Practice until you get it right:

This really isn't a specific method - more generally introducing potty training. Holding regular practice session where you ask the child to sit and pee. Rewarding the child for whatever they do. While continually charting progress and gradually transitioning from diapers to "big kid" underwear.

Pros:

This easily fits into today's busy schedule

With some planning you can make practice sessions into a routine

Is done gradually over time

Very limited accidents because you keep the child in diapers

Cons:

Takes a lot of time, depending on the child's maturity level and temperament.

May not learn to initiate going potty themselves

Keeping curious toddler interested while sitting for long periods of time.

You can take some steps now that will help your child when, at some time in the future, you begin toilet training.

Let your child watch you. Your child can learn a lot about how to use the toilet correctly by watching a parent. Frequently let your child come with you when you go to the bathroom. Use simple words to explain what you are doing (for example, "Mommy is going peepee in the potty.").

Teach your child to raise and lower his or her pants. You can do this gradually when you are dressing or undressing your child. With your daughter, for example, you can first pull down her pants with little or no help from her. Then, do less pulling and let her do more. This process may take many weeks, but it is worthwhile. Later, when you begin toilet training, you will be glad that your child already knows how to pull down his or her pants and that you don’t have to tackle that learning task in addition to toilet training.

Help your child learn to follow your instructions. Make sure you have your child's attention when you give an instruction. Immediately praise your child if he or she does what you ask. If your child does not follow your instruction right away, gently guide him or her through what should be done, and do not give another instruction until the first one has been followed. If your child starts to cry, ignore the crying. When your child has calmed down, repeat your instruction. If you often have trouble getting your child to follow your instructions, ask your health care provider for guidelines on managing your child's behavior, or search the Boys Town Web site parenting.org for valuable help.

Set out a potty chair. A few weeks, or even months, before you think you will start toilet training, make a potty chair available to your child so that he or she can get used to it. Put it in the bathroom or in another room so your child has a chance to investigate it. Let your child get used to sitting on it, with clothes on. Encourage your son to sit on the potty (instead of standing in front of it) so that he will be used to sitting when you start toilet training. (Later on, when he is well past being toilet trained, he can stand.)

Praise your child. Every time your child does something the right way, be sure to let him or her know. Praise your child with words that are brief and to the point, such as "You did a good job pulling down your pants." Or, give your child a smile, a hug, or a kiss. This attention is how you teach your child what

behavior pleases you.

A “Laid-Back” Approach to Early Potty Training

JULY 24, 2011 BY SCARLET 7 COMMENTS

If you have a little one in diapers, whether they are 3 weeks or 3 years old, potty training is in your future. You may be wondering how to potty train and you may be interested in early potty training. There are just about as many approaches to potty training as there are children. Every child is different and will respond differently to the myriad of approaches. I think it is a good idea for parents to read up on different strategies, talk with your friends about what they did, and then process that information with your unique child in mind, and develop a plan that works for you.

For me, I knew that it wasn’t critical for Darah to be potty trained in a matter of hours or days (as some approaches take), but I DID know that I wanted her to be trained as early as possible. So I took bits and pieces from different strategies I had seen and read about and developed our own “laid-back” early potty training style.

Darah was potty trained in two days. Or, Darah was potty trained in 7 months. It really all just depends on how you look at it. The keys to our success involved an infant potty chair, sign language and a lot of time.

We got started when she was 13 months old. We just moved across the state, and I was no longer working full-time. I want to emphasize that I was home with her and therefore had the time to begin potty training. I would not have been able to do this if I worked outside the home. This just happened to work for my family at the time. I wouldn’t have even attempted it this early if I had still been working.

I bought an infant potty seat from Baby Bjorn (I have no relationship with this company; this is just the product I chose). For the first week, I just kept it in her bathroom. She discovered it and played with it a little bit, and I intentionally didn’t make a big deal out of it. I was very easy-breezy as I explained that it was her potty. In my opinion, that’s part of how it became a fixture in the bathroom, and something that wasn’t stressful. Additionally, during this time we started actively teaching her sign language for potty. When we would change her diaper, we also started signing potty and telling her that she went potty in her diaper.

After a week of her getting used to it being around, we started putting her on the potty first thing in the morning and also right before bed. We would make a noise to imitate going potty (I hope that makes sense!) and talk about how she goes potty in her diaper, but how she can also go potty in the bathroom.

On the second day, she went potty, and we went absolutely NUTS over it. We cheered and praised VERY heavily, and showed Darah her impressive work. She signed “potty” for the first time after her “christening” of the potty chair. She understood what she had done! Over the next few weeks, she started regularly using the potty in the morning, although the nighttime potty usage was less common.

A few weeks (maybe 3?) after we started the morning potty sessions, we started going to the potty again about 10 minutes after every meal. We timed the potty trips for the most success, which was ideal. Even though she may not have been holding it, the fact that she was actually using the potty once she got there and then getting praise for it was very encouraging to her and I think contributed to her trying to figure out how to really try to go potty.

It was just a week or so later that the unexpected awesome thing happened….she started to go poop in the potty. Joy of joys! The first poop caught us by surprise, but once we saw that she could do it, we incorporated “poop time” into the potty regimen. As you can imagine, by this point, we were spending a great deal of time in the bathroom going potty. But Darah never dallied too much on the potty, and really only took a long time when she needed to poop.

As the weeks passed, Darah started to really try to tell us when she needed to go. She was excellent at telling us when she had just gone (so close!) and she did start to tell us before she went, too. That was a huge step in the right direction. Once we noticed her going to hide when she needed to pee or poop, we knew that she was developmentally ready to finish what we had been working on for months.

We set aside a few days for official potty training. I gave her plenty of water and juice and set the timer for 20 minute increments on day one. She wore big girl underwear. We talked A LOT about the potty that day. Darah was very cooperative, and I think that’s because going to the potty wasn’t that big of a deal to her. She did have 2 accidents that day, both of which she promptly told me about.

On day 2, we set the timer for 30 minutes and she had a perfect track record. She actually started asking to use the big potty that day, so we got her a potty seat (this is the one we purchased, and again, I have no relationship with this company).

After we got her totally potty trained during the day, we decided to tackle night-time potty training. We had no desire to move Darah from a crib to a bed. Even if we had wanted to, she was (and still is) too young to take herself to the bathroom. Our main obstacle was that Darah still had a bottle of milk right before bed. We cut it out by reducing the amount of milk she got over the course of 4 days. Days 3 and 4 were tough, but she accepted no longer having a bottle with less drama than we were expecting.

And guess what? Without those 6 ounces of milk right before bed, she can go 10 hours without needing to go potty! We never bought a single package of Pull-Ups and stopped using our cloth diapers cold turkey. She does sometimes wake up in the middle of the night asking to go potty, and while that does stink, dirty diapers stink even more, so it’s a trade-off that works for us.

So that’s how we got our daughter completely potty trained by 20 months. It was really fast, but also took forever. But one thing it never was to any of us, most importantly Darah, was stressful.

Guest post by Tiffany who is a mom to 2 year old firework named Darah and blogs at Stuff Parents Need about products and services that make life a little less hectic and a lot more fun for parents of young children.She gives away cool stuff almost every day, so goon over and try your luck at winning something fabulous!