

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

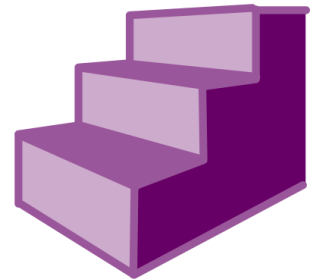
Toileting Skills ~ Preparing your child for School



This sheet is part of a series of Information Sheets designed to provide parents / carers with advice and information on supporting children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disability with their toileting development in preparation for starting at school in either the Nursery Class or in Reception.

What is toilet training?

Toilet training requires a process of learning actions, language, routines and skills as well as developing physical readiness and independence to be able to go to the toilet. Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability may require additional support to help them to learn some of these skills in small steps. Working on one skill at a time can be very helpful in making your child's toileting journey more manageable for your child and you. Each step will take you and your child closer to the stage of more formal toilet training. Information in this sheet will provide guidance and advice on how best to support your child in relation to their toileting development.



You may have some questions and worries about supporting your child with their toileting development, particularly in preparation for school. **Do any of these questions sound familiar?** *The information in these sheets will help you to consider answers to these questions.*

My child is not showing signs of being ready for toilet training. Can I still work on toilet training?

When should I start toilet training?

Who can I talk to about my child's toileting at school?

Where do I start?

Does my child have to be toilet trained before they start school?

How do I know my child is ready for toilet training?

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Toileting at School

Starting school can be a worrying time particularly if your child is at the early stages of their toileting development. You might have some questions and concerns and below is some guidance which you may find helpful in relation to these questions / concerns.

What if my child is not toilet trained in time for school ~ Do they have to be toilet trained before school?

If your child has SEND and a delay in their health and self care skills and development, there is no requirement for them to be toilet trained in time for school.

Can a school refuse admission if my child is in nappies ?

The Equality Act 2010 requires that schools must not discriminate against or disadvantage children with SEND. Delay in achieving continence (not being toilet trained) is considered a disability so, schools should not deny admission to children with SEND on the basis of not being toilet trained.

Can the school ask me to come in to school to change my child's nappy?

No, as above, the Equality Act 2010 requires that schools must not discriminate against or disadvantage children with SEND.

How will my child manage at school if they are in nappies?

Each school will have their own arrangements for supporting children with SEND and this should include arrangements for self care including nappy changing and supporting with toileting development. Refer to the school's SEND policy or intimate care / toileting policy.

I'm worried about telling the school about my child's toileting development. Who can I talk to about this?

As part of transition to school, it will be important to discuss your child's toileting needs with the school SENCO and/or Class Teacher. It is best to have these conversations before your child starts school so that they can prepare relevant support for your child. If your child was at a setting before starting school, with your consent, the setting SENCO will have passed this information on to the school as part of transition arrangements. If you think you might like some help with discussing your child's needs you can contact the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), Telephone 020 8583 2607, Email SENDIASS@hounslow.gov.uk. They can provide impartial and confidential advice, covering educational matters, social care and health entitlements.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Useful Questions to ask School

Useful Questions to ask the school

Starting school can be a worrying time for parents. To help ease your worries, it might be useful to think about talking to the school so that they are aware of your child's toileting needs. This discussion can be very helpful for the school in preparation for your child starting. You may also have many questions that you would like to ask about your child's toileting needs and how these will be met at school. Below there are some suggestions of questions along with who would be the relevant person to share information with at school:

Questions for the SENCO:

What support will there be for my child to manage their nappy / toileting? ?

What facilities do you have for nappy changing?

Do you have any equipment to support with transition from potty to toilet e.g. stools, toilet seats, seats with steps and arm rests?

Am I able to bring in equipment from home as my child has a favourite toilet seat?

Do you use visuals to support children to understand toileting routines?

Does school provide the nappies and wipes?

My child has not got an EHC Plan will the Class Teacher be able to help my child with toileting?

Questions for the Class Teacher:

If my child needs help to go to the toilet, will there be someone to help them? Will it be the same person helping each time? ?

Is my child able to go to the toilet whenever they need or are there set times?

How far away are the toilets from the classroom?

My child is not able to communicate when their nappy needs changing. Who will check and how often? Will the nappy be changed on a need's basis rather than at scheduled break times?

My child will only lay down for a nappy change can this be managed?

My child tends to 'hold on' for wees and poos can you encourage them to use the toilet still?

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Things to Think About

Things to
think about

Before thinking about supporting your child's toileting, it will be helpful to think about their needs. Remember your child's toileting development can be seen as a journey of small steps and there may need to consider before starting on their journey:

* **How do you feel about supporting your child with their toileting?**

It can be a daunting experience knowing where to start, particularly if you are already worried about the transition to school. Try to remove the pressure of getting your child toilet trained in time for school ~ your child's toileting development is unique to them. Aim to be relaxed and calm about toileting. You will need to choose the right time and will need patience and lots of determination ~ you and your child will get there.



* **What is your child's level of understanding of language? Do they understand simple spoken instructions or do they understand better when you show them objects or pictures? What words will you use, toilet, potty, wee, poo?**



It can be helpful to agree on language that everyone will be using so that your child understands what is being asked of them. Show your child objects or pictures as this will also help them to understand. (see suggested visuals at the end of this information sheet).

* **What are your child's experiences of toileting? Are they comfortable with being in the bathroom / having their nappy changed? Have you tried to sit them on the toilet before? How did they respond? Do they seem calm and relaxed when having their nappy changed or do they find it a difficult experience?**

Before you start on any toileting support, it will be important to think about what your child's current feelings are about toileting. This will help you to plan carefully your next steps.



* **Any physical needs that your child may have which might affect their toileting development**

If your child has physical or mobility needs, you can still help them to achieve independence by encouraging them to join in with any actions that they are able to do e.g. if your child can help with pulling at the trousers / request help when they need their nappy changing etc. Be prepared for extra time for things like getting on and off the toilet.




GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Things to Think About

* **Issues such as constipation, smearing etc.**

It will be important to address any issues before trying toilet training. Always seek medical advice in relation to bowel and bladder issues such as constipation. If your child is known to the Occupational Therapy service, discuss any issues such as smearing as there may be some underlying sensory reasons for this.



