

INDEPENDENCE IN SELF CARE ROUTINES

**A Curriculum for Professionals and Parents of
Children with Autism and Developmental Conditions**



MODULE 1 TOILETING SKILLS

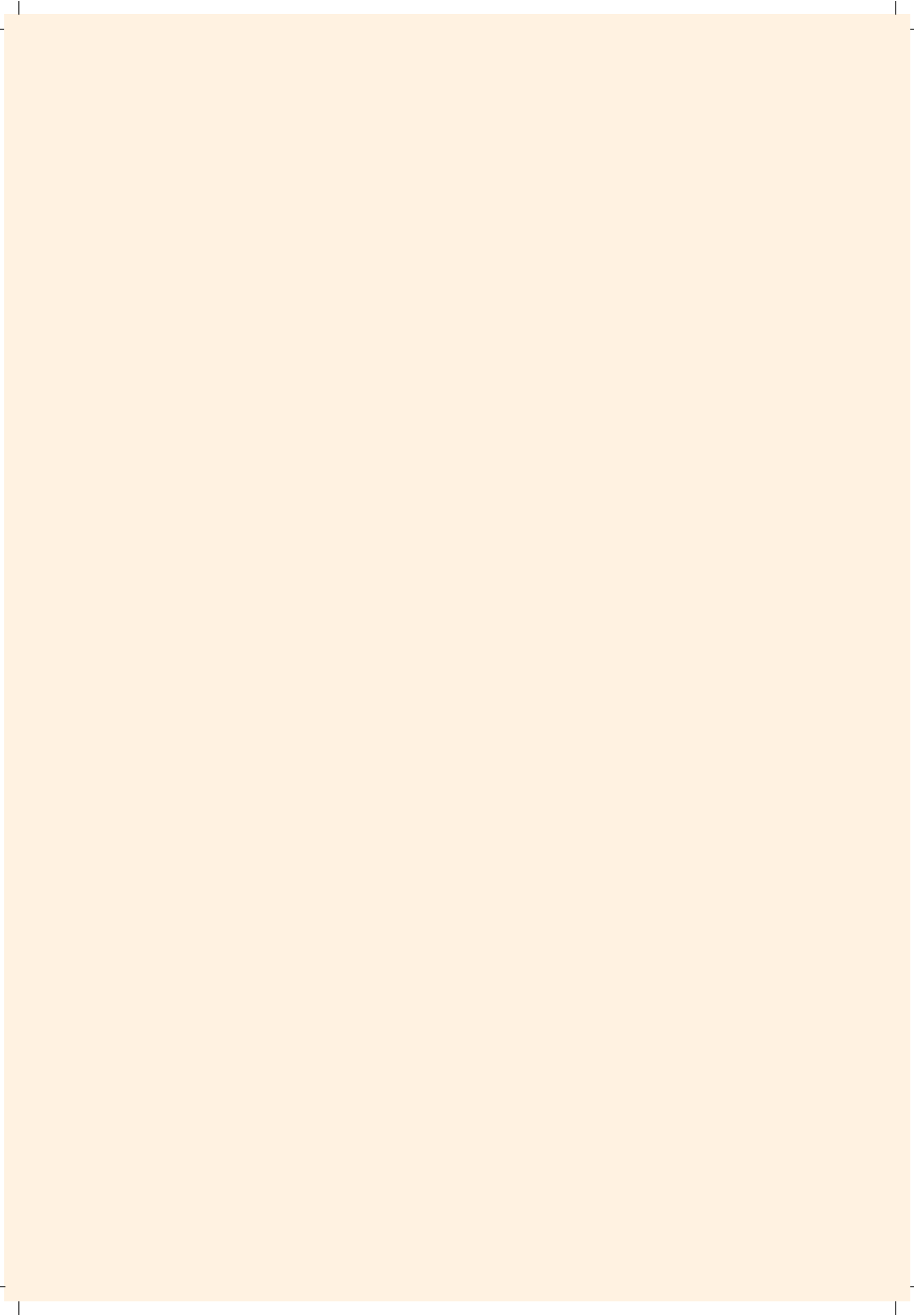
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Nidhi Singhal, PhD

MODULE 1 TOILETING SKILLS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the autism community, Action For Autism extends its gratitude to everyone involved in the development of this curriculum for their valuable contribution.

