

 **2015-16 Autism Speaker Series**   
University of Houston Clear Lake CADD  
CENTER FOR AUTISM AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

## “Tips to Successful Toilet Training”

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Please visit their tables during the break and after the lecture!

# Tips to Successful Toilet Training

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## Take Note

Prior to toilet training, your learner should be examined by a medical professional to ensure there are no issues.

## Outline

- Benefits and Toilet Training Readiness
- Common Problems when Toilet Training
- Preparing for Toilet Training
- Trips to the Toilet
- Schedule for Toilet Training
- Data Collection
- Final Tips

## Benefits of Toilet Training

- Increase learner's independence
- Decrease caregivers' stress
- More community inclusion opportunities
- Increase in family's resources
  - Time
  - Money

## Toilet Training Readiness

- Can start as early 18-30 months old
- Sit for 3-5 minutes
- Family needs to be ready



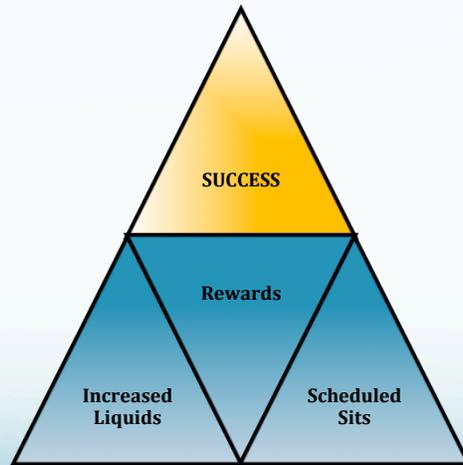
## Time to Start

- Toilet training is intensive
- Start training when your learner has a break from school
  - When they return to school, the schedule will be more practical for school
- While waiting for break in school, you can start teaching bathroom related skills
  - Dressing
  - Washing hands
  - Tolerating the bathroom

## Common Problems

- Lack of language
- Fear/dislike of restroom
- Difficulties using different restrooms

## Building Blocks of A Successful Program



Starting off Right:  
Be Prepared!

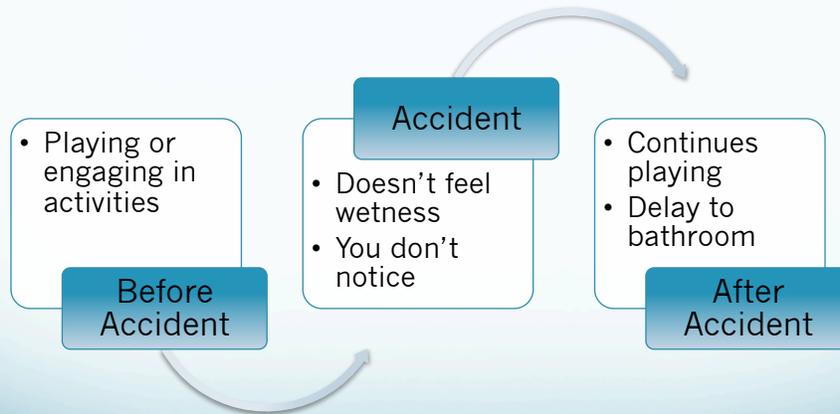
## Getting Everyone On Board

- Consistency is key!
- Teachers and parents both need to be prepared
- Meet to discuss plan
- Assign a leader
- Create a communication log
  - Information about progress
  - Data collection
  - Current schedule