Things to
think about

* **Physical readiness**

You may have concerns about your child not being physically ready to start toilet training. The aim of this sheet is to help you decide where your child is in their toileting journey and to start from there to take them to their next step. Even if your child is not showing physical readiness, it will be important to start to think about toileting to encourage your child's development for longer term independence for when they are ready.

* **Sensory needs**

Some children may have some sensory needs which might mean that they might be very distressed or afraid of the toilet / flush / sitting on the toilet. In contrast, some children with sensory needs may also be very interested in the toilet and may pose other difficulties in repeatedly trying to play with the toilet flush / water in the bowl. This means that they might need a gentler approach to help them manage these fears so that they become comfortable and happy to be in the bathroom / toilet area.



* **Equipment**

It may be that you would like to start your child's toileting by using a potty rather than a toilet. For some children, whilst this can be a useful starting point, for others who find change difficult, going from a potty to a toilet is then another change that they may have to get used to. You know your child best and use equipment to suit your circumstances.



Consider also whether you might need things like a footstool, steps, toilet seat adaptations. These can be especially useful for children who may be a little fearful of the toilet and dislike the sensation of sitting on the toilet without having something to hold on to. Will you need any particular toys or things to use to help your child?

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Where to Start

Start with the 'Things to think about' section (page 3 & 4):

- Read the 'Things to think about section'. Is there anything you need to address before you start e.g. constipation issues?
- Prepare any equipment you might need e.g. steps, toilet seat, toys etc.
- Decide what language you will use and agree this with anyone in the family who will be helping.



Look at the Steps to Toileting below:

- Read all the 'Steps to Toileting' in this sheet so that you have a good overview of what each step is about.

Where do I start?



Steps to Toileting

Step 1, Preparing for future toilet training ~ Getting your child familiar with the toilet ~ introducing changes gradually at your child's pace to get them ready for future toilet training.

Step 2, Teaching the skills needed for future toilet training ~ Teaching your child each skill they will need before they start toilet training.

Step 3, Identifying bowel and bladder patterns ~ Learning about your child's bowel and bladder routines and habits so you can plan for toilet training.

Step 4, Toilet training ~ Formal toilet training.



Move through these steps at your child's pace ~ follow their lead.

Praise your child every step of the way ~ use rewards such as stickers or other rewards that your child will be motivated by.



You should now have an idea of which step to start at. If in doubt, start at step 1 and work your way through the steps at your child's pace.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 1 Preparing your Child

Step 1, Preparing for toilet training

The main goal of this step is to help prepare your child before toilet training so that your child is familiar with the language relating to toileting, gets used to being around the toilet and begin to see a connection between wee / poo and the toilet before they start to learn toileting skills. This crucial first step will aim to prepare your child for future toilet training by:



- Making small changes to your child's current routine.
- Introducing / teaching your child key words linked to toileting
- Helping your child to make the link between their nappy and the toilet.
- Setting up bowel and bladder habits which will help with future toileting (dealing with issues such as constipation, encouraging regular food and liquid intake wherever possible).

Step 1 is particularly important for children who find change difficult or who may have some fears about the toilet / bathroom and may need a gentler introduction to the toilet before starting on teaching the skills they will need later. Step 1 is not always about children who are not physically ready for toilet training. Some children who may be physically ready for toilet training may not be prepared to use the toilet so some work on preparing them will be crucial. At this stage there is no expectation that your child will be using the toilet for having a bowel or bladder motion. This is simply about helping your child feel comfortable and getting used to being in the bathroom / toilet area / on the toilet.



Step 1 is a good place to start if any of the following apply:

- ✓ You are not sure where to start.
- ✓ You are not sure how your child will respond to any changes.
- ✓ You know your child dislikes changes and so will need support to help them prepare for changes to their toileting routine (they may be physically ready for toilet training but they may need a gentle approach to toilet training because of their dislike of changes)
- ✓ Your child has sensory needs and you know they may experience distress with some of the sensations they may experience during toileting development e.g. they may be distressed by the sound of the flush, or withhold their bowel motion until they are wearing a nappy.
- ✓ You know your child is at the very early stages of toilet training.
- ✓ You are not sure about whether your child is ready for toileting training and want to take a gentle approach to starting toilet training.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 1 Preparing your Child

Step 1 ~ Preparing for future toilet training



The main goal of this step is to gently introduce changes to your child's toileting routine to help prepare them before toilet training. This step will help your child become familiar with the language, relating to toileting, used to being around the toilet and beginning to see a connection between wee / poo

What to do:

- * For some children with additional needs, changes can sometimes be stressful ~ it can be a good idea to introduce these changes gradually and gently. Try to make only one change at a time until your child is comfortable and has adapted to the change e.g. if your child is not used to standing for a nappy change, then get them to stand a little before the end of the nappy changing process and gradually move back to the point where they are standing the whole way through.
- * Try to make the bathroom / toilet a positive place to be for your child by putting up stickers or music your child likes.
- * Have a basket of toys in the bathroom / toilet which are only for toilet time to help your child feel comfortable in the bathroom / toilet.
- * Start to put your child in clothing that will be easy to remove as part of future toilet training.
- * Try to start use words such as 'toilet time' rather than 'nappy'.
- * Try to take your child to the bathroom area for a nappy change at the same sort of times to build a sense of routine e.g. first thing on waking, just after lunch etc.
- * Let your child continue to wear their nappy throughout the day.
- * Aim to always change your child's nappy near to the toilet ~ if your child is reluctant to do this, gradually move their changing mat closer to the bathroom each nappy change time until you are in the bathroom.

