

## Intensive Toilet Training Protocol

*Adapted from a program developed by  
Gateway Pediatric Therapy  
Bingham Farms, Michigan*

**Materials needed:** timers, cleaning supplies, cloth underpants, diapers or “pull-ups” (training diapers) preferred beverages, foods, books, toys, music and/or videos

**This protocol involves:** Scheduled sits on the toilet, communication training, and positive reinforcement of urination in toilet with enthusiastic praise and high value toys, foods, books, music, and/or videos

- **Drinking Schedule:** Beginning at every 5 minutes and fading to every half hour, offer the child a preferred beverage. This will only happen on the first intensive treatment day.
- **Sitting Schedule:** Time sits on toilet, beginning with every 3 minutes. See training guidelines below.
- **Communication Training:** Say “potty,” and have the child say and/or sign “potty” (prompt as necessary).
- **Positive Reinforcement of Urination in Toilet:** Upon successful urination in the toilet (or successful bowel movement):
  - Provide social praise that is preferred by the child (e.g., enthusiastic verbal praise, hugs, smiles, claps).
  - Provide access to highly preferred toys and/or music.
  - Allow child to get off the toilet and go back to playing or, if at school, working.

### Helpful Tips

1. Have positive reinforcers available at all times.
2. **If the child urinates successfully...**
  - a. Give enthusiastic praise, hugs, and smiles
  - b. Give access to highly preferred toys and food
  - c. Allow child to get off the toilet and return to activities
  - d. Restart time until next sit
3. **If the child has an accident...**
  - Say “We go pee in the potty”
  - Rush the child to the toilet
  - Allow the child to finish urination
  - If he urinates on the toilet, provide positive reinforcement (above)
  - If he does not urinate on the toilet, implement positive practice (see below).
  - Implement Positive Practice Immediately
  - Take the child to where the accident occurred

- Say “we go pee in the potty”
- Rush the child to the toilet, pull down pants, and sit him down
- Quickly get the child up, pull up his pants
- Go back to where accident occurred and repeat the process 2 more times

### **Toilet training guidelines:**

- First time sitting on the potty for the day, put on cloth underpants. At the end of the session, put on pull-up/diaper. Child should be in underwear during all waking hours when not in the car.
- Promote a fun atmosphere with lower levels of demands to encourage compliance with toilet training.
- Increase fluids during toilet training until the child reaches a schedule of at least 30 minutes off the toilet.
- Check for dry/wet pants about every 5 minutes. When reliably dry, increase to 10 minutes, then to 15 minutes. Cue: “Are your pants dry?” (Have child touch his/her own pants).
- Each pants check that is dry, deliver high enthusiastic praise.
- Cue child with: “Let’s go potty.” “Say Potty.” Take child to the bathroom by prompting from behind (use as few prompts as possible).
- While child is sitting on potty, listen carefully. Immediately following successful urination in the toilet, deliver a reinforcer with enthusiastic praise.
- Closely monitor for accidents (wetting pants). Say “No wet pants” and immediately rush to toilet, sit for 3 minutes. If urinates in toilet, immediately deliver a reinforcer with enthusiastic praise.
- Teach independent dressing steps (initially use hand-over-hand guidance, then fade out prompts).
- Increase time after 3 consecutive successful urinations (cannot be separated by accidents, must be 3 successes in a row). Schedule: 10 min, 15 min, 20 min, 30 min, 40 min, 50 min, 1 hour, 1 hour 15 min, 1 hour 30 min, 1 hour 45 min, 2 hours) After 2 hour mark is reached, continue every 2 hours until child self-initiates.
- If more than 2 accidents occur in a row, reduce time to previous set minutes (for example, if accident occurred at the 40 min. mark, reduce time to 30 minutes).