

Sparkbrook

**Children's  
Zone**



# Toilet Training: A Guide for Parents

Supporting children and families to live happy, healthy lives.



March 2025 V1

# Introduction

## What is Sparkbrook Children's Zone?

**Our Doctors, Nurse and Family Support Team help children and families to lead happy, healthy lives. We offer clinics, advice and outreach activities across Balsall Heath, Sparkbrook and Sparkhill.**

**Children and young people, aged 0 to 16, can get a booked appointment from their GP to see a children's nurse and a doctor, and the whole family is able to receive support from Early Help.**

## Who is this booklet for?

**Teaching your child to toilet train can be hard, this booklet is to help parents, carers, and professionals through the stages.**



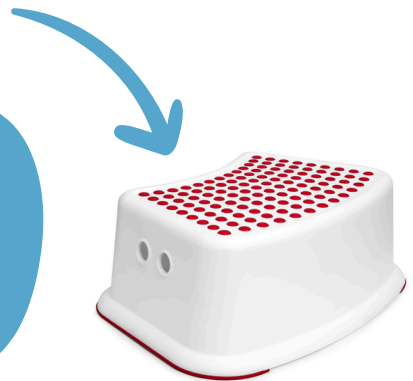
# When to begin toilet training?

Not all children show signs of readiness, especially those with additional needs, but most children will be ready to start potty or toilet training from approximately 18 months.

The longer you leave toilet training, the harder it can be for your child to learn.

Some families find using a potty helpful as your child will find it easier to sit on. Make sure that you are fully supervising your child during potty or toilet training.

Some children, particularly those with additional needs may refuse to sit on a potty, but will sit on the toilet seat with a step.



# First Steps

**1) Set up a regular routine for sitting on the toilet.** Try linking this to waking up, going to sleep, going in and out of the house, before and after meal and snack times, or any other convenient moments during the day to help your child get used to sitting on the toilet.

**2) Children learn quickly by imitating others around them so it may be helpful for them to see you or older siblings using the toilet successfully.**

**3) If you think your child cannot tell when they are wet, dress them in a pair of cotton pants rather than a nappy or pull up.** These are not padded so your child will feel the wetness easier. Remember, be prepared for accidents, and try not to show disappointment when it occurs.

Tip: It can often be easier to train your child to poo successfully in the toilet as they happen less often than wees, and you will probably have an idea of when this is likely to occur.



## Advanced Skills

As your child gains confidence in sitting on a potty, you can begin to teach them some more advanced skills:

- 1) How to communicate their needs to you using words or signs.
- 2) How to pull down, and pull up their own pants.
- 3) Personal hygiene including how to wipe, how to wash and dry hands.

## Summary

**Step 1: Begin potty training around 18 months.**

**Step 2: Establish a routine and praise your child for sitting on the toilet. Expect some accidents but don't make a fuss or punish your child.**

**Step 3: Stay positive and patient and make it fun!**

*If you would like more help or advice then please contact your Health Visitor or Sparkbrook Children's Zone.*



# Check these things before potty training

**Check your child is passing soft poo every day and there is no constipation.** Use the ERIC website for more advice on this: [www.eric.org.uk/childrens-bowels/constipation-in-children/](http://www.eric.org.uk/childrens-bowels/constipation-in-children/)

**Can my child reach the light switch?** Children may be put off by a dark and scary bathroom!

**Do my child's feet touch the floor when sitting on the toilet?** A small step may be useful for this! Boys may also need to stand a bit higher if they are going to stand whilst weeing.

**Would a child's seat be helpful?**

An additional seat placed on top of the existing toilet seat often helps with a child's balance when sitting. One with handles on each side helps them to access the toilet safely (along with a step).

**Does my child have clothes that are easy to get on and off/pull up and down?**

In the early days of toilet training, clothes that are loose fitting, which are easy to pull up and down are much easier especially if your child is desperate. Clothes without lots of buttons, fastenings and zips are most appropriate.



# Helpful Resources

ERIC  
[www.eric.org.uk/](http://www.eric.org.uk/)

NHS How to Potty Train  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/babys-development/potty-training-and-bedwetting/how-to-potty-train/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/babys-development/potty-training-and-bedwetting/how-to-potty-train/)

Toileting for children with additional needs  
[www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/behaviour/toileting/parents](http://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/behaviour/toileting/parents)



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