

REINFORCING TOILETING 101

1 INITIAL REINFORCER TO START

You want to first motivate your child to want to initiate a scheduled toilet sit. To do this, you want to pair sitting on the toilet with a preferred activity. Every time your child sits on the potty, they get that preferred activity/item (e.g., iPad, favorite toy). This will help your child for the association that every time they sit on the potty, they get that item/activity and will then increase their motivation to self-initiate toilet sits. Make sure your child ONLY gets this items when they are sitting on the potty, otherwise, it will not be an effective reinforcer. Use the "Potty Time Activities" worksheet to help your child identify their preferred potty time items.

2 IMMEDIATE REINFORCER WHEN COMPLETE

You then want to motivate your child to sit for the full 5 minute toilet sit. To do this, you want to provide an immediate positive reinforcer right after they finish sitting for 5 minutes. This may be a sticker, an m&m candy, or a fun dance video on the TV. Make sure this is something you are able to give your child frequently. Providing this reinforcer right after your child completes a 5 minute sits motivates your child to complete their scheduled potty sits. Also, for young children, immediate reinforcement is often more effective than reinforcement that occurs later since children can have limited concept of time.

3 DELAYED REINFORCER

Finally, you want to provide a delayed reinforcer to motivate your child to engage in toilet sits regularly. A delayed reinforcer is something your child earns after successfully completing a set amount of toilet sits. For example, once your child completes 4 5-minute toilet sits, they get a playdate at the park. When starting toilet training, your child should be able to earn this reward within 2 to 3 days. Anything more than that will likely not be motivating for your child. As they improve and become more comfortable with toilet sits, you can increase the demands. Use the "Poop Chart" to identify effective reinforcers and track your child's success.