



Starting toilet training?

Common Questions & Answers

More detailed explanations can be found in the files section of the Facebook pages and BBUK's website

Q. How often should I sit my child on the toilet/potty?

A. The frequency of sitting on the potty will depend on the outcome of the baseline assessment and how long they can stay dry for allowing the bladder to fill in between.

Q. Why is it not recommended to sit the child on the potty too often – such as every 30 minutes?

A. Too frequent visits to the potty can be counter productive as it prevents the bladder filling and stretching and can also delay the child learning to recognise full bladder messages that signals the need to go to the toilet.

Q. My child does not appear to be aware/bothered by being wet.

A. Prolonged use of disposable nappies often results in children not recognising when they are wet – switching to washable nappies/pants can help children become more aware of when they are wet.

Q. What is a 'wetting alarm'?

A. A wetting alarm is a small moisture sensor attached to a wearable sound box. It is worn in the child's underwear and sounds as soon as the child starts to wee. It is generally used for children 5years+ who struggle to recognise when they have done a wee.

Q. How much should my child drink?

A. We suggest children drink around 1,500mls divided between 6 water-based drinks per day such as breakfast/midmorning/lunch/mid-afternoon/late-afternoon/evening.

Q. How often should my child do a wee?

A. We would expect most children to wee between 4-7 times per day depending on how much they drink.

Q. Is it normal for my child to dribble in between wees?

A. When the nappy is removed for the first time and the child starts to wee it may be a sensation that they don't fully recognise so they stop themselves weeing. As the bladder continues to fill, they start to wee again and then stop so they look as though they are doing lots of small wees. This is common and once the child becomes more aware and fully relaxes during weeing the problem resolves. If, however the problem continues then do seek further advice.

Q. How can I encourage my child to sit on the potty/toilet?

A. Sitting on the potty/toilet should be introduced early as part of the child's normal day but some children can become reluctant to sit on for several reasons. Never force the child but combine it with a nice activity such as blowing bubbles or allowing a special toy. The use of a timer can encourage increased sitting time.

Q. My child seems to 'hold on' how can I get him to wee on the toilet?

A. Some children do not recognise the potty/toilet as the place where wees/poos should go. Putting an open nappy on the potty/toilet and then sitting the child on the nappy can help to get the child used to weeing on the toilet.

Q. Despite doing everything suggested my child is still not staying clean and dry – should I just give up?

A. There are several reasons why children may continue to have wetting and soiling problems and we should not presume it is just because of delayed toilet training. If your child continues to have problems, then do seek further advice from your doctor or nurse.

Q. My child is now dry in the day. When should I expect him to be dry at night?

A. We would expect most children to become dry at night by the time they reach 5 years of age. It is a physiological process so cannot be 'taught' and usually occurs within 6 months of the child becoming dry in the day. Any child who is dry in the day and is over the age of 5 years but is still wet at night is said to have a problem with enuresis (bedwetting). Enuresis is a recognised medical condition that can and should be treated.

Further information:

For further information please contact Bladder & Bowel UK's confidential helpline on 0161 607 8219 or email: bbbuk@disabledliving.co.uk

To see the full range of Bladder & Bowel UK information leaflets about children and young people's bladder and bowel issues visit <https://www.bbuk.org.uk/children-young-people/children-resources/>