

# Toileting Readiness



## IS MY CHILD READY FOR TOILET LEARNING?

Children can physically control their bowel and bladder between 24 and 30 months old. Your toddler needs this skill to be able to use the toilet. But your child must be emotionally ready too. Some children are ready at 24 months, and others are not ready until age 3, or even older.

### Your child is ready to learn to use the toilet when they:

- Stay dry for at least two hours at a time.
- Copy a primary caregiver's toileting behavior.
- Can follow simple instructions.
- Know how to walk, pull their pants up and down, and get on and off the potty with some help.
- Notice when they are going in their diaper (your child might go into another room or under the table).

It's most important that your child show some interest in using the potty. They might show you by telling you they want to use the toilet or wear "big kid" underwear. Or they might say they want to go "like Daddy does."

## WHEN NOT TO START TOILET LEARNING

Some things can get in the way of successful toilet use. For example, when children are going through a big change, it might be best to wait. Common family changes that are generally not good times to start toileting include:

- An upcoming or recent family move.
- Starting a new child care arrangement.
- Switching from a crib to a bed.
- When mom is close to her due date or recently had a new baby.
- A major illness, a recent death, or any other family crisis.



If your child seems ready, ask your HealthySteps Specialist for our [Toilet Learning](#) article and additional support. If your child does not seem ready but you are eager for them to be, discuss this with your HealthySteps Specialist.