident
- ❖ All Done/Finished
- ❖ Celebrate
- ❖ Diaper
- ❖ Drink
- ❖ Dry
- ❖ Eat
- ❖ Flush
- ❖ Go
- ❖ Help
- ❖ I Love You
- ❖ More

- ❖ **Potty**
- ❖ Proud
- ❖ Ready
- ❖ Soap
- ❖ Stop
- ❖ Time
- ❖ Try
- ❖ Underwear
- ❖ Wait
- ❖ Wash Hands
- ❖ Water

- ❖ Wipe/Clean
- ❖ Wet



Becoming Independent in the restroom

- ▶ Remove distractions from the bathroom.
- ▶ Give correct amount of paper to child until they are almost ready to be independent. Save almost empty rolls of TP to limit waste.
- ▶ Work with child's OT on how to teach wiping skills.
- ▶ Have a step stool available for use at the toilet and sink.
- ▶ Have visuals of the potty steps that can be reviewed often.
- ▶ Reduce the physical closeness of the adult.

Learning Through Failure



- ▶ Accidents can happen, well after your child is potty trained
- ▶ Cleaning up your mess is a great life skill.
- ▶ Having to go home due to soiled clothing, can be a good learning tool
- ▶ Wetting pants is sometimes a control behavior



Join the Facebook Group Underwear 4 Kindergarten

UNDERWEAR 4 KINDERGARTEN

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BYE, BYE BOOTCAMP AND FRUSTRATIONS! HELLO HELPFUL HABITS FOR POTTY SUCCESS.



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ANGIE WILLEY

ADVANCED SIGNING TIME INSTRUCTOR



MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU!

Go forth and be dry!

QUESTIONS

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Thank You

Contact us with any questions!

Web:underwear4k.weebly.com
Email:underwear4k@gmail.com

Kim Yaeger

402-515-7234

kim@littleleaf.com

Angie Willey

402-499-4022

abcsigningkids@signingtimeacademy.com