



# Bladder & Bowel UK

Supporting people with bladder and bowel problems

part of Disabled Living

## Talk about going to the toilet



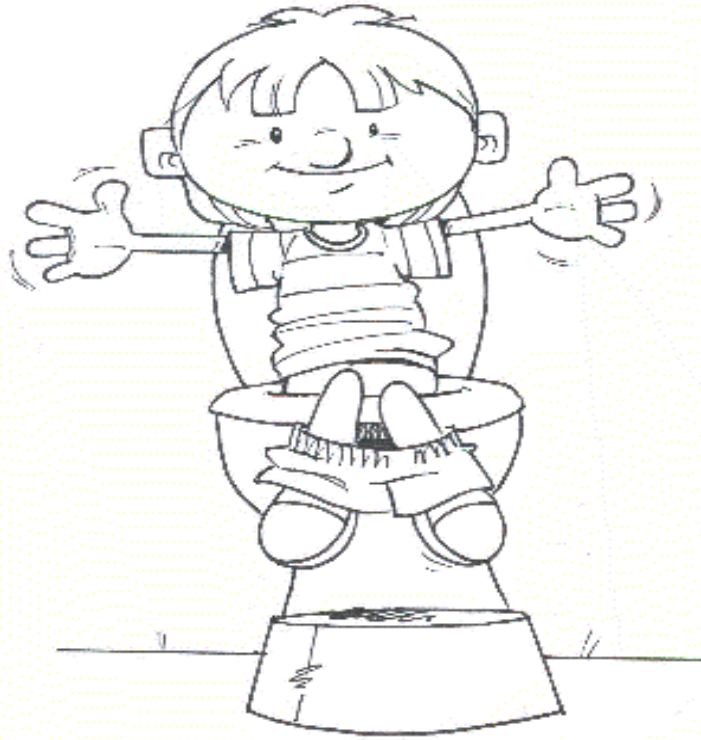
This booklet has been produced to help parents start toilet training their child.

Modern disposable nappies contain a 'super-absorbent' layer which 'locks away' urine within the nappy, so the child never feels wet.

Feeling wet after doing a wee is part of learning to become toilet trained. If the child never feels wet it takes longer for them to understand why going to the toilet for a wee or poo is important.

You can help your child understand about wees and poos by doing one of the following:

- putting them in cotton pants with a disposable nappy on top
- using cloth nappies or washable cloth trainer pants
- using a disposable liner inside the nappy (such as folded sheets of the kitchen paper towel that does not disintegrate when wet)



When I need to **wee** or **poo** I go to the **toilet**

Teaching your child to get dressed is part of helping them to become independent.

Encourage your child to help you when you are getting them dressed and undressed.

You can start with simple things such as pulling socks off or helping pulling pants down.

If your child sees an Occupational Therapist (OT) and has problems with getting dressed or undressed then ask the OT for advice.



I go to the **toilet** and pull my pants **down**

Many children feel frightened when they sit on the toilet as their bottoms are so much smaller than the toilet seat, their feet do not reach the floor and there is nothing for them to hold onto. This is particularly true if their balance is not very good, as they may feel that they will fall in.

A children's toilet seat and step will help. The seat must sit firmly on the toilet seat. It must not wobble. The step should be high enough for your child to be able to rest their feet on it, while they are sitting on the toilet.

If your child finds balancing difficult and you feel they would need extra help and support to sit on the toilet then ask your occupational therapist (OT). There are special toilet aids and adaptations that may help your child.



