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 return to activities.

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).