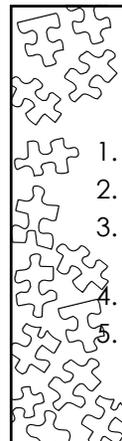
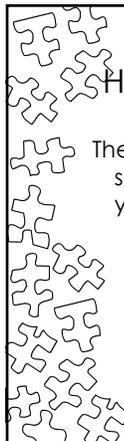


## Toilet Training for Children with ASD: Some Helpful Hints & Resources

Sami Baker, BCABA  
Carriage House Preschool  
Endeavor Program



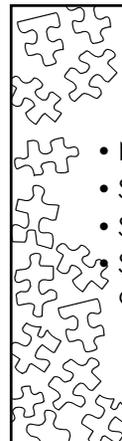
- 
1. How do I know when to start?
  2. How do I start?
  3. Methods to potty train at home and in the classroom.
  4. Problems and hints
  5. Resources

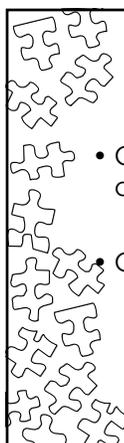


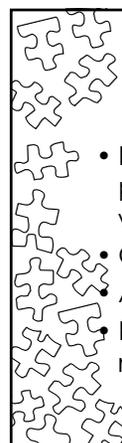
### How do I know when to start?

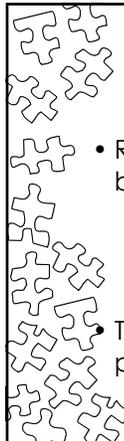
There is no set age when potty training should begin but there are some things you can look at .

- Physiological Development
- Motor Skills
- Cognitive and Verbal Skills

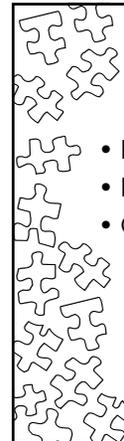
- 
- ### Physiological Development
- No BM's most nights.
  - Stays dry for a long period of time.
  - Some regularity in BM.
  - Some indication when they urinate or have a BM.

- 
- ### Motor Skills
- Can pull their underwear up and down.
  - Can pull their pants up and down.

- 
- ### Cognitive and Verbal Skills
- Has the ability to understand signs, pictures, written word, or spoken word.
  - Can follow simple instructions.
  - Able to imitate.
  - Responds to some form of positive reinforcement.



- Rule out any medical problems before beginning potty training.
  - Too much or too little urination or painful urination.
  - Too much, too little, too loose or hard stools.
- This can be ruled out by the family physician.



### How do I start?

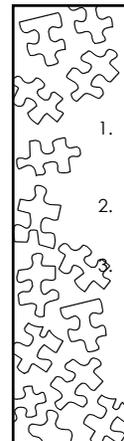
- Find out your child's schedule.
- Find several reinforcers.
- Choose a method and stick with it.



### Method to potty train at home and the classroom

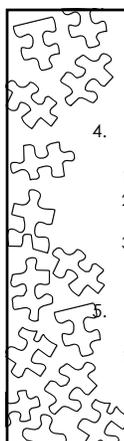
Modified version of Foxx and Azrin's Toilet Training in Less Than a Day

<http://www.ahrq.gov/downloads/pub/evidence/pdf/toilettraining/toilettr.pdf>

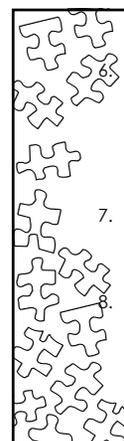


### Steps to follow

1. The child should wear regular underpants during the day. Diapers or pull-ups may only be worn at night.
2. Keep the bladder full by giving the child as much fluid as they can drink.
3. Go to the bathroom every 20-30 minutes and stay on the potty for 10 – 20 minutes or until they go on the potty.
  1. Have the child sit on the potty during training.
  2. Provide reinforcement and praise immediately if they go on the potty.
  3. If they don't go on the potty, put clothes back on and allow them to leave the bathroom.
  4. Prompt them as little as possible to pull up their pants.



4. Every 5 minutes, check the child to see if they are dry.
  1. If they are dry reinforce and praise immediately.
  2. If they are wet follow the positive practice procedure.
  3. Increase time between dry checks as potty training progresses.
5. When the child self-initiates, stop scheduling potty time.
  1. If they self-initiate one time and never again, start scheduling potty time again.