This has been possible with support from Science for Equity Empowerment and Development, Division of Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, and their commitment towards creating meaningful and practical solutions that add value to the everyday lives of people. The guidance and the mentoring we received from the different experts have been an enormous learning experience.

We also wish to acknowledge the support of A Guha, Aditya Chatterjee, Deepali Taneja, Moushumi Chatterjee, and the many parents, professionals and persons on the autism spectrum who generously contributed their time and expertise to help develop relevant and applicable content for this curriculum and for their consistent feedback to help improve the quality of the final curriculum. Our deepest appreciation for our star performers Dipanshu Kumar, Maham Khan, and Yuvaan Malhotra, who, along with Indrani Basu, Merry Barua, Preeti Siwach, Rakshanda Khan, Riya, Sudhanshu Grover and Sujata Bannerji, enthusiastically and smilingly offered precious time for their friends with autism.

Finally, we are honoured to receive the Foreword from Dr Wenn Lawson. An autistic advocate, a psychologist and a lecturer, Dr Wenn Lawson is a well-respected and highly knowledgeable expert on autism who has authored fifteen books and numerous papers, and regularly delivers keynote speeches and trainings at international events. Currently, Dr Lawson is a Teaching Fellow with Birmingham University's online Masters autism course. He is on the board of and an advisor to several educational and research councils in Australia. He has also been running his own business for more than 20 years now.

Thank You!

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The resources in this book are provided for informational purposes and are not meant to replace the judgement and training of parents and professionals.