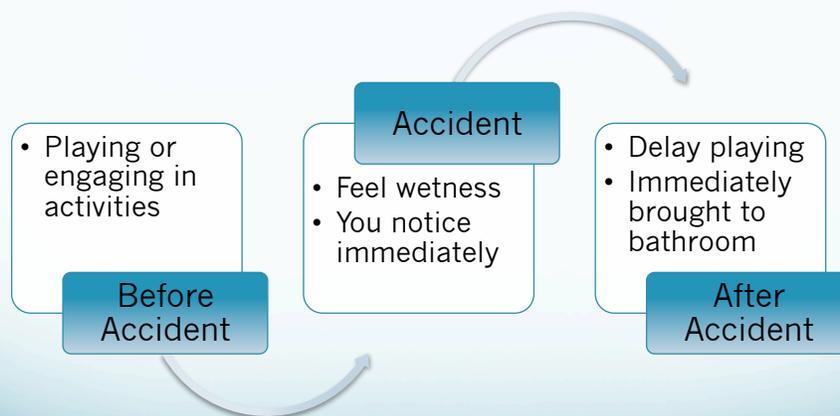
## Pull-Ups vs. Underwear



## Accidents in Pull-Ups



## Accidents in Underwear



## Sitting Comfortably

- Potty chairs can provide learners with a comfortable sitting
  - However, you will have to transition your learner to normal toilets
- Instead, use a seat that can be added to toilet and a step stool

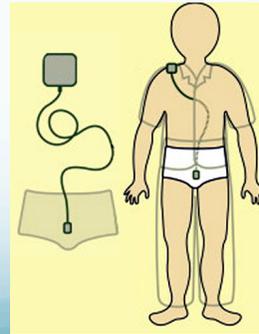


## Sit Down or Stand up?

- Always start toilet training boys sitting down
  - Sit longer than stand
  - Opportunity to have a bowel movement
  - Overall, easier process to teach sitting down

## Urine Alarm

- Sensor secured in underwear
- Discreetly worn
- Signal when accident is occurring
  - Allows you to quickly bring learner to bathroom
- May startle learner causing them to stop urinating



## Limit Clothing

- An alternative to urine alarm is limiting clothing
- Dress your learner in just underwear and small shirt
- Allows you to detect accidents quickly
- Decrease effort to undress/dress
- May also limit messes

**TIP:** Choose lighter colors for your learners so that you can easily detect accidents

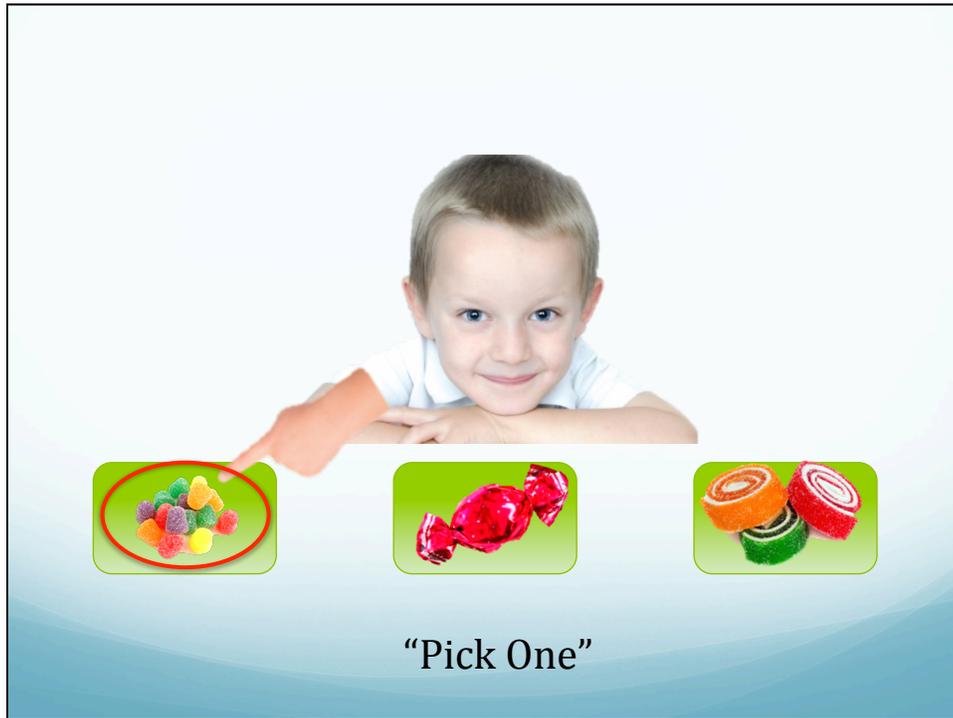
## Select a Communication Response

- Choose form of communication that fits learner's current skills
  - Examples:
    - "Bathroom," "toilet," or "potty"
    - Bathroom card, iPad or other communicative device
      - Always have the card in eyesight
    - Sign "bathroom"
- Be consistent with words!



