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**Notes on Toilet training**

* Staff at Footprints are committed to working with parents to ensure that toilet training is a stress-free operation for both parents and children.
* It is important to wait until the child is showing signs of being ready in order to prevent feelings of frustration on both sides.
* Most children begin to show signs of being ready around the age of two and a half but there is no hard and fast rule, this may happen before or after this age.
* Every child is different therefore it is best not to compare them with others, children need to be physically ready to control their bladder and bowel. Here are some guidelines but remember that your child will let you know when they are ready.
* *By age one, most babies have stopped passing stools at night.*
* *By age two, some children will be dry during the day.*
* *By age three nine out of ten children are mostly dry during the day.*
* *By age four most children are reliably dry during the day*
* Even then, all children have the odd accident, especially when they are excited, upset, absorbed in something else. It usually takes a little longer for children to master being dry at night, but they will let you know when they are ready.
* Signs of being ready for toilet training include:
  + *Knowing when they have a wet or soiled nappy*
  + *Telling you that they are passing urine or a stool.*
  + *Having a dry nappy for more than an hour*
  + *Hiding somewhere and then coming out with a soiled nappy.*
  + *Showing signs of fidgeting or walking in a strange fashion.*
  + *Telling you that they need to pass urine or a stool in advance.*
* It is important to try toilet training when there are no great disruptions in your family routine. It is also important to stay consistent, so it is a good idea to have a few quiet days at home (perhaps over the weekend), in the early days. If you do go out, take the potty with you as it is important to keep the momentum going.
* At Footprints the toilets are child sized so we find that children prefer to use these to a potty but we do have several different types of potty if this is preferable. It is important that they are able to sit on the potty or toilet and get up when they have finished as well as being able to pull their clothes up and down. Dressing them in clothes that are easy for them to do this, avoiding tights, belts and zips or buttons is important.
* We have found that it works better if children are dressed in pants or knickers from the start, pull ups are useful when you are going out, but as a rule the child cannot distinguish between a nappy and a pull up and this tends to hinder the process.
* Please provide plenty of spare clothes during the process of toilet training as accidents are bound to happen.
* If toilet training is not going well and you and your child are becoming frustrated, try not to worry, leave it for another month and try again.
* Please remember to discuss any concerns with your child’s key person who will be happy to help and advise.

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