Authored by Nidhi Singhal, PhD

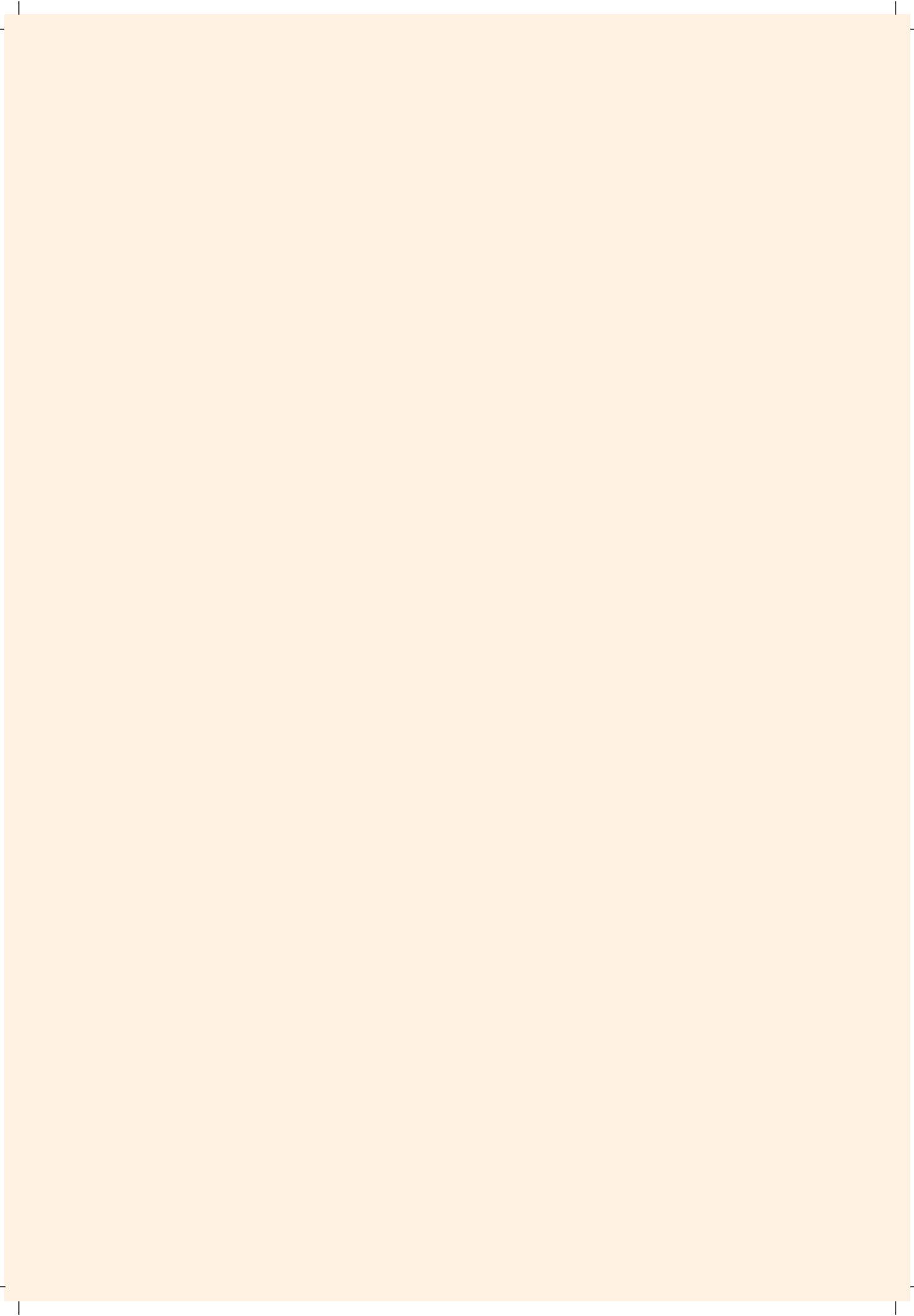
Edited by Merry Barua

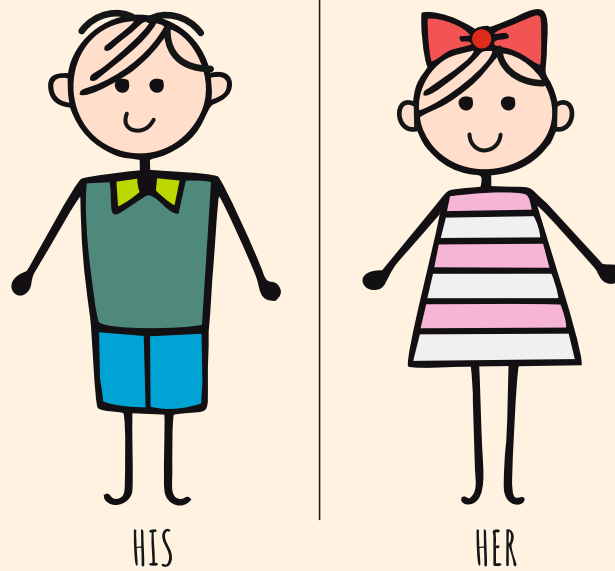
Activity illustrations by Samar Bansal

Book design and illustrations by Sudhir Pillai

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TOILETING SKILLS

WE ARE ALL aware of the importance of having children independent in toileting routines. When children are young we help them with their toilet needs. But soon we want them to not wet or soil themselves. This is a very basic necessity. They have to be able to indicate a need to use the toilet, and use the toilet appropriately when taken. In time, children are expected to be able to take themselves to the toilet spontaneously and do whatever they want to do independently. If they do not learn these skills, it restricts their quality of life as they grow older, affecting schooling, travel, entertainment and general social participation in weddings, festivals and other gatherings typical of family life in India. Children on the autism spectrum generally show the same signs of readiness for toilet training as others, and the learning is quicker and retained better if started when the child is very young.

Toilet training a child on the spectrum can be challenging both for the child as well as the adult. Many children with autism like things to remain the same. Once they have formed a routine, many resist any changes in that, unless they have been adequately prepared for the change. Some children may find it difficult to transition from no underpants to wearing underpants as they grow a bit older. Others may resist the change from going in their nappies or diapers to using the toilet for urinating or moving their bowel.

