



## ***The "Right" of Passage - Toilet Training Dos and Don'ts***

### ***When should I start?***

Generally age 2 is a good time to start toilet training your child.

### ***How will I know if my child is ready?***

To tell if your child is ready to be toilet trained watch for the following signs:

- Your child stays dry for a couple hours.
- Your child shows interest in learning.
- Your child is able to manage his or her clothing and using the potty chair.
- Your child seems to understand the idea of using the toilet.

\*Toilet training should be delayed if there are any major changes going on at home or within the family (i.e. moving, a new baby, illness).

### ***How do I teach my child to use the toilet?***

- Have a potty chair in the home and explain to your child why it is there.
- Use words you want your child to use when talking about using the toilet.
- Make sure your child is wearing clothes that are easy for him or her to take on or off.
- Give your child time to practice.
- Praise any kind of success. NEVER PUNISH.

### ***Things to Remember***

- Learning how to use the toilet will take time for your child. Don't expect it to happen overnight.
- Don't give your child reminders give him or her responsibility.
- Accidents can and will happen. Make sure your child knows that accidents are okay.
- Use diapers overnight initially.
- Give praise for accomplishments. NEVER PUNISH.

### ***Common Problems***

For toilet training to work, your child has to want to learn, please you and want to try and care for himself. Young children often go through a stage when they don't want to learn to use the toilet. During this stage toilet training will not work.

Make sure that learning how to use the toilet is a happy time, not stressful. It is not helpful to make your child feel bad about accidents by yelling or teasing.

### ***Daytime Wetting and What to Do***

If you have been trying to toilet train your child for several months, and he or she is between 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  and 3 years old, he or she may be trying NOT to use the toilet. If so, try the following:

- Stop reminding your child to use the toilet.
- Let your child know that when he or she wants to use the toilet you will help.
- Every time your child uses the toilet give smiles and hugs.
- If your child has an accident, make sure he or she knows that accidents happen to everyone.
- Give a sticker every time your child uses the toilet and put them on a chart or calendar that can keep track on your child's progress.

### ***What to do about Bed Wetting***

Wetting the bed is a very common problem when young children are learning how to use the toilet. Young kids have smaller bladders than most adults and they also often sleep very soundly through the night.

1. Cut down on the amount your child drinks after 7 p.m.
2. Try to get your child to use the toilet before going to bed and as soon as he or she wakes up in the morning.
3. At night you can use training pants. It is also a good idea to use a rubber pad over the mattress in case there are any accidents.
4. Praise your child when he or she stays dry through the night.
5. Don't get angry when accidents occur. It makes things worse for everyone.
6. Let you child know that if he or she wakes up in the middle of the night it is okay to use the toilet and ask for help.

Toilet training can be a trying time for both children and parents. Remember that it will take time and that you need to be patient with your child through the process.

### ***It's okay to ask for help!***

Parenting is one of the hardest and the most important job that you will ever have. If you have questions, concerns or just need someone to talk to, then call and ask to speak to a Public Health Nurse.

**Chouteau County Health Department**

**406-622-3771**

**Our hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

