

Public Toileting Tip Sheet

Increase Independence at Home:

- Fade prompts after child becomes familiar with routine
- Use a task analysis to visually prompt your child through the steps
- Hold back your language (except for verbal praise)
- Have a reward system
- Teach dressing/undressing, washing hands, flushing, etc.

Use Consistent Supports:

- Have a portable version of the modifications and visual supports you use at home to take out into the community – toilet insert, task analysis, first-then boards, choice boards, etc.

Provide Warnings:

- Let your child know what might be different in the public bathroom (e.g., automatic flush, hand dryers)
 - Talk to him/her about it in advance and just before these events occur
- Use a Picture Story:
 - Why?
 - To talk about toileting behaviors & expectations **before** accidents occur
 - To verbalize and visualize behavior expectations prior to a community activity
 - To address the feelings and/ or fears of your child
 - To provide an alternative appropriate behavior choice
 - How?
 - Use pictures of your child behaving appropriately during a difficult activity
 - Read the book every day or before each community outing
 - Use positive language when writing the story - Tell your child what TO do
 - Avoid reading the story during or after the accident occurs

Schedule Trips to the Bathroom:

- Take your child to the restroom regularly when out in the community, even if he/she is regularly initiating the need to go to the bathroom at home. When possible, do so at the beginning of the outing as a more predictable way to expect when to go in public and to familiarize them with the location of the bathroom. This will be better than trying to catch them when they need to go in the community, which may feel abrupt and may not be successful. This may also be better than trying to do it at the end of the trip when they may be tired/ready to leave.
- Make it a point to practice going to the bathroom in public. Start with restrooms that most resemble your home bathroom (e.g., at a friend or relative's house).
- Gradually work your way toward visiting less predictable restrooms (e.g., with multiple stalls, automatics flushes, hand dryers, etc...). If needed, bring a post-it to place over the automatic flush sensor to disable that feature and try to use wet wipes/hand sanitizer for hands to decrease the likelihood of standing next to a hand dryer when it goes off.

Reinforce Appropriate Behaviors:

- Vary the reinforcer from what is available at home
- Use a token board to reinforce staying dry or successful completion of toileting routine in public