

## Me and the Potty

I get in a lot of trouble when I wet or soil my pants. Sometimes people yell at me or punish me, and this makes me feel bad.

I'm just a little kid! I'm not used to managing all this stuff inside me. I get distracted. And sometimes I just forget.

### What I Want You to Know

Most of the time I don't even notice that I need to go to the potty until it's too late. Besides, I can't control my bowel and bladder muscles yet. And then I get involved in playing and forget all about stuff like that.

Please be patient with me. It will take me a while to learn. Somewhere around two to three years of age is when most kids start learning to use the potty. And I will probably have accidents at least until I'm in kindergarten.



## Here's How You Can Help Me

When I'm about 2 or 2½ years old I might have the muscle control and the interest I need to start learning to use the potty. Rather than push me, maybe you could notice when I show an interest. *Encourage my interest.*

Sometimes, grown-ups are too busy to stop what they are doing to take me to the potty. Then I'm the one who gets in trouble. Try to *notice my need.*

If you get mad at me, yell at me, try to force me to use the potty, or leave me in a soiled diaper, I will probably learn to hate potty training. I may never learn to use that stinkin' thing!

The thing that matters more to me than anything else is feeling safe with you and loved by you. If you *help me feel safe and loved*, I will probably want to figure out this potty thing. Maybe you

can read me stories while I sit on the potty. It may help if I am around kids who already know how to use it. I know it helps when you stay calm. I like it when you make an adventure out of it.

When I slip up, *be patient.* We all have accidents!

You can help me by teaching me to notice when I need to go. Maybe you can dress me in clothes I can easily pull off. Regular underpants may be better for me than pull-ups so I can feel when I have had an accident. Don't forget to *pack lots of extra clothing* when we leave the house.

Most kids will be pretty good at using the potty by the time they are 3 or 3 ½. I will learn. We'll get through this. Thank you for being patient as I learn.

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture and County Governments Cooperating

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