



{inclusion outreach}

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Toilet Training for Everyone

Toilet training is often a goal for teams and families. It may result in greater access to community programs, events and locations, as they are not restricted by access to a change table and/or lift. Thereby increasing the social opportunities, quality of life and community inclusion.

Some concepts to keep in mind:

- **There are no prerequisite skills required**; there is no research supporting that specific skills are needed before starting toilet training. Toilet-training can be successful for a wide range of students, although a lot of time and commitment from the teaching team, family, or caregivers is often necessary.
- However, it is **possible to be toilet trained in one environment only**, if toilet training is not possible or a priority for instance at home or in the community.
- Determine a successful toilet training method at school, then teach family/caregivers at home; or vice versa.
- When teaching toilet training in a second environment, consistent methods are recommended in each setting, such as school and both parents' homes.

An occupational therapist can help develop an individualized toilet training protocol for your student. However, the presentation [“Toilet Training for Everyone”](#) (Feb 2021) for ACT (Autism Community Training) by Pat Mirdena and Katie Rinald provides in-depth training information (*Tip: Scroll down to Step 14 and 15 for “Urination Trip Training”, Part 17 for “Bowel Movement Trip Training”)

Trip Training

- Involves successful urinating/bowel movement when taken to the toilet at **regular intervals** in the training setting
- Requires flexibility in school schedule to access toilet consistently at regular intervals, once established.
- Requires 5-7 days of data tracking (i.e. wet/dry) every 30 minutes of waking hours to determine student's regular toileting intervals
- Goal is to stay dry in between trips, in the training setting

Respect

Competence

Inclusion

Presence

Choice



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- Student not required to ask to go to the toilet, nor stay dry in other settings
 - Don't ask – tell “it's time to go the bathroom”
 - Continue to use students' individualized strategies, such as visual supports, model language using student's AAC, sign, etc.
 - Continue to provide assistance with student's permission for transfers, managing clothing, wiping, flushing, washing hands, etc.
 - Once student is “trip trained”, can teach student to **self-initiate** (see Part 16 in presentation) by requesting
 - Self-initiating can also look like: grabbing themselves, wiggling, using speech modelled “pee”, sign language, AAC or picture symbol provided, taking your hand and leading you to bathroom, moving to classroom or bathroom door and looking distressed, etc.
 - If no self-initiating signals, extend the toileting interval very gradually by 5-10-15 minutes and look for the slightest signal
 - Be prepared: more time and planning may be needed for complex students to access the toilet, such as 2 people available to assist with transfer
 - Note: Some students may self-initiate and not go through the Trip Training process, and need support to successfully access the toilet with support, and therefore a flexible school schedule is required, as to not ignore bathroom requests