## Select Rewards

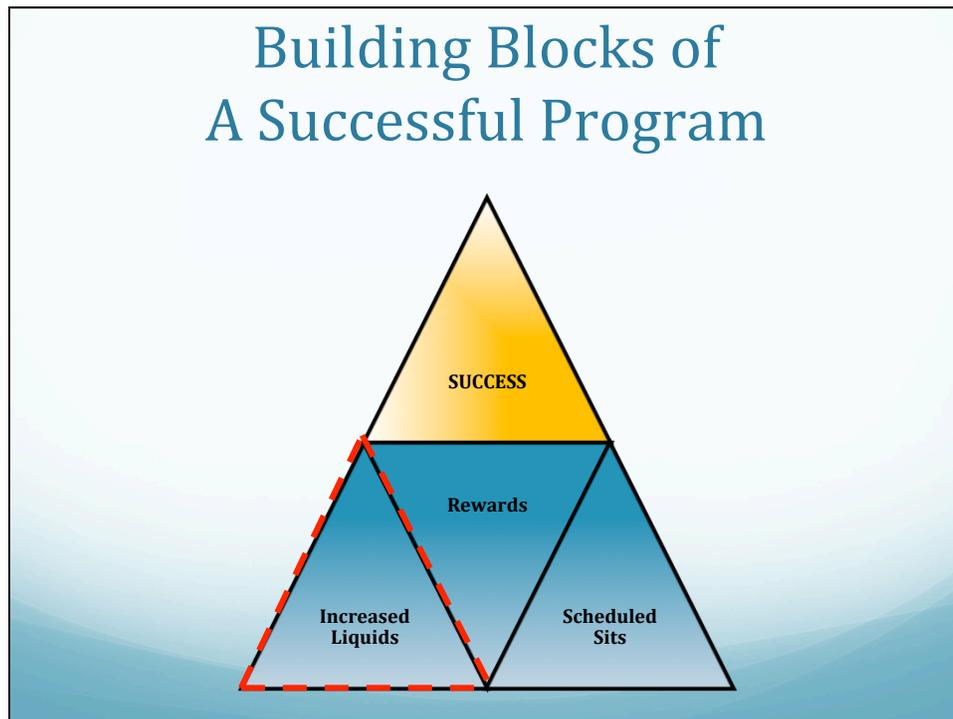
- Rewards are an **essential** part of toilet training!
- Select 3-4 of your learner's favorite edibles or items
  - These items should **only** be used during toilet training



## Final steps to be prepared

- Have copies of plan, data collection sheets, and rewards in all frequented bathrooms
- Have fun things for your learner on toilet
  - Songs
  - Books
- Have plenty of extra clothes
- Provide free access to liquids all day

## Building Blocks of A Successful Program



## Increase Liquids

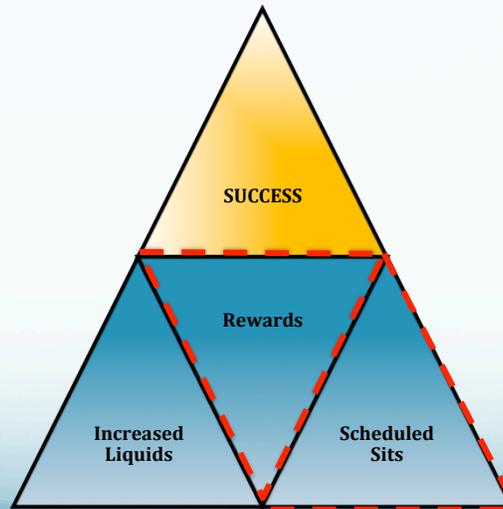
- Increases frequency of urination
  - More opportunities to teach!
- Provide free access to preferred drinks
- Vary drinks
- Provide favorite drinks after urination

