

Toilet independence

By the time children begin Prep, they will be independent in many areas of their lives. An important part of this is using the toilet independently, and not needing to wear a nappy or pull-up pants during the daytime.

You can help your child get set for Prep by helping them to master toilet training.

Being toilet trained in the daytime means that your child can:

- control the urge to use the toilet until they reach a nearby toilet
- pull underwear up and down and adjust their outer clothing
- get on and off the toilet without help
- use paper to wipe themselves
- flush the toilet
- wash and dry their hands afterwards.

Getting started

- Start when your child understands what it means to use the toilet like a grown up.
- Teach them the words to use to let you know they need to go. For example, “I need to wee”.
- Help them to relax.
- Use routines like sitting on the toilet after each meal, snack or drink.
- Try using regular underpants or training pants.
- Praise success.
- Be consistent. It is important that your child gets the same message at home, day-care or kindy.

- Encourage your child to feel pride in their achievements.
- Try to be near a toilet early in toilet training to increase chances of success.

Set aside time for toilet training and be patient. Some children are toilet trained quickly; others may take weeks or months to master it.

Go at your child’s pace, all children are different.

Remember that punishment has no place in toilet training.

Even when your child is toilet trained, an occasional accident is normal. Your child’s Prep teacher knows that accidents sometimes happen.

Most Prep teachers will ask you to leave a change of clothes at school or in your child’s bag in case of accidents.



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When to get more help

Sometimes toilet training can be difficult. It may be time to ask for help if your child:

- Is having more than an occasional accident.
- Is about to begin or has started Prep and toilet training has been unsuccessful.
- If you have any concerns about your child's toilet use.

Your child's doctor or local child community health centre or clinic would be an ideal place to ask for help.

If you need help to get your child started on toilet training you could use one of the free services available in our community. Some of these are listed here:

Telephone

Child Health Line

Ph 1800 177 279 (toll free statewide)

or 07 3862 2333 from Brisbane.

Specialist registered child health nurses provide free confidential information and support in all areas of child development including toilet training. 24 hour phone service.

Internet

There are some excellent free services available on the Internet to assist with information on toilet training.

- Queensland Health
- Western Australia Health Department
- South Australian Government parenting website
- Raising Children website

Books

There are a number of books and DVDs for parents and children about toilet training. Ask at your nearest bookshop or at your local library.