6. Bowel Training
  1. Do not use positive practice procedure for BM accidents.
  2. Require the child to clean up the mess.
  3. If the child has a regular bowel schedule, sit on the toilet during this time.
7. Teach boys to stand while urinating only after the child is consistently voiding and having BM's on the potty.
8. Teach child to request for potty once child is self-initiating for one month with no accidents.
  1. Block access to the toilet and prompt the request.
  2. Do not require the child to request during the training process.

## Positive Practice Procedure

1. At the location of the accident state "You're wet, you pee pee on the potty".
2. Direct the child to the bathroom, prompt them to pull down pants, sit and pull wet pants up.
3. Return to location of accident.
4. Repeat steps 1-3, 5 times.
5. After the fifth practice, change the child into dry clothes.
6. Have the child clean up wet spot on floor and put away wet clothes.
7. Do not provide a lot of attention at this time and maintain a flat nonreinforcing tone. The positive practice procedure is not fun for the child.

## Going out in public

1. Fill child's bladder before departing so they will need to use the bathroom when you arrive at the store.
2. Walk the child to the restroom when you arrive to the store. Do not say anything to your child.
3. Show the child the toilet and see if they will initiate.
4. If they do not, use minimal prompts for toilet use.

## Classroom adaptations

- Use plastic pants to prevent accidents in the classroom.
- If no bathroom in the classroom pair a potty picture with the process of going to the potty and show the child where the picture is kept. This will aid with initiation when there is not free access.
- If needed you may adapt steps 3 and 4 of the positive practice procedure.  
Step 3: Return to chosen location instead of location of accident.  
Step 4: Repeat steps 1-3, 3 times instead of 5.

## Visual and Verbal Prompts

- Read potty books.
- Have potty parties with a wetting doll.
- Have the child fill in phrases from their potty book about their reinforcers.
- Sing a chosen potty song each time you take the child to the bathroom.

## Potty Book example

I like to potty

I can pee pee on the potty.

First I pull my pants and underwear down.

Then I sit on the potty.

I go pee pee on the potty.

Every time I go pee pee on the potty I get a gummy bear.

If I go pee pee in my pants I have to clean up my mess.

I always go pee pee on the potty.

## Problems and Hints

1. The child does not want to sit on the toilet.
  - Reinforce small steps towards sitting on the toilet.
    - Enter room, stand 2 feet away from toilet, stand next to toilet, touch toilet, etc.
    - This may take some time but be patient.
  - Model the desired behavior yourself, with a doll, or in a book.
  - Cover the toilet seat and remove gradually by cutting larger holes.
  - Sing a favorite song while sitting.

2. The child is afraid of flushing.

- You flush and gradually have them stand closer and closer. Reinforce for each step closer.
- Listen to the sound at other times away from the toilet and reinforce listening to it at different volumes.
- Let the child know when you will be flushing.
  - Verbal – "Ready, set, flush, all done, wash hands."
  - Visual schedule

3. The child will only have a BM in a diaper.

- If constipation is a problem seek help from a doctor.
- Keep a daily log of BM's and body cues.
  - Play in the bathroom during time of BM, when body cues are present place the child on the toilet (with a diaper on if needed).
- Identify a strong reinforcer and only allow access to the reinforcer for a BM on toilet.
  - When child has a BM on the toilet (with or without the diaper, depending on the child) give child reinforcer immediately.
- After several successful BM's with the diaper on, cut a small hole in the diaper. Increase the size of the hole until the diaper is removed.

## Things to Remember

- Consistency is important!
- Identification of a good reinforcer is important!
- Do not use diapers except when sleeping when starting to potty train.

Tarbox, R.S.F., Williams, W.L., Friman, P.C. (2004). Extended Diaper Wearing: Effects on Continence in and Out of the Diaper. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 37, 97-100.

## Resources

- Toilet Training in Less Than a Day, Azrin & Foxx
- Applying Structured Teaching Principles to Toilet Training, TEACCH
- [www.autismtoilettraining.com/blog/](http://www.autismtoilettraining.com/blog/)
- [www.behavioralpediatrics.com/papers/foxx\\_and\\_azrin.htm](http://www.behavioralpediatrics.com/papers/foxx_and_azrin.htm)