## Increasing Hydration

- If your learner doesn't frequently drink
  - Give them foods with water
    - Watermelon
    - Grapes
    - Popsicles
- Things to consider
  - Milk and sugary drinks may cause constipation
    - Avoid milk
    - Cut sugary drinks with water

## Trips to the Toilet

## Building Blocks of A Successful Program



## Transitioning to the Toilet



**Help them to request**

- Have them say or sign "bathroom"
- Have them use the bathroom card or iPad



**Walk them to the restroom**



**Help them undress**

- Only provide the help they need

## On the Toilet



Help them sit on the toilet



Set timer



Have fun!

- Sing songs
- Read books

## If Elimination Occurs...



Wait for your learner to finish urinating



Provide **enthusiastic** praise



Provide reward **immediately**



Assist off toilet and help dress

## If No Elimination....



Assist off toilet and help dress



**Do not** provide reward

## Finishing Bathroom Routine



Set timer for next sit



Provide only assistance needed to dress



Help wash hands

## Dry Checks

- Check if your learner is dry every 5 minutes
- Provide praise for remaining dry
  - “You’re still dry! Awesome job staying dry!”
- If wet, immediately bring to restroom

## Handling Accidents

## Handling Accidents

Immediately walk to restroom

Say, "We pee in the *bathroom.*"

Help them undress and sit on toilet for 1 minute or until urination

**Limit Attention:** Avoid smiling, lecturing, or reprimanding during this time

## Urination Following Accidents



Provide Praise



**Do not**  
provide reward

## Finishing Bathroom Routine



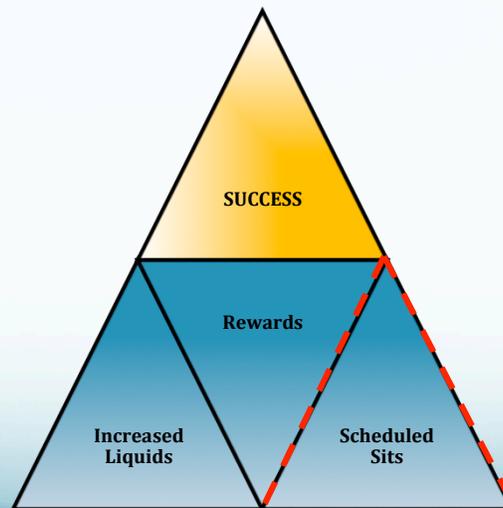
Help learner complete bathroom routine



Have your learner clean any mess made during the accident

- Put soiled clothes in dirty hamper and wipe floor

## Building Blocks of A Successful Program



# Toileting Schedule

Time on and off the Toilet

## Scheduled Sits

### Fixed Schedule Sits

- Less intensive schedule
- More practical for school
- Can be used if
  - First time toilet training
  - Learner stays dry for at least 30 minutes

### Intensive Schedule

- Successful method for learners that previous attempts failed
- Intensive schedule that is quickly decreased
- Designed to be started at home
  - Start over a break from school

For both methods, steps on and off toilet and handling accidents are the same

## Fixed Scheduled Sits

Sit on toilet every 30 minutes

Sit for 5 minutes or until urination occurs

Set timer for 30 minutes

## Increasing Time between Sits

- After 3 consecutive days without accidents, increase time off the toilet by 15 minutes

30  
min

45  
min

60  
min

## Scheduled Sits

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## Increasing Time off the Toilet

Level	Time On Toilet/ Time Off Toilet
1	10 min on/5 min off
2	10 min on/10 min off
3	5 min on/15 min off
4	5 min on/25 min off
5	5 min on/35 min off
6	5 min on/45 min off