If your child has sensory needs, can the bathroom / toilet be overwhelming? Here are some of the ways your child's sensory experience in the bathroom may affect their experience:

- * **Sight** ~ bright lights / reflections
- * **Sound** ~ flush / extractor fan.
- * **Touch / balance / body position** ~ toilet seat at right height / comfortable / temperature / texture of tissue or towel.
- * **Smell** ~ cleaning products, air fresheners / bowel motions.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 1 Preparing your Child

Step 1 ~ Preparing for future toilet training ~ continued



What to do:





- * Your child is used to having their nappy changed lying down, try to move toward changing them whilst they stand ~ give them a toy to hold or put stickers of favourite characters on the wall for them to look at to encourage them to stand.
- * Tip any nappy contents into the toilet in front of your child so they begin to see the connection between the toilet and bowel movements.
- * Let your child see you on the toilet so that they see it as a natural part of the day.
- * If your child is happy to do so, begin to encourage your child to sit on the toilet ~ at first this could be as soon as you have taken off their nappy (only if they are happy to). If your child shows any hesitation / reluctance or fear ~ follow their lead and avoid sitting them on the toilet but reassure them. You can sit on the toilet to show them it is OK.
- * After changing the nappy, encourage your child to wash their hands as this is part of the routine they will be learning when using the toilet.
- * Look at pictures or books of toilets.
- * Keep your facial expressions calm and praise your child so your child can see there is nothing to worry about.
- * Talk about the toilet positively and praise any attempts your child makes to sit on the toilet.
- * Try to encourage regular drinking and eating to help with developing regular bowel and bladder motions.

Take your time at this step if your child needs time to adjust to being in the bathroom / toilet area. It is important that your child is comfortable and feels calm and relaxed about being in the bathroom / toilet before trying to carry out any toilet training.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL




Toileting Skills ~ Step 1 Preparing your Child

Step 1 ~ Sometimes there might be some particular challenges. Here are some common ones that you might experience, along with possible solutions.

<p>What if? </p>	<p>You could try... </p>
<p>What if my child won't go to or near the bathroom.</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Try placing exciting floor mats to walk in the bathroom. ✓ Blow bubbles to entice your child into the bathroom area. ✓ Introducing changes when your child is relaxed in this area e.g. bath time, nappy changing. ✓ Try using first & then, e.g. '<i>first bathroom, then toy</i>'. ✓ You could give your child a toilet symbol in the bathroom. ✓ Gradually move the nappy changing mat nearer and nearer to the bathroom each time you change your child's nappy. ✓ If your child struggles to go into the bathroom and then unexpectedly enters the room, remain calm and give a positive low level response. ✓ You could put a favourite toy in the bathroom on the floor, just near the door so that you child might be motivated to go and get it. ✓ Practice walking in and out of the bathroom to get something ~ keep it quick so your child feels relaxed going in and out of the bathroom. ✓ You could have your child's favourite toy wearing a nappy and take them into the bathroom / toilet area.
<p>What if my child does not like the floor tiles / covering in the bathroom and will not stand on the floor?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use a bathmat to cover the floor tiles. ✓ Encourage your child to sit on the bathmat by placing some motivating toys on to the bathmat. ✓ Lay a towel on the floor so your child can stand on the towel. ✓ Put some stickers on the floor of favourite things e.g. numbers / story or tv characters. ✓ Put footprint cut out shapes on the floor so your child can stand on the footprints. ✓ Have things up on the wall as a distraction. ✓ If your child likes light up toys, use these to shine on the floor to make patterns.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 1 Preparing your Child

What if? 	You could try... 
<p>What if my child doesn't want to stand for a nappy change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The important thing to establish is a routine of changing in the toilet first. ✓ You may need to spend some time changing your child laying down as long as it is always in the bathroom. ✓ When changing your child's nappy, before you lay them down, start the nappy change by pulling down trousers or removing nappy and then laying down. Gradually work your way to keeping your child standing up throughout the whole routine. ✓ You could give your child a toy to hold whilst standing and changing. ✓ Your child might need to hold onto something as they might find it difficult to keep their balance as you are changing them. Show them or place their hands on your shoulders for stability. ✓ To encourage your child to stand you may have motivating toys for your child to explore in the bathroom and then change their nappy ✓ Encourage your child to help with pulling up their trousers after their nappy being changed.
<p>What if my child likes to play with the water in the toilet bowl / taps?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ You could keep a visual nearby so you can show that it is '<i>finished</i>' (see below). Sign '<i>finished</i>' to your child so they can see your instruction as well as hear it that the playing with taps or the toilet bowl is finished. ✓ Keep the lid on the toilet and put something on top or sit on it as you change your child's nappy. ✓ Cover the taps with a towel. ✓ Turn the water play in the sink into a hand washing time then turn off the taps and twist them tight. ✓ Have a routine so that when you go in the bathroom, you do the same thing each time in the same order e.g. lid down, mat out, hold on, nappy down etc. <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>

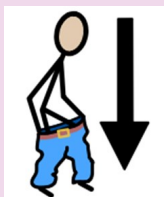
GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 2 Developing Skills

Step 2, Developing skills needed for toilet training

Step 2 builds on the preparation stage by teaching skills that your child will need for future toilet training:

- Pull trousers up and down
- Sit on the toilet for at least two minutes
- Wipe
- Press the flush button
- Wash and dry hands



Step 2 is all about working on the skills needed to be able to use the toilet. It is not expected at this stage that your child will be using the toilet or starting formal toilet training. Some children will need skills taught to them using a range of strategies. These might include guiding their hands to carry out the actions or if they can do the actions, they might need a prompt to encourage them to do it. This prompt could be a visual prompt by you pointing to the object or could be you showing them a picture of what you want them to do.

Step 2 is a good place to start if any of the following apply:

- ✓ Your child is happy to be in the bathroom area and is happy to have their nappy changed standing up.
- ✓ Your child shows interest in the toilet / flush / handwashing routine.
- ✓ Your child is a little wary of the toilet / flush / handwashing routine but you are confident that they would cope with learning to sit on the toilet / press the flush / handwash if it is for a couple of seconds.
- ✓ Your child is happy to be in the bathroom but has sensory needs and may need a gentle approach to teaching the skills of sitting on the toilet / flushing / handwashing.
- ✓ Your child already has some of the skills from the list above and you want to spend a little longer on teaching other skills e.g. washing / drying hands or pulling trousers up / down.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 2 Developing Skills

Step 2 ~ Developing the skills needed for future toilet training



The main goal of this step is to help teach your child the skills they need to learn before they can start toilet training e.g. pulling trousers up and down / sitting on the toilet / wiping / flushing / hand washing and drying.

