

Toileting

The learning of toileting skills will vary widely amongst children.

Most children learn to control their bladder and bowel by 18 months of age. Around this age children will typically show an interest in toilet training. Bowel control usually is attained before bladder control and girls generally attain independence a few months before boys.

Typical development may include:

Age (year)	Skill
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows discomfort when wet or soiled Has regular bowel movements
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flushes the toilet
2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tells someone he or she needs to go to toilet May need reminders to go to the bathroom and help with getting on the toilet Can wash hands
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can climb/sit on toilet independently May need help with wiping and fasteners on clothing
4 – 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent in toileting including tearing toilet paper, flushing, wiping, washing hands, dressing/undressing

Before toilet training your child, you may want to ensure you have the space in your day to commit to this as consistent support and practice are the key!

For a child to master toileting, they need to be aware of their body with regards to feeling the need in their bladder or bowel to 'go' and then feel if it is 'finished'.

Ideas to support your child's toilet training include:

- ✓ allowing boys to use a private stall in the public toilets before progressing to a urinal
- ✓ letting your child know what is expected before, during and after toileting
- ✓ making the bathroom/toilet area a relaxing and inviting place to be – consider use of scents, pictures on walls, a basket of fidget toys, background music or a toileting song
- ✓ making toilet time a consistent part of your routine, e.g. upon waking, after meals, before going out
- ✓ selecting clothing that is easy to manipulate for dressing and undressing
- ✓ supporting their body for the task, e.g. with an over the toilet seat with handles thus reducing the toilet ring size or use of grab rails and a foot stool
- ✓ using a simple visual routine on the wall or providing access to a toileting app, book or social story
- ✓ using consistent words or phrases, e.g. 'I need to go', 'wee time', 'poo time'

With regards to your child's toilet training, an occupational therapist can:

- ✓ Prescribe or recommend any necessary equipment or resources for toileting
- ✓ Support you to better understand any barriers in relation to your child's toileting skills
- ✓ Support you to implement strategies with regards to visual aids, routines, the home environment
- ✓ Support skill development such as the physical skills required for dressing/undressing or sitting on the toilet
- ✓ Support your child's body awareness and body signs

For further information about Fabic Occupational Therapy Services, please visit www.fabic.com.au or contact us on 07 5530 5099.