- Stay on each Level for 1 hour
- If no accidents occur during the hour,
  - Move to the next Level
- If an accident occurs during the hour,
  - Stay on the current Level for an hour

## Increasing Time off the Toilet

Level	Time On Toilet/ Time Off Toilet
7	5 min on/1 hour off
8	5 min on/1.5 hour off
9	5 min on/2 hours off
10	5 min on/2.5 hours off

- Stay on each Level for 4-6 hours
- If no accidents occur during the 4-6 hours,
  - Move to the next Level
- If an accident occurs during the 4-6 hours,
  - Stay on the current Level for an additional 4-6 hours

## Increasing Time off the Toilet

Level	Time On Toilet/ Time Off Toilet
11	5 min on/3 hours off
12	5 min on/4 hours off

- Stay on each Level for 2 days
- If no accidents occur during the 2 days,
  - Move to the next Level
- If an accident occurs during the 2 days,
  - Stay on the current Level for an additional 2 days

## Remember...

- Bring your learner to the restroom following every request or show they may need to go!

## Bowel Movements

## Bowel Movements

- Sometimes, bowel movements will successfully be trained during toilet training
- However, it may be more difficult
  - Bowel movements don't happen as frequently as urination
- You may need a specific plan for bowel movements!

## Tips for Successful Bowel Movements

- Record the times of day that your learner has a bowel movement
- Pay close attention to the movements and faces seen before bowel movements
- Have a specific reward that is only used during bowel movement training

**IMPORTANT:** **Never** use laxatives without guidance from medical professional

## Bowel Movement Training

Transition to the toilet about 20 minutes before they usually eliminate

Say, "Okay, go poo."

Sit for 10 minutes

## If Bowel Movement Occurs...

- Give learner favorite reward and enthusiastic praise
  - Bowel movements don't happen frequently, make the reward for bowel movements memorable!
- After, help learner complete bathroom routine

## If Bowel Movement Doesn't Occur...

Help learner off toilet

Help learner complete bathroom routine

Return to restroom in 10 minutes

Continue to watch for facial expressions

## Increasing Initiations

## Promoting Spontaneous Requests

- Start when your learner is steadily using the restroom
- Slowly increase the learner's distance from the bathroom when you deliver the prompt to request the restroom
- Wait to see if your learner will request the restroom when he/she shows signs that he/she needs to go
  - Ask, "What do you need?"
- Provide reward for requesting the restroom
  - Should be different than reward for using the bathroom

## Promoting Self-Initiations

- Ultimate goal for home settings
- When it is time for your learner's scheduled sit, have the learner sit in a chair in the bathroom.
  - If they move to the toilet, provide praise and a reward for moving to the toilet
  - If they have an accident on the chair, immediately help them to sit on the toilet
- When your learner is steadily moving from the chair to the toilet without your assistance, slowly increase the distance between the chair and the toilet

## Data Collection

## Data Collection

- **Very** important!
- This can inform if
  - Training is effective
  - You should increase or decrease time off toilet

## Data Collection Sheet

Date	Current Schedule	Time	Ind. Request	Elimination On Toilet	Accident	Initials
4/15	5 on/15 off	9:00	Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	U <input type="radio"/> BM <input checked="" type="radio"/> NA <input type="radio"/>	U <input type="radio"/> BM <input checked="" type="radio"/> NA <input type="radio"/>	DD
4/15	5 on/15 off	9:20	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	U <input type="radio"/> BM <input type="radio"/> NA <input type="radio"/>	U <input type="radio"/> BM <input checked="" type="radio"/> NA <input type="radio"/>	CD
4/15	5 on/15 off	9:50	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>	U <input checked="" type="radio"/> BM <input type="radio"/> NA <input type="radio"/>	U <input checked="" type="radio"/> BM <input type="radio"/> NA <input type="radio"/>	CR

## Learning to Tolerate the Restroom

## Dislike of Bathroom

- Some learners may cry or engage in problem behaviors when they are instructed to sit on the toilet
- Before starting toilet training, teach your learner to tolerate the restroom