What to do:

Teaching to sit on the toilet:

If your child is happy to try to sit on the toilet:

- * Use steps to provide stability for your child's feet to rest as they sit on the toilet or to help them balance, have a towel rolled up behind them so they have something to lean against whilst sitting.
- * Encourage them to hold onto the sides (or you could use a toilet seat with handles).
- * Sit your child on the toilet in the morning ~ generally children have a bladder motion within 20 minutes of waking.
- * Take your child to the toilet and sit them on every time you change their nappy ~ if your child happens to have a bladder motion while sitting on the toilet, praise them e.g. 'high five, wee in the toilet'.
- * Use a timer to encourage them to sit for 2 minutes ~ talk or sing with your child to encourage them to stay sitting. Never force your child to sit on the toilet.

If your child is reluctant to sit on the toilet and possibly afraid of it:

- * Start by getting your child comfortable to sit on the toilet whilst fully clothed ~ you could sit on the toilet with the lid down whilst they play in the bathroom. You could also have them sat on your lap whilst sat on the toilet with the lid down ~ you could look at a book or sing a song to help them be at ease.
- * Keep the toilet seat lid down and play with your child's favourite toys on the lid of the toilet.
- * Blow bubbles onto the toilet seat and see if your child is happy to pop them. If your child is happy with the lid up play with some toys on the toilet seat.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

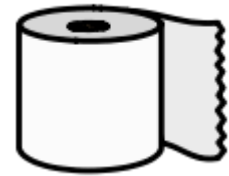
Toileting Skills ~ Step 2 Developing Skills

Step 2 ~ Developing the skills needed for future toilet training ~ continued

What to do:

Teaching to wipe:

- * Let your child take the toilet roll ~ help them to look at the 'squares' and get them to tear off one or two sheets.
- * Girls should be taught to wipe front to back.
- * Let your child hold the tissue and help them to wipe ~ you could sing a 'wipe the poo away, wipe the poo away, wipe, wipe, nice and clean' (to the tune of wind the bobbin up).
- * If your child is worried about wiping, you could offer them disposable gloves to wear.



Teaching to wash hands:

- * If your child dislikes or is fearful of the tap / sink, then before you start to teach hand washing, work on helping your child to feel comfortable with the tap and sink ~ refer to the 'What if' section below for suggestions on how to help your child.
- * Name the actions as you go through the hand washing routine i.e. 'open tap / soap on / rub, rub / rinse / close tap / dry'. Have a sequence of pictures to show hand washing e.g. soap / rinse / dry.
- * Sing a hand washing song to encourage your child to join in ~ 'This is the way we wash our hands'.

Teaching to flush the toilet:



- * If your child dislikes or is fearful of the flush or the water swirling when you flush, then it will be important to work on encouraging them to feel OK when the flush is pressed. Start gently. The aim is to make your child feel relaxed ~ refer to the 'What if' section below for ideas on helping your child learn to tolerate the toilet flush.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 2 Developing Skills

Step 2 ~ Developing the skills needed for future toilet training ~ continued

What to do:

Teaching to pull trousers / pants up and down:

- * Name the actions as you pull trousers up and down. Make a simple little rhyme e.g. up, up / down, down, down. Get your child to help you by encouraging them to hold onto your hands as you pull the trousers up and down or your start and they finish.
- * Praise your child for helping.
- * To teach them to pull up and down their trousers / pants, start with pulling up the trousers almost to the top then get your child to help with the last bit.
- * Each time, pull up the trousers lower and lower down the leg until they can then pull up their trousers / pants on their own ~ remember praise for each step of the way.

The skill of pulling trousers up and down will be helpful for other areas of your child's school and home life e.g. for when dressing and undressing. This will be helpful for your child's ongoing independence. Refer to the Independence Skills information sheet within the series of the Getting Ready for School sheets for further guidance.






Getting used to being without a nappy:

- * It might be a good idea to also work on supporting your child to get used to having their nappy off for short periods of time to see if your child is happy to be without it.
- * Try to do this at times other than when you are going through the toilet routine e.g. at bath time. Remove the nappy a little before the bath and sit your child on the toilet in case there is a motion ~ be prepared for accidents.
- * You could put the nappy in a 'finished' box so your child sees that it is finished.
- * Use your child's favourite toy and encourage them to put on / take off the nappy at the same time that you are changing your child's nappy e.g. '*dinosaur nappy off*', '*[child's name], nappy off*'.





Toileting Skills ~ Step 2 Developing Skills

Step 2 ~ Sometimes there might be some particular challenges when trying to teach your child toileting skills. Here are some common ones that you might experience, along with some possible solutions.

What if? 	You could try... 
<p>What if my child won't sit on the potty / toilet?</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At a time when your child is comfortable in the toilet area e.g. during bath time you can roleplay with a squeezey duck or animal and get them to wee on the potty or toilet. ✓ Place a dolly or teddy on the potty for a turn first. ✓ Give your child a distractor toy to hold ~ use a play mat in front of the toilet. ✓ Read stories with your child showing its ok to sit on the potty / toilet ✓ Have a routine where you encourage your child to first sit and then have a snack or turn of a favourite toy. ✓ You could sit on the toilet and have your child sit on your lap so they get used to being on the toilet but feel supported ✓ Make sure your child feels stable on the toilet / potty ~ use a back rest (rolled up towel or tape some foam pipe covering together for a homemade back rest). Use a foot stool where required.
<p>What if my child is distressed by sound of the flush?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use reassuring sounds as you press the flush e.g. 'it's OK' or count-down before you flush to give your child warning e.g. '3,2,1 flush'. ✓ Look at toilets online and watch videos of toilet flushes. ✓ Say 'finished' when the flush has finished. ✓ Flush the toilet with the lid down so it is not so noisy. ✓ Let your child stand at the door whilst you flush the toilet. As they get used to the sound, they may gradually come in. ✓ Use a toy character to press the flush e.g. Peppa Pig could bounce on the toilet and make it flush. ✓ There are some 'flushable' toy toilets available to purchase ~ however, these are relatively expensive and you might wish to try the other strategies above first. ✓ You could distract your child away from the 'flush' by putting food colouring in the cistern and then showing them the colour as you flush.