Children who are highly sensitive to sensory stimuli may feel overwhelmed with the environment inside the toilet such as wet floors, the sound of the flushing of the toilet, and the myriad smells including those from toiletries. Others struggle to integrate their bodily signals with suitable action. Some children find the complexity of motor movements when wiping themselves or in pouring water



Children who are highly sensitive to sensory stimuli may feel overwhelmed with the environment inside the toilet such as wet floors, the sound of the flushing of the toilet, and the myriad smells including those from toiletries.

and washing bottom, hard. And regardless of their verbal skills, many children on the spectrum are unable to communicate their toileting needs or associated fears or concerns. For instance, many children find the gaping hole in the toilet scary. Some find the flushed water going down the toilet disconcerting. Some will find it hard to communicate if it hurts to defecate or if it burns or itches during urination. Some

TOILETING SKILLS

... many children on the spectrum are unable to communicate their toileting needs or associated fears or concerns. For instance, many children find the gaping hole in the toilet scary. Some find the flushed water going down the toilet disconcerting.



children may express in ways that may not be socially desirable or are hard for an adult to understand. Some children with autism, even the ones who use speech to communicate, sometimes do not know that they can tell another person that they need to use the toilet and wait to be told to go.

These and more can make toileting a difficult and often anxiety-provoking experience for the child. But there are simple strategies that can make it easier for a young child to be independent in his or her toileting needs. As adults helping children acquire these skills we want to make the environment fail-safe, bring patience and positivity to the learning, while giving children the time and space they need for successful learning. Here are a few things to support children towards independence in their toileting needs.

- 👂 Collect information on the child's existing toilet habits.
 - ✓ Observe the child's toileting behaviour for a week or 10 days. For this choose a typical week i.e., a week when the child is healthy, when there will be no variations to the usual routine, with no special events planned.

TOILETING SKILLS

- 🕒 To identify patterns, and understand the child's toileting needs, some things to record include:
 - ✓ **when** the child urinates and defecates. Mark those times on the chart. This will give an indication of how often the child needs to go to the bathroom.
 - ✓ **where** the child relieves (in the toilet, outside in a specific room or a corner).
 - ✓ any specific **timings** when the child may need to use the bathroom (e.g. everyday around 10 am the child has a motion).
 - ✓ particular **activities** before or after which the child may need to use the bathroom (e.g. after waking up from sleep or right after swimming).
 - ✓ **fluid** intake through the day.
 - ✓ **noticeable behaviours** that indicate that they need to use the toilet (e.g. make a face, specific sounds, cross legs, touch private parts, suddenly sit still, start to run around, squat or sit, get off the furniture, etc.).
- 🕒 Create a toilet schedule for urination and defecation, based on the identified patterns. If child urinates right after rising at 6:30 am, then schedule a toilet visit at 6:30 am. If the child passes urine after every 2 hours, then schedule toilet visits for every 1 hour 45 minutes. If the child has breakfast at 8:00 am and has a motion right after, then schedule a toilet visit at 8:15 am.

TOILETING SKILLS

Toilet Schedule

Time	Urine (U) Bowel Motion (BM)	NOTES						
		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6:30	U							
8:15	U							
10:00	U & BM							
11:45	U							
1:30	U							
3:00	U							
4:45	U							
6:30	U							
8:15	U							

- Take the child to the toilet following the times on the schedule.
- If the child exhibits any of the behaviours indicating need to use the toilet, take child to the bathroom regardless of the schedule.
- Follow the steps as given in the respective sections for urinating or defecating. Even a small dribble of urine is a success.

TOILETING SKILLS

💡 If the child relieves:



✓ Praise child as soon as s/he finishes relieving.

✓ Continue to follow the times on the schedule.

✓ Follow steps for urination/defecation as described in the sections below.

💡 If the child does not relieve immediately:

✓ Wait for a few minutes. Some children benefit from additional time: 2-3 minutes to urinate, and 5-6 minutes for defecation.

✓ Perhaps s/he may not need to go. Praise the child for trying.

