Toilet Training from a Sensory Perspective

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Welcome to the Webinar!
• We will begin promptly at the scheduled time.
• Your speakers are currently muted to prevent overhearing background noises and to ensure an optimal audio experience.
• Please use the “Chat” feature in your control panel at any time to communicate with me.

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The Benefits of Toilet Training

- Increased social acceptance
- Increased educational opportunities and job placement possibilities
- Decreased parent and caregiver stress
- Decreased costs (diapers)
- Decreased risk of physical and sexual abuse
- Decreased hygiene-related physical discomfort and/or infections

Contributing Factors to Success (or Lack of Success) in Toilet Training

- IQ
- Behavior
- Fear
- Physical Development
- Physical Disability
- Sensory Modulation

Sensory Modulation and It's Impact on Toilet Training

- Over-responsiveness to certain forms of sensory input can lead to avoidance of anything that elicits such a response. Example: Tactile over-responsiveness can make the movement of clothing during toileting very uncomfortable.

- Under-responsiveness to certain forms of sensory input can lead to lack of awareness of the need to toilet and/or the desire to seek more stimulation than what is provided during the toileting process.
Assess Sensory Modulation

- Assessment Options
  - Sensory Profile
  - Sensory Processing Measure
  - Sensory Symptoms Checklist

Common Sensory Issues Affecting Toileting

- Tactile Over-Responsiveness
  - Clothing moving up/down, cold toilet seat, handwashing
  - What helps?
    - Deep pressure activities
    - Sensory distractions
    - Toilet seat alternatives

- Auditory Over-Responsiveness
  - Toilet flushing, water running, echo potential in tiled rooms
  - What helps?
    - Potty-training videos that include common sounds
    - Play time in the bathroom during non-toileting times
    - Allowing child to leave the bathroom before flushing
    - Calming music or white noise in the bathroom
    - Calming sensory activities in general prior to toilet time

Common Sensory Issues Affecting Toileting

- Interoceptive Under-Responsiveness
  - Lack of awareness of need to “go,” not bothered by wetness in pants
  - What helps?
    - Alerting vestibular activities prior to toilet time
    - Long t-shirt method
    - Incentives to keep underwear dry

- Sensory-Seeking Characteristics
  - Enjoys being wet/soiled, likes movement too much to sit still on toilet, likes high-intensity activity and doesn’t want to stop to “go”
  - What helps?
    - High-intensity activities prior to toilet time with high-intensity activities to look forward to after toilet time
    - Incentives
    - Consequences
Toileting Readiness

- For typically developing kids:
  - Awareness of being wet/poopy
  - Has dry period for at least two hours
  - Ability to pull pants up/down
  - Ability to get up and down from toilet
  - Ability to sit comfortably on toilet
  - Has words for urine and stool
  - Shows interest in others going to the bathroom
  - Responds to praise and/or rewards
  - Is in a generally cooperative stage

Toileting Readiness

- Recommended “minimum requirements” for toilet-training in kids with autism and/or sensory processing disorder:
  - Some indication of awareness of being wet/poopy
  - Physical ability to sit upright on the toilet with adaptations as needed
  - Shows some interest in others going to the bathroom
  - Allows direction

“Schedule Training” Approach

- Autism Treatment Network states it takes an average of 1.6 years for bladder training for children with ASD and over 2 years for bowel training.
“Schedule Training” Basics

• Visual Schedules
  ◦ Identify appropriate times for toileting and build those into the main visual schedule.

“Schedule Training” Basics

• Visual Schedules
  ◦ Develop a visual schedule for the bathroom itself (i.e., pants down, sit down, try to “potty,” stand up, pants up, wash hands, reinforcer).

“Schedule Training” Basics (cont.)

• Visual Schedules (cont.)
  ◦ Caregiver guides process and provides minimum amount of physical assistance to complete the steps on the schedule.
“Schedule Training” Basics

- Reinforcers
  - Routine Reinforcer: The last step on the bathroom visual schedule should be a choice-based activity or reinforcer that can happen in the bathroom. Examples: edible, sticker, high five, bubble blowing. This reinforcer is not tied to success in toileting but rather simply represents completion of the routine.

- Success Reinforcer: A highly motivating reinforcer should be in place for successful elimination in the toilet or potty seat (e.g., candy, small toys, TV time). With repeated success, you can move toward a token economy.
Token Economy

“Schedule Training” Basics

- Aim for six toilet trips per day.
- Stick to the routine. Settle in for the long-haul. Encourage parents to be satisfied with making toileting a part of the routine and not to expect immediate success.
- Determine the words to use (potty, poo-poo, etc.) and encourage all caregivers to use the same language.
- Encourage fluids.
- Dress child in easy-to-manage clothing.