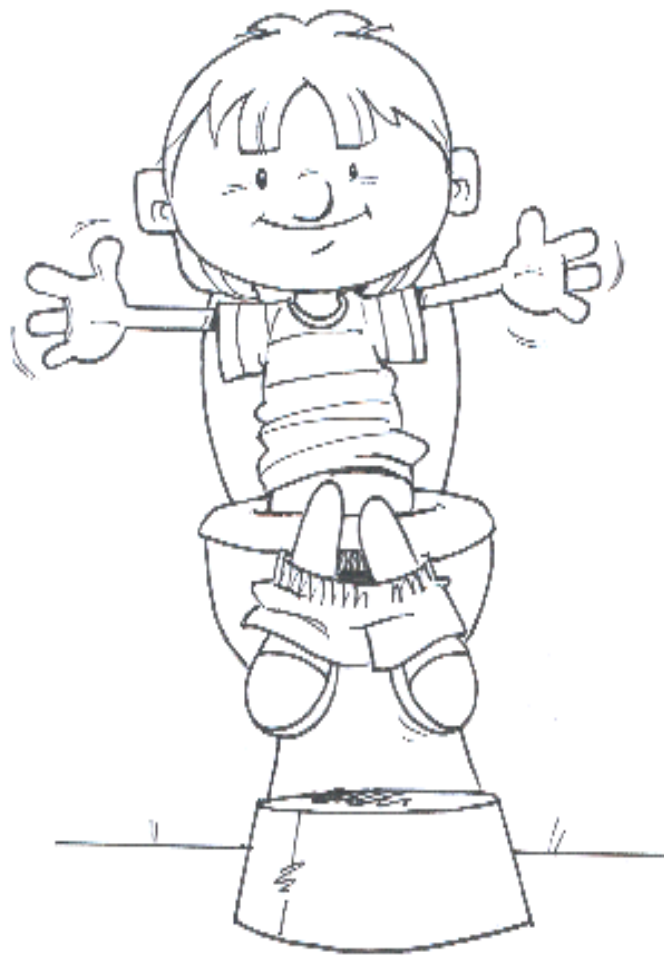
I can **sit** on the **toilet**

Positive reinforcement is a way of encouraging your child to learn new skills. This involves praising and rewarding your child for actions you want them to do, such as using the toilet.

Avoid making a fuss if they do things you don't want them to do, such as wetting their pants.

Your child can be helped to learn by praise given in the right way. Reward and praise your child for actions you want them to do. Ignore or accept any actions or accidents that you do not want.





“Hoorah I have done a **poo!** That was **easy!**”

Do encourage your child to get involved with wiping their own bottom early on. Let them have a go first, and you can check they are clean and suggest ways they might do it better.

Little girls should always be taught to wipe front to back.

Patterned or coloured paper may help a reluctant child, particularly if they have helped to choose which colour to buy.

‘Wet wipes’ may make it easier for some children.

If they are struggling then try putting your hand over theirs, to guide them as they wipe.

Playing animal tail games can help children learn to reach their bottom – this is done by sticking a ‘tail’ at the back of the child’s trousers/skirt and encouraging the child to reach round and pull the tail off. Scarves or bits of fabric make good ‘tails’.



**I wipe my bottom**

When toilet training, try and dress your child in clothing that is both easy to pull up and down. It will also help if it is quick and easy to wash and dry.

Avoid zips, buttons and straps if possible, as these can make it more difficult for you and your child to get clothes down quickly!



**I pull my pants up**

Some children are frightened by the flushing sound of the toilet, so never flush the toilet whilst your child is sitting on it.

However, other children are fascinated by the sound. They like to see the water flushing away and will want to keep flushing all the time. These children may be allowed to flush, but only once and only as a reward for using the toilet successfully.

A few drops of food colouring in the cistern will change the colour of the water. Changing the colour at each flush may encourage a reluctant child to flush the toilet. You could make it into a game with a prize for a correct guess at what the next colour will be!



**I flush the toilet**

Having some sort of reward chart, as well as giving your child lots of praise for any efforts they make in the toilet training process, can be helpful for some children. For example, a sticker may be an immediate reward and it can be stuck on a chart with a small prize for getting a set number. Prizes could be five minutes of extra story, TV or computer game time.

Expect and be ready for 'accidents' and do not punish your child or give them too much attention for these. Help them to change with the minimum of fuss.

Learning to wash and dry their hands is another skill the child has to learn, as a step towards becoming independent. This is also an opportunity for children to learn the concepts of being 'wet' or 'dry'.





**I wash my hands**

This book can be used whole as a story. It can also be used as an activity book:

- colouring book
- pictures cut out and used as a 'storyboard'
- pictures put in the bathroom wall as a frieze.

It is suggested that this story is introduced in the child's second year. It can be used for all children, including those with additional needs.

Advice and support can be obtained from your local Health Visitor or Community Nurse.

Further advice and information is also available from Bladder and Bowel UK (formerly PromoCon) confidential telephone helpline: 0161 607 8219.

## Further information

Bladder and Bowel UK (formerly PromoCon), Disabled Living

**Tel: 0161 607 8219**

Email: [bbuk.org.uk](mailto:bbuk.org.uk)

Website: [www.bladderandboweluk.co.uk](http://www.bladderandboweluk.co.uk)

Bladder and Bowel UK (formerly PromoCon), working as part of Disabled Living Manchester, provides impartial advice and information regarding a whole range of products, such as musical potties and other toilet training equipment and swimwear and washable trainer pants for children who have delayed toilet training.

Information is also available regarding services and resources that are available for both children and adults with bowel and/or bladder problems.

Down's Syndrome Association

Tel: 0845 2300372

Fax: 0845 2300373

Website: [www.downs-syndrome.org.uk](http://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk)

National Autistic Society

Tel: +44 (0)20 7833 2299

Fax: +44 (0)20 7833 9666

Email: [nas@nas.org.uk](mailto:nas@nas.org.uk)

Website: [www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk)

Other booklets in this series include:

Talk about bedwetting

Talk about clean intermittent catheterisation

Talk about constipation

Talk about daytime wetting

Talk about having an ultrasound bladder scan

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