

Strategies of support for successful transition to using the toilet

- Introduce the toilet area slowly for those children who may find it over stimulating due to any sensory needs. You may want to offer them the opportunity to help fill up the tissue, put up a picture or stand at the door and watch the adult.
- Make the toilet area inviting for children who may not be motivated to transition to the space. This may be with motivating pictures, a picture of the child on the toilet door to indicate that is the cubicle they will use, or a box of motivating items to keep in the toilet area.
- Consider using the pictures and motivators as the distraction. 'Lets go find the cars', 'where is the where's wally picture?' This can support those transitions to go to the toilet.
- Consider the position children are in when sitting on the toilet. They may need support on their back such as a rolled-up towel, a stall beneath their feet, or a toilet seat. This will support the child's confidence to feel safe and comfortable
- Blowing activities can support a child to pass stools. Party blowers and bubbles would work
- If the child is sensory avoiding, they may avoid using the bathroom due to the smells, echo, lights, splash of the toilet water. To support this, you could offer something to smell whilst they are in there for example air fresheners or something of theirs that smells of their washing powder, you might model putting tissue down the toilet to prevent the water splashing and you may provide the child with gloves for them to use to support wiping.
- Visual cues are supportive to indicate needing to use the toilet. This could be a toilet card for the child to ask or a visual timeline with toilet within that routine. Consider when is more convenient to use the toilet.

- STAR CHARTS can be useful to identify when a child may be having accidents, or how often they need to use the toilet. From here, consider when to schedule in a toilet break in their routine .
- Adults should consider that some children may find it difficult to multitask. If they are focused in their play, they may not be aware of their body senses, and therefore not recognize when they need to use the toilet. This is where the adult will need to explicitly label the signs that they can see to encourage the child to use the toilet.
- Teaching sensations is important. A child who may have sensory differences may not recognize when they need to release. The adult should label the sensations and the need to go to the toilet.
- Consider the language we use with the children. Be direct and have that expectation of them trying to use the toilet. Instead of 'shall we use the toilet now', say 'we are going to the toilet now'.
- Consider a safe place for the toys they are using and may not want to leave. Leaving an activity to use the toilet will not be motivating so consider when they use the toilet. Just before they go outside, or before they join an activity for example.
- Rewards are supportive. These can be used in different ways. Rewarding the small steps such as walking to the bathroom, sitting on the toilet and using the taps will be motivators if an instant reward is offered.