✓ Take the child off the toilet neutrally. Avoid reprimands or any negative language.


✓ Try every 5-7 minutes till the child urinates, and every 30-45 minutes for 1-3 hours around anticipated time of defecation.

💡 Make notes in the toilet schedule right away.

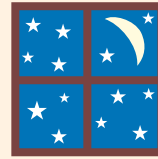
💡 Note any variations in routine, timings, when and where (toilet/ outside) and note any significant changes. This will help adjust the schedule as per the child's need.

💡 Place the toilet schedule with a pen or pencil attached to it with a thread, near the bathroom to help fill information immediately.

TOILETING SKILLS

 To introduce night time toilet routine:


- ✓ Set an alarm for specific time (s).
- ✓ Wake up the child, lead him/her to the toilet and provide support to complete the steps.
Over time, consistently following the routine will help the child learn to wake up and go to the toilet.



- ✓ Praise the child in the morning when the bed is dry.
- ✓ Stay neutral and comfortable if the bed is wet in the morning.
Do not scold, reprimand or use negative language.



- ✓ Reduce fluid intake after 6:00 pm to reduce chances of bed-wetting.

 Organise the toilet to make it child friendly.

TOILETING SKILLS

💡 If the child is currently using a movable baby toilet:

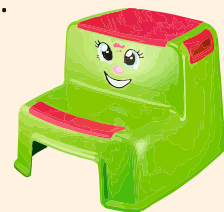


- ✓ Have it placed at one consistent place, preferably near or in the bathroom, so that the child can learn faster where to go each time and be more independent.
- ✓ Many children find it harder to transition from a movable baby toilet to a regular toilet, so if possible, adapt the regular toilet as per the child's needs.

💡 If the child is using a commode:




- ✓ Place a baby's toilet seat over a regular commode to make the large seat smaller. Little children are likely to find it more secure and comfortable. It is also easier to remove the baby's seat and transition to a regular toilet when the child is ready.
- ✓ Use a firm stool which works well with the child's height. Most children find it easier to sit when their feet are firmly planted on a foot stool, instead of their feet dangling in the air. Some examples have been shared here.



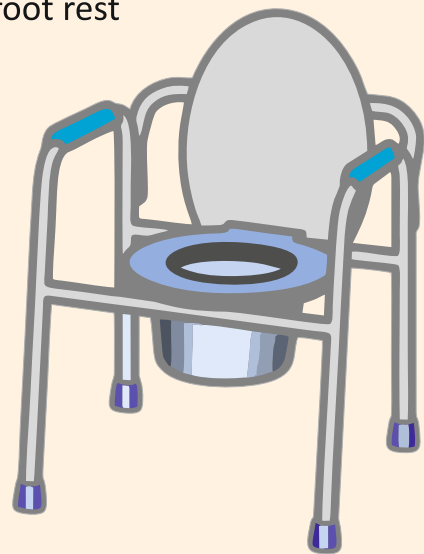
TOILETING SKILLS

Check the kind of support the child may need to squat comfortably. If required, help the child hold a rail, a tap, or the wall for support... Motor issues may make it harder for the child to squat.