## Learning to Tolerate the Bathroom

- First, determine how long your learner will stay without problem behavior
  - How long will they stay in the bathroom?
  - Will they sit on the toilet?
  - How long will they sit?
- This will be your starting goal

## Learning to Tolerate the Bathroom

Bring your learner's favorite toys and activities in the bathroom

Set timer for current goal

They can continue play as long as they have appropriate behaviors

Give favorite edible once they reach the current goal without problem behavior

Allow learner to leave restroom

## If Problem Behavior Occurs...

Take your learner out of the bathroom (leave the fun activities in bathroom)

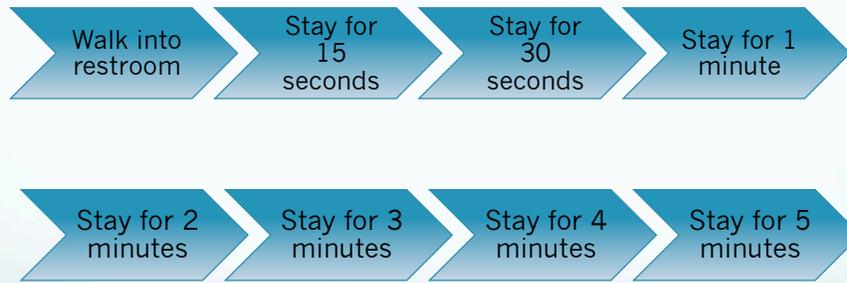
Stay near restroom, avoid providing attention or other fun activities

Once calm, bring learner back into restroom and allow them to play with fun activities

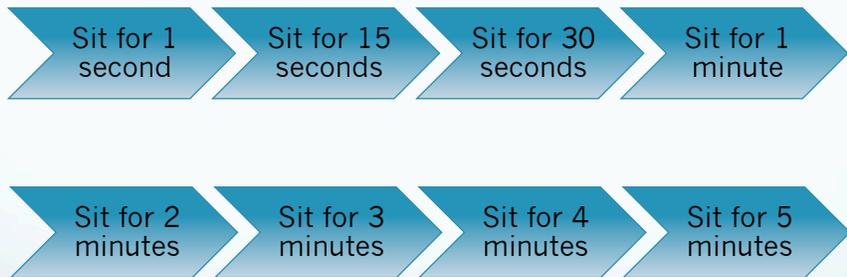
Reset timer and give favorite edible once they reach the current goal without problem behavior

Allow learner to leave restroom

## Setting Goals for Tolerating the Bathroom



## Setting Goals for Sitting on the Toilet



## Learning to Tolerate the Bathroom

- If problem behavior in bathroom persist or worsens, contact a Board Certified Behavior Analyst

## Using Different Restrooms

## Practice Using Different Restrooms

- Start by practicing in different restrooms at home/school
- Look for opportunities to practice in new restrooms
  - Always have rewards with you
- Use same phrases in new locations
- If your learner uses a toilet seat, you may need to help them stay on the toilet

## Final Tips for Increasing Success

## Nighttime Training

- Start nighttime training when your learner remains dry throughout the day
- Limit liquids 1-2 hours prior to bed
- Have learner use restroom immediately before bed
- Use urine alarm or urine alarm pad
- Wake learner to use restroom

## Tools to Help

- “Potty Watch”
- Wet Stop



## Teaching Boys to Stand Up

- Start when your learner has had successful urinations and is urinating within 1 minute of sitting on the toilet
- Use targets to help with aim
- Guide arms to help with aim



## Last Tips

- BE CONSISTENT
- Don't ask, tell your learner
- Use the same phrases and words in the restroom
- Use simple phrases

## Resources

- The Bed Wetting Store
  - <http://bedwettingstore.com>
- *Toilet Training in Less than a Day* by Nathan H. Azrin & Richard M. Foxx
- Toilet Training Manual
  - [https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/toilet\\_training\\_manual.pdf](https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/toilet_training_manual.pdf)