Toileting Skills ~ Step 2 Developing Skills

What if? 	You could try... 
What if my child will not let me flush the toilet?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Get your child's favourite toy to model flushing the chain. This can be extended by saying <i>'Oh dolly has a poorly arm can you help dolly flush the chain?'</i> ✓ Offer your child a choice <i>'Do you want to flush the chain or dolly?'</i>
What if my child is reluctant to wash their hands?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ You could gently open & close the tap, fill the sink bowl and put some bath toys in there to play with. ✓ Initially use a wipe, start to wet it under the tap so that your child gradually gets used to the water. ✓ Make soap shapes when washing your hands or blow bubbles with your soapy hands. ✓ Use a little bowl of water to create their own sink experience. Have a towel available at the side for your child to use when they need. ✓ Place a toy that the child enjoys into the water to wash. ✓ Use spray bottles to spray water on your hands in the sink. ✓ Reward any hand washing with a high five or <i>'good washing'</i>.
What if my child is easily distracted in the bathroom and will not join in with any of the routine?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Put things that might distract your child, out of sight e.g. toothbrush etc. ✓ Take in something that your child enjoys playing with so that they are focused on that e.g. bubbles. ✓ Cover the sink or other areas with a large sheet or towel.
What if my child will not drink water or eat a range of food?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Offer your child foods that are high in water e.g. melon or soup. ✓ If your child needs 'flavour' in the water, squeeze some fruit into the water. ✓ You could use straws to motivate them. ✓ A tea party with your child's favourite characters may encourage them to eat and drink. ✓ Try some messy food play activities ~ see suggestions in the 'Messy Food Play in the Home' information sheet on the Hounslow Local Offer. ✓ If your child is known to the Occupational Therapy service or specialist feeding Speech and Language Therapy service, consult with them on supporting your child with their feeding.

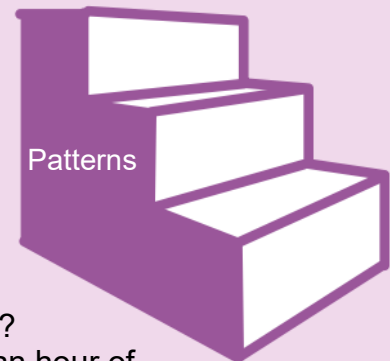
GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 3 Bowel / Bladder Patterns

Step 3, Identifying bowel and bladder patterns

Once your child co-operates when taken to the toilet, can sit on the toilet for at least two minutes and has learned some of the skills needed such as flushing and hand washing, you can then start to think about looking for patterns to their bowel and bladder motions.

- Looking for how long your child is dry for (ideally can they stay dry for at least 1.5 hours at a time?)
- Is there a regular time when your child opens their bowels? Just after mealtimes, when they have woken up or within an hour of having a drink?
- Have any issues been dealt with e.g. constipation?



Step 3 is about understanding your child's bowel and bladder patterns before you move onto more formal toilet training. This will give you an opportunity to see whether your child is physiologically ready for formal toilet training. If your child is not showing any signs of regularity or awareness of having bowel or bladder motions, then they may not be physiologically ready for the step of toilet training. However, it will still be crucial to continue to work on teaching the skills in Step 2.

Step 3 is a good place to start if any of the following apply:

- ✓ Your child happily goes to the toilet and will sit for at least two minutes.
- ✓ Your child can do some of the skills such as flushing, hand washing and / or pulling trousers up and down.
- ✓ You are not sure if your child is physically ready for toilet training and you want to find out about their bowel and bladder patterns to be able to plan their toilet training
- ✓ You know your child is ready for toilet training and you want to find out about their bowel and bladder patterns to be able to plan their toilet training.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 3 Bowel / Bladder Patterns

Step 3 ~ Identifying bowel and bladder patterns



The main goal of this step is find out about your child's bowel and bladder patterns. It will help you with toilet training if you know about how long your child is dry for / when they tend to have bowel and bladder motions throughout the day.

What to do:

- * Encourage drinking fluids ~ if your child is reluctant to drink water, see if they will eat foods with high water content. It is important your child drinks plenty as they will need to learn about their bladder feeling full.
- * Encourage high fibre foods ~ if your child has sensory needs relating to food, you could encourage messy play with these foods, gradually.
- * Seek advice from your GP for any ongoing constipation issues and start to follow any advice to ensure any constipation is dealt with.
- * Keep track of your child's bowel and bladder patterns. Check your child's nappy every hour. Note whether the nappy is dry or wet or if a bowel motion has taken place ~ try to do this for at least 3 full days so you get a clear idea of any patterns.
- * If it is hard to tell when your child has had a bladder motion (nappies are designed to keep your child dry so it is not always easy to tell if they are wet), you could put a kitchen towel in your child's nappy. The towel will help your child and you to notice when the nappy is wet.
- * You could try and remove the nappy completely if this helps to see when your child has bowel and bladder movements ~ though you may well need plenty of spare clothing.
- * Keep track of what your child is drinking and eating and when, again for 3 full days.



Depending on how much your child has had to drink they might have between 4 and 7 bladder movements during the day.

If possible, aim to encourage your child to drink 6 x 250ml good drinks or more during the day rather than having lots of little sips.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 3 Bowel / Bladder Patterns

Step 3 ~ Identifying bowel and bladder patterns ~ continued

- * Encourage your child to join in with checking their nappy using simple language e.g. 'check nappy'. Say toilet words like 'wet', 'poo' etc. as you check the nappy.
- * Encourage your child to sit on the toilet each time you change their nappy ~ go through the routine as if they had been to the toilet.
- * Praise any time your child manages to have a bowel or bladder motion in the toilet.
- * As your child's awareness of the toilet and their own bowel and bladder motions increases, they may begin to be able to let you know when they are about to have a motion.
- * Remember to make a note of any bowel and bladder motions even if they are in the toilet.