Free Printable Resource on Schedule Training

Rapid Training Approach
- Developed by Azrin and Foxx in 1971
  - Nine adults with a mean age of 43
  - Median IQ of 14
  - Average of 4 days of intensive training
- Full article: https://goo.gl/qbxzvf

Rapid Training Approach
- Common practices today include:
  - Full-time toilet training (typically takes 1-4 days for people with IQ greater than 20 and younger than 21 years of age).
  - Reinforcers for "dry pants" given every 3-5 minutes initially.
  - Prompted potty trials every 15 minutes initially.
  - Reinforcers given for success.
  - Accidents result in cleaning up the mess and "positive practice" of the correct steps in toileting.
- Good summary from Potty Training Concepts: https://goo.gl/aPPIj

Rapid Training Approach
- Modified Version
  - Long shirt, no underwear/pants
  - Designated area for toilet training
  - Have fun between potty trials
  - Prompted potty trials every 15 minutes initially
Pros and Cons to Both Approaches

- Schedule Training
  - Pros
    - Low pressure/low stress
    - Builds on preference for routines and rituals
    - Does not require uninterrupted training time (no days off work for parents, etc.)
  - Con
    - Takes much longer

- Rapid Training
  - Pros
    - Fast
    - High success rate
  - Cons
    - Requires caregiver to be able to devote uninterrupted time to training (could be days)
    - Can be stressful if behavior or fears are a factor

Sensory Tips

- **Schedule Training**: Build in a sensory break to the main visual schedule right before toileting. Address the issues impacting toileting with appropriate choice-based activities. Example: Jake is over-responsive to tactile and auditory input. His sensory break prior to toileting should include red (calming) and yellow (just-right/organizing) arrow activities.

- **Rapid Training**: Integrate appropriate choice-based sensory activities into the time between toileting trials. Example: Sarah is a sensory seeker. Offering choice of green arrow (alerting) activities after toileting trials assists with keeping her modulated and increases likelihood of success.
Sensory Tips

- Both Approaches:
  - When possible, conduct training in a "cozy" bathroom. Half-bathrooms work well.
  - Ensure trunk stability. Feet need to be firmly planted on floor or a stool.
  - Use a visual timer and encourage child to remain on potty until time is up.
  - Offer lots of choices. Examples: big toilet vs. little potty seat, child flushes or mommy flushes, warm water or cool water for handwashing, etc.

What About Consequences?

- Natural consequences should be used:
  - Assisting in the clean-up process
  - Not participating in activities that necessitate people be toilet trained

- Additional consequences:
  - May be considered when team feels sure child has the skills and cognitive ability
  - Best to consult with behavior specialist

Additional Strategies for Both Approaches

- Social Stories or Video Modeling: Include the steps involved in toileting, the rewards and consequences, and sensory strategies that may be beneficial.
  - Video model example: https://goo.gl/VN0MVj
  - Social story example: https://goo.gl/tsyAVL5
Additional Strategies for Both Approaches

- Potty Doll

Variety of books, videos, and apps about toileting to increase interest and decrease fears before training begins.

- Top-rated books: [https://goo.gl/lwIQ1E](https://goo.gl/lwIQ1E)
- Popular videos: [https://goo.gl/MJJsFl](https://goo.gl/MJJsFl)
- Top Apps: [https://goo.gl/oYy9uJ](https://goo.gl/oYy9uJ)
Overcoming Fears

• Implement bathroom playtimes every day. Caregiver and child engage in a fun activity in the bathroom each day such as blowing bubbles, playing with water toys in the sink, or finger painting on the sink or tub. The goal is desensitization to the sights and sounds present in the bathroom.

Overcoming Fears

• Potty Doll: By “helping” the doll go to the bathroom, pouring out the doll’s “potty,” helping doll flush the toilet, and rewarding the doll, the child can feel one step removed from the activities while learning the routine.

Overcoming Fears

• Desensitization: Pair sitting on the toilet with positive experiences such as calming sensory input, music, or playing with a preferred toy.

* Image from Little Things [https://goo.gl/9NlROp](https://goo.gl/9NlROp)
Big Issues with “Poop”

- Refusal to go without a diaper
  - Incremental changes
  - Modeling

- Poop withholding
  - Contact pediatrician
  - Consider diapers for naps and nighttime

Toilet Training at School

  - Five students with AU or DD aged 3-5
  - Regular underwear and sweatpants
  - High fluid intake
  - 3-minute potty trials every 30 minutes
  - Success reinforcers: edibles or toy for 15s
  - Children assisted in clean up process of accidents
  - Increasing time intervals to 120 minutes
  - Decreasing frequency of rewards

Toilet Training at School

- Results
  - Mean of 56 school days for 100% mastery at 120-minute intervals
Toilet Training at School

- Toilet-Training Guide for ABA Settings from Autism Speaks: https://goo.gl/QeGZzg

Resources

- Azrin and Foxx Article
  - http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1310676/
- Azrin and Foxx method for typical kids about 20 months of age
- Typical toddlers - rapid approach study
- Toileting video modeling research
  - http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10882-007-9044-xl/page-

References

Next Steps

• Questions?
• Course Evaluation
• Post-test password: potty
• http://www.sensationalbrain.com/tests/toilet-training-from-a-sensory-perspective/
• Certificate within 2-10 days