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*Listening, learning,
and living together:
it's the science of life.*

Toilet Training While Out with Children¹

Suzanna Smith²

Living with toddlers is no doubt an adventure. As these little humans begin to develop skills that make them more independent, such as speech, mobility, dressing themselves and going to the toilet on their own, they are also developing new challenges for their parents. Working through potty training can be one of the most difficult challenges... but it doesn't have to be. It takes patience and persistence. To help your toddler make the transition from diapers to the toilet, helping them get there when they're not at home is also important.

Work with other caregivers, including your daycare provider or babysitter, to be consistent in your approach to toilet training. When you are out, be especially patient. You will soon learn where the closest restroom is in every grocery store, restaurant, and mall.

It is important to know that for every child there will be accidents. This is just a normal part of toilet training. Punishing or spanking the child for an accident can only make things worse! (Children who are punished for mistakes may end up resisting the toilet altogether.) Instead, stay calm and encourage the child; remind her or him to let you know when he or she has to go. Be sure to praise your child when she or he uses the potty, and tell her

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2. Suzanna Smith, associate professor, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, University of Florida, and Executive Producer, Family Album Radio, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611.

or him that you are proud. Celebrate with your child when you make it through the first "dry" day and congratulate yourself on your patience.

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To listen to the radio broadcast:

http://www.radiosource.net/radio_stories/ttwowc.mp3

http://www.radiosource.net/radio_stories/ttwowc.wav

Resources

For more information about toilet training and other child development topics:

EDIS Cooperative Extension resources:

http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/TOPIC_Babies

The American Academy of Pediatrics:

<http://www.aap.org>

The National Association for the Education of Young Children:

<http://www.naeyc.org>

References

Ferrer, M. (2000). Toilet training (FSC2152). Gainesville: Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Retrieved March 23, 2005, from

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/HE367>

Administration on Children and Families. (2006). Surviving toilet training. Retrieved March 22, 2005, from <http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/supporting/resources/toilettraining.cfm>