You can think about step 4, when:

- * *Your child is starting to show a pattern to their bowel and bladder movements.*
- * *They have been able to use the potty / toilet for bowel and bladder movements on some occasions.*
- * *Your child is showing awareness of their bowel and bladder habits and you think they understand the connection between the toilet and these habits.*





It important to start toilet training when your child starts to show physical readiness.

Any delay in toilet training might teach your child that bowel and bladder motions go in the nappy.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 3 Bowel / Bladder Patterns

Step 3 ~ Working out your child's bowel and bladder patterns is a crucial step towards toilet training. There can however be occasional barriers as suggested below which are not unusual for children with SEND.

What if? 	You could try... 
<p>What if my child experiences constipation?</p>	<p>It is best to try and seek advice on constipation before going forward with toilet training, however, if this is an unexpected or occasional issue, you could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Initially, encourage your child to sit in a position with their knees higher than hips. This can be supported by using a foot stall to raise feet. ✓ You can encourage your child to blow raspberries on the back of their own hand. This can also be done by using techniques such as your child blowing a balloon whilst they are sat on the toilet. ✓ Encourage your child to drink more liquids throughout the day. The recommended intake if for a child to drink 7 cups of not fizzy (e.g. water-based) drinks a day. ✓ If your child is constipated frequently you may need to seek advice from your GP to support further.
<p>What if my child doesn't show regular habits?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Try taking your child to the toilet at set times during the day. You may then start to notice a pattern. ✓ Watch for behaviours such as hiding behind the sofa, squatting or becoming quiet. These are all common toileting behaviours and may also let you know that your child is having a motion.
<p>What if my child does not seem to notice their bowel or bladder motions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ You could put your child's pants on first then the nappy on top. ✓ See if your child will go without a nappy for a while and whether they notice any motions without the nappy. ✓ If you notice your child having a bladder or bowel motion, see if you can get them to the toilet.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 4 Toilet Training

Step 4, Toilet training

Your child may now be ready and this is the time when you might like to start toilet training which will involve learning:

- Using the toilet to have a bladder movement
- Using the toilet to have a bowel motion
- Learning to wipe
- Learning to use unfamiliar toilets



This step is best started when both your child and you as a family are ready. If there are lots of other things going on e.g. house move / new baby. It might be best to wait until things are settled before starting this step. Toilet training will require time dedicated to the process so it will be important to make sure you are ready.

Step 4 is a good place to start if any of the following apply:

- ✓ Your child notices when their nappy or clothing is wet or soiled.
- ✓ They seem to show interest in the toilet and when other people use the toilet.
- ✓ Your child is dry for about 2 hours and you have noticed a pattern to their bowel and bladder motions.
- ✓ They are showing through their gestures / facial expressions / posture that they need to go to the toilet or are starting to realise that they are about to have a motion.
- ✓ You are confident that your child is showing readiness and awareness and that any sensory issues are minimised.
- ✓ Your child has had some success with occasional wees / poos on the potty, appears to understand the process and is happy to sit on the potty or toilet.
- ✓ You are ready to stop using the nappy and replace with washable training pants or normal underwear (possibly with a small pad in if required).
- ✓ Your child responds to regular prompting and / or goes to the potty / toilet themselves to wee and poo regularly.
- ✓ You can plan to be at home for a few days.
- ✓ Your child is consistently able to use the toilet but they may still need prompting or reminders due to the occasional accident.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 4 Toilet Training

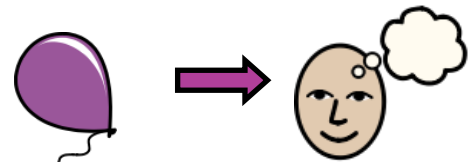
Step 4 toilet training



Your child may now be ready for toilet training, therefore the main aim of this goal is to help your child to use the toilet consistently for bowel and bladder motions.

What to do ~ getting ready

- * If you have not already, it may be helpful to start at Step 3 to give you an idea of your child's bowel and bladder motions throughout the day. This will help you to know how often and when to take your child to the toilet.
- * Encourage drinking fluids ~ if your child is reluctant to drink water, see if they will eat foods with high water content.
- * Have everything ready ~ pants, potty (if you are using a potty), waterproof sheets to protect furniture, plenty of easy to remove clothing etc.
- * Decide whether your child will wear pull-ups or start wearing pants. Generally, pants are better because pull-ups will not give your child the same sensation of wetness as pants. You will also have to then move from pull-ups to pants at some stage. Try to ensure that you do not put your child back in nappies as this may be confusing for your child which in turn might create a delay in their toilet training.
- * Letting your child select choice of pants might be motivating for them, especially if you think they may not like to move from nappy to pants.
- * It may help to remove trousers during the day so that your child can get to the toilet quickly, however, for some children with SEND, it may create issues in the longer run as they may learn to only go to the toilet when their trousers are off completely.
- * Aim to go the toilet throughout the day at around the times that your child tends to have a bowel or bladder motion ~ try to go at about the same times each day so that your child starts to predict when it is time to go to the toilet e.g. always when waking up, mid morning before a snack or just before lunch etc.
- * Try to avoid taking your child to the toilet too frequently ~ aim for approximately every 90 minutes to 2 hours. The bladder is like a balloon. When it is full, it stretches and only at this time can you get a message that the bladder is full.



