**Toilet Training**

Toilet training can be more difficult for children with coordination problems or physical disabilities. The following strategies may help with toilet training.

* Indications that a child is ready to attempt a classical toilet training approach include the ability to remain dry/clean for 1-2 hours, that he/she is aware when performing, that there are signs of interest in the toilet and there is a regular pattern to wetting/soiling.
* When your child is showing signs of being ready help to familiarise them with being in the bathroom during times of going to the toilet. Sit your child onto the toilet seat for washing their face to familiarise them with sitting on the toilet.
* Encourage your child to sit on toilet/potty at regular intervals at times you have decided they are most likely to perform e.g. after meals/drinks or a sleep.
* Continue to wear nappies/ pull-ups, or go straight into pants in this process.
* Often the sensation of wetting/soiling when out of nappies begins to heighten awareness and encourage control of the bowel/bladder.
* Verbal explanation, use of social stories with pictures, or a symbol timetable may help with the routine of going to the toilet. Allowing your child to observe others or carry out role play with dolls may help to establish understanding of what is required.
* Upon successfully performing, give the child lots of praise and/ or tangible rewards such as stickers, star charts or a favourite activity.
* Avoid making a fuss if accidents occur. Instead, give encouragement and reassurance that this is ok and the child can try again.
* In the event of failure to toilet train after a week, it may be appropriate to take a break and try again a month or so later.
* Blowing games and activities on the potty or toilet will naturally encourage the stomach pushes needed to pass urine or motions. E.g. bubble blowing, blowing party whistles, blowing bubbles with a straw into a cup.
* When trying to use the potty or toilet only do this for 10 minute periods maximum.
* Encourage resting hands on the lower tummy to encourage awareness of stomach movements and to be aware of the bladder.
* Talk about what you are doing when on the potty/ toilet e.g. ‘waiting for a wee’
* Turning on the tap so that you have the sound of running water may help encourage your child to go.
* Increase the number of tries on the potty/ toilet. Two hours before and two hours after a successful time of using the potty/ toilet may be successful.
* Encourage the establishment of a good routine which includes wiping your child’s bottom and washing hands following tries on the potty or toilet.
* Discuss with your child’s nursery or school times of the day that they encourage going to the toilet and try and follow the same routine.
* It is important to establish that the child has the potential control of bowel/bladder movements. Repeated failure to succeed may require discussion with the child’s doctor.
* Make sure you child is support in their posture when sitting on the toilet- this will provide them with more stability and control to be able to go.