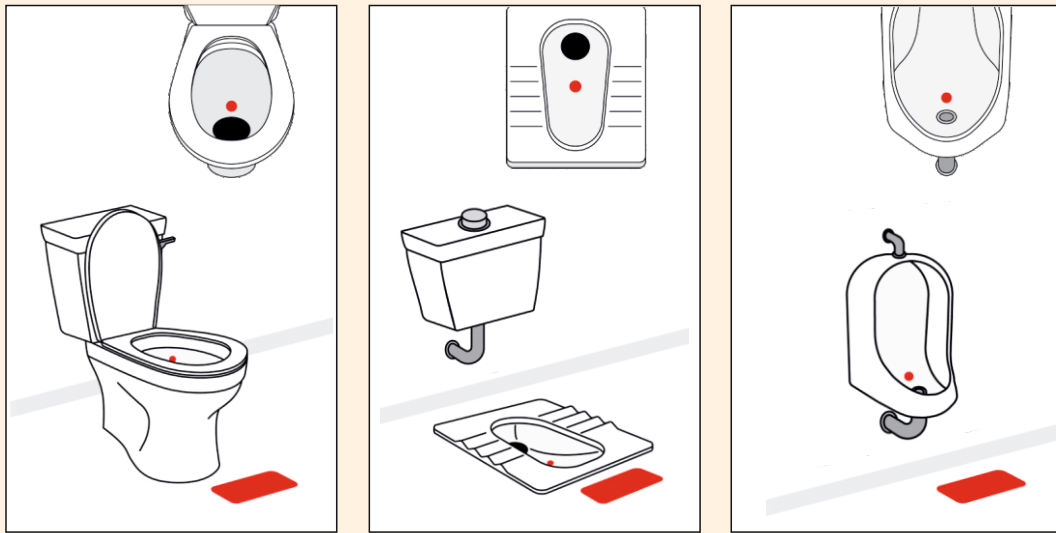


 If teaching the child to squat over a floor toilet:

- ✓ Check the kind of support the child may need to squat comfortably. If required, help the child hold a rail, a tap, or the wall for support. Gradually as the child gets more comfortable and confident, reduce support and help the child independently hold on to the tap or the wall.
- ✓ Little children find it easier to squat near the tip of the toilet as they defecate into the toilet bowl. As the child begins to get comfortable with squatting and relieving in a toilet, the child can squat on the foot rest of the floor toilet.
- ✓ Practice squatting concurrently through other activities.
- ✓ Motor issues may make it harder for the child to squat. If so, use an alternate chair style potty over the floor toilet.



TOILETING SKILLS



- 🪿 As shown above, if required, mark spots on toilet floor that clearly indicate where to stand or squat for urination or defecation. This is especially useful for very young kids using floor toilets.
- 🪿 Initially boys will sit to pass urine. Once they are comfortable standing and urinating, it helps to mark a spot in the toilet to indicate a 'target' to direct the stream of urine. Use bright coloured paint, a permanent ink marker or stick a big 'bindi' ahead of time.
- 🪿 Be mindful and respectful of the child's sensory preferences.
 - ✓ If the child finds wet floors bothersome, keep the floor dry when the child enters the bathroom. You can also place bathroom mats to avoid wet or slippery floor tiles.
 - ✓ Minimise bathroom echo by having additional things such as old towels or bedsheets etc. that can absorb the echo.

TOILETING SKILLS

- ✓ Keep the exhaust fan off, if the sound bothers the child.
- ✓ If a child finds the toilet or bathroom smells overwhelming, introduce smells that the child likes. Some children like fragrances of specific toilet fresheners or aromatic oils; or particular smells of disinfectants (like Dettol or Lysol), camphor (*kappoor*), or incense sticks (*agarbati*), or even unconventional smells such as garlic.
- ✓ Some children dislike the sound of a flush or hate to see the water gushing down inside the toilet. Before using the flush, tell the child about the noisy flushing sound and explain the reason for flushing. Also explore alternatives that work best for the child. For instance, close the toilet lid before flushing, or pour a bucket of water instead of flushing, or wait for the child to leave the bathroom before flushing. Work on teaching the child to flush later.

Build tolerance for sitting on a toilet.

- ✓ Encourage the child to sit only a few seconds and gradually increase the time for the child to sit on a toilet.
- ✓ Some children enjoy singing while others may like playing with a toy or holding a favoured object when sitting on the toilet.



TOILETING SKILLS

- ✓ Choose an item that is large and will not accidentally fall in the toilet. Select items and activities that will not be overly stimulating or distract the child from relieving.
- ✓ You may also use a highly favoured item such as a toy or an object like a string or leaf.
- ✓ Reserve the toy or object only for toilet time to encourage appropriate toileting routines.



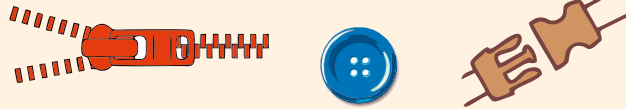