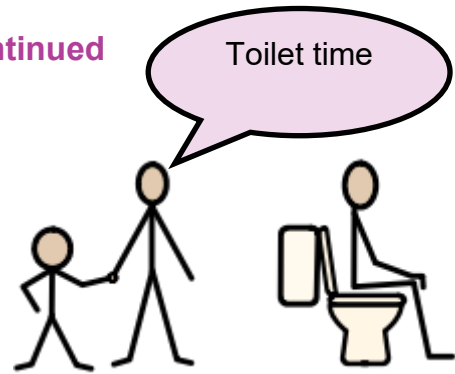
GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 4 Toilet Training

Step 4 toilet training ~ continued

What to do ~ taking your child to the toilet

- * Give your child warning before you take them to the toilet (especially if they are absorbed in something) e.g. *'2 minutes then toilet'*. Try not to ask them if they need the toilet, just say it is toilet time.
- * Remember to keep your language simple and the same throughout.
- * Encourage your child to take part in all aspects of the routine e.g. open the door, lift the toilet lid, trousers down, climbing up to sit on the toilet, gathering toilet tissue etc.
- * Encourage your child to wipe their own bottom ~ you could try patterned toilet roll or get your child to 'find' the poo on the tissue.
- * Whilst your child is on the toilet, talk about what is happening i.e. *'wee wee coming'*.
- * Guide your child verbally through each part of the routine and use visuals if you know that this will help your child (instructions on using a visual toileting routine are at the end of this information sheet).
- * Using visual routines will also help your child's understanding and means that they may better understand and learn the routine more quickly. Some children may also enjoy placing the pictures on the visual routine or taking them off when they have done each action.
- * Make 'weeing' in the toilet fun ~ put a few drops of food colouring in the bowl and let your child see how 'weeing' changes the colour.
- * Encourage boys who stand to stand and aim at targets in the toilet (a few Cheerios or screwed up bits of toilet paper make good targets).
- * Remember to praise your child for showing an interest and / or using the toilet.
- * A musical potty can also provide motivation if your child is reluctant to sit on the toilet.



GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Step 4 Toilet Training

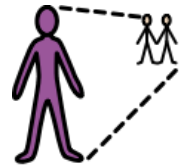
Step 4 toilet training ~ continued



Your child may now be ready for toilet training, therefore the main aim of this goal is to help your child to use the toilet consistently for bowel and bladder motions.

What to do ~ developing independence

- * If your child is not communicating and / or not able to tell you when they need the toilet, you might like to have some pictures or visuals around the house to show them to give them a prompt to go to the toilet.
- * You could encourage your child to bring the visual to you when they need to go to the toilet.
- * You could set a timer every 2 hours or at set times to provide your child with a 'prompt'.
- * Try to reduce the amount of reminders as your child becomes more independent to go to the toilet.
- * Don't worry if your child has the occasional accident ~ this is all part of the process and will help your child to develop better toileting awareness.






Once you are relatively confident that your child is comfortable and happy to use the toilet, you can start to introduce them to toilets that are unfamiliar to them e.g. on outings, friends or families' homes. Wherever possible, using different toilets will help your child. Try to:



- ✓ Take along familiar resources like your child's favourite toy, your own wipes, toilet seat if it is portable etc.
- ✓ If your child is afraid of public toilets because of the sound of the hand dryer, practice just walking in and out again without going to the toilet. Each time, spend a little while longer to help your child get used to it.
- ✓ You can purchase a Radar key at [Disability Rights UK](https://www.disabilityrightsuk.com/) if you would like to access Disabled toilets which are quieter and where you have greater control over things like the hand dryer being set off.
- ✓ Try using visuals like the ones you use at home.

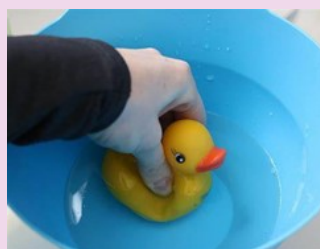
Toileting Skills ~ Step 4 Toilet Training

Step 4 ~ As you go through toilet training with your child there might be some common situations you come across. Try not to worry, most situations can be dealt with:

<p>What if? </p>	<p>You could try... </p>
<p>What if my child has lots of accidents during toilet training? Do I have to put a nappy back on?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Change your child and re-assure them that its ok that they have an accident. ✓ Put clean pants on and continue with the routines as normal. ✓ Continue to persevere with toilet training. Accidents do not require your child to return to nappies.
<p>What if my child does not go to the toilet when I think they need to go?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If you think it is because they do not wish to leave what they are doing try 'First & Then' e.g. 'First toilet, then iPad'. ✓ If your child likes singing, try to make up a toilet song and sing this on the way e.g. 'This is the way we go to the toilet' (to the tune of Mulberry Bush). ✓ Try 'Ready, steady go'. ✓ Try and have toilet time built into your routine i.e. if you always go to the toilet before lunch then your child may get used to doing so. ✓ You could model to your child how you remember to go to the toilet e.g. 'Wee wee coming, I'm going to the toilet'. ✓ There are watches designed to vibrate at pre programmed times to remind your child to go to the toilet. These can be expensive but as a good alternative, you could set a timer to go off at around the same time that your child tends to have a bowel motion or roughly every two hours as a reminder to go to the toilet ~ encourage your child to take notice of the alarm.
<p>What if I am going on a long journey and my child will not be able to access?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make sure your child goes to the toilet before leaving for a journey. ✓ Pack a portable potty so that your child can use this if needed. ✓ You can use a potty-training waterproof pad which is placed between your child and the car seat. This will support your child if they have an accident as they are replaceable so will not leave your child uncomfortable if an accident occurred. ✓ Share a story with your child about travelling and let them know that there will be a toilet stop.

Toileting Skills ~ Step 4 Toilet Training

<p>What if? </p>	<p>You could try... </p>
<p>What if my child will wee when sat on the toilet but will only poo in the nappy or refuses to remove their nappy for toileting?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If you observe your child trying to have a bowel movement, take them into the potty / toilet area and let them finish in the toilet. This may begin with your child initially sitting on the toilet in their nappy and then progressing onto removing the nappy step by step e.g. first unfasten one strap and let your child sit on the toilet. Gradually loosen the nappy whilst they sit until eventually the nappy just falls away into the toilet. ✓ Cut a hole in the nappy before you put it on and sit your child on the toilet. ✓ If your child has used the nappy to have a poo, you can then put the contents into the toilet to model to your child that poo also goes down the toilet like a wee. ✓ To further support your child to use the toilet successfully, you can use their toys to role play the actions that occur on the toilet. ✓ Share a Social Story with your child (see example resources). ✓ A hot water bottle or weighted blanket can give your child a sense of comfort if they dislike the feel of sitting on the toilet without a nappy.
<p>What if my child is ready for toilet training but refuses to use the toilet?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Try to work out what is preventing your child from using the toilet so that you can then address this ~ is it something they are afraid of or are they busy and do not want to leave their toys? ✓ Encourage your child to have a bladder motion by using toys that expel water in bowl e.g. dinosaur toys from the Getting Ready for School Bag, or a plastic duck, 'Look duck doing a wee, wee'. ✓ Give your child tasks to do such as putting the toilet seat on as they may enjoy the sense of responsibility. ✓ You could try a book to encourage them to use the toilet ~ especially ones that make sounds or are fun.

