

Toileting

One of the best ways to help the student build independence and confidence in the bathroom is through explicit practice and encouragement.

Remember, even though the student may have some difficulty with the task at the start, it is not about getting the perfect result each time! Instead, focus on encouraging and reinforcing their efforts! The more confident the student feels about a task, the more likely they will be to take greater risks and be more independent.

What are signs of toileting readiness for the student? The student should show several of the following:

- Interest in the bathroom or in the toileting process (pretending to use toilet paper, flushing the toilet, etc.)
- Wanting to observe others using the bathroom
- Periods of dryness of 2 hours or more
- Bowel movements have become regular and predictable
- Indicates diaper is dirty, asks to wear underwear or asks to use the toilet
- Discomfort/upset when diaper is dirty
- Healthy bowels (no diarrhea or constipation)
- No big stresses or life changes (a move, new sibling, etc.)
- Ability to sit for 3-5 minutes when placed on the toilet
- Ability to follow basic instructions

Supporting Toileting At School

Visual and Verbal Cueing: Visual and verbal cues are great tools that can be used to teach/reinforce toileting skills. We suggest printing out a copy of visual cues for toileting (in either standing or sitting) and placing them in the bathroom at a height where the student can see. This way, every time the student goes to the bathroom, they will be reminded of the toileting routine and will start to store these steps away in their memory! Once the student is showing greater independence with these skills, try reducing verbal cues and transition to only visual cues.



Sing-a-long: Songs are another great way to reinforce toileting skills. Encourage the student to sing songs like the Alphabet Song or Happy Birthday while they wash their hands - these are two great songs that will help ensure thorough washing of their hands for good hand hygiene.

Role-playing: Practice the steps of toileting using toys/stuffed animals!

Social Stories, Books and Videos: Find books from the local library or videos on you-tube that talk about using the bathroom. Social stories can be custom-made for your student can be found online.

Special Considerations:

- Clothing Modifications: pant loops, elastic waist pants, loose clothing, zipper pull or ring Seating Modifications: sitting backwards on the toilet, a potty chair, a ring reducer, foot rest, hand rails or a toileting system (consult the occupational therapist)
- Wiping Modifications: use wet wipes, extended reach wiping tool, bidet seat
- Sensory Modifications: headphones, dimmed lights, air freshener, defer flushing the toilet until the child is out of the room, comfortable toilet seat
- Behaviour Modifications: reward/sticker chart, potty toy or book, a visual schedule, make it fun, use positive talk about toileting

From: Kindergarten Readiness [Kindergarten Readiness \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com), John McGiveny Children's Centre