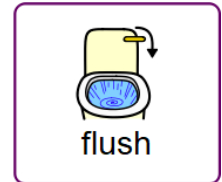


GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Visuals to Support

Using Visuals

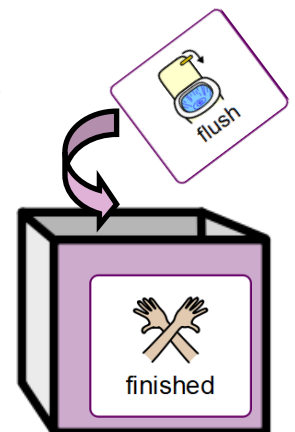
Predictable routines and visuals can be very helpful for many children with SEND. Using routines and visuals may help your child to learn the sequence of new skills and may support them to understand what is being asked of them. You can use individual visuals on their own or together in a routine.



Social stories are another visual resource and you can use these to teach your child the sequence of going to the toilet. Decide on what works best for you and your child.

Visuals

- * Print, laminate (if possible) and cut out the visuals on the next page.
- * It can be helpful to have spares as you might need them if you have more than one bathroom / toilet you use.
- * You can use each visual on it's own to focus on one skill.
- * You can also attach visuals in a row on the wall or on a board (with masking tape, Velcro or blu tack) to show your child the sequence in the toilet routine.
- * For each action, show the visual, say the name of the action and wait a few seconds to give your child time to process the instruction.
- * If they have not understood, you start the action and say the name again. Encourage your child to join you e.g. if you show your child the hand wash visual, wait, if there is no response, you turn the tap and help them join in.
- * You can stick the 'finished' visual on the front of a box. As each action is finished, your child can put the visual in the box to show it is finished e.g. 'flush finished'.

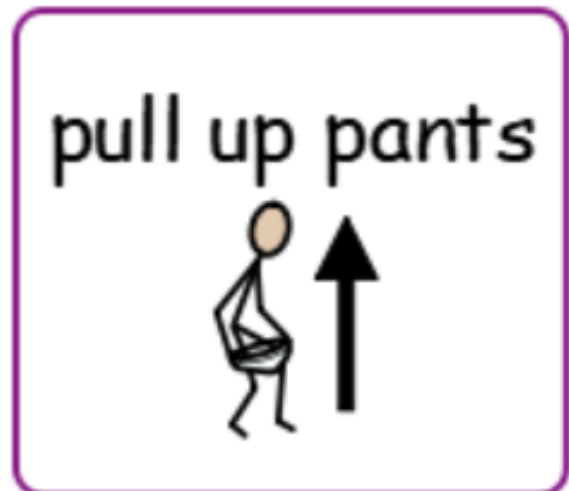
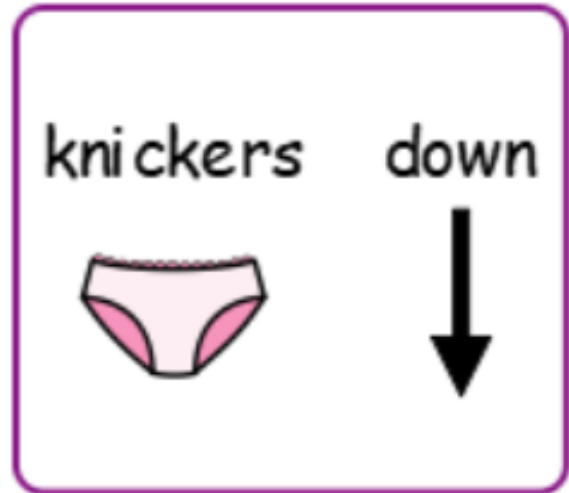
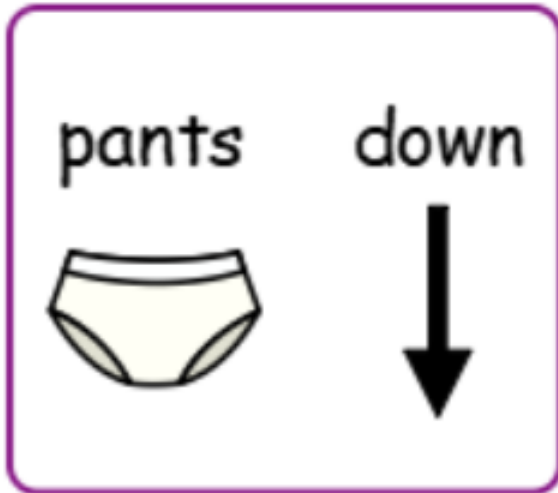


Social stories

If your child likes to sit and look at a book with you then these can be a good way of going through the routine of using the toilet. They can be made personal to your child ~ you can stick pictures of your child on the pages and add your child's name to make it individual to them.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Visuals to Support



GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Visuals to Support

pull knickers up



flush



soap



wash hands



dry hands



finish



GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Toileting Skills ~ Visuals to Support



The list below contains suggested further sources of information or resource ideas that you might find helpful.

Websites / Books:

<https://www.eric.org.uk/videos-about-wee-and-poo> ~ a range of videos about going to the toilet for different age groups. The Wiggles song about sitting on the toilet might be a useful song to sing to encourage your child to sit on the toilet



Linked to the video above ~ the Toilet song book from The Wiggles.

<https://www.bbuk.org.uk/> ~ Bowel and Bladder UK offer a telephone helpline for any bowel and or bladder issues.

<https://www.eric.org.uk/> ~ The children's Bowel and Bladder Charity.



Washable waterproof training pads can be purchased from online retailers. These can be used for car seats or buggies.



Whatever stage your child is at in their toileting development, working at their pace and helping them along to their next step will help your child gain independence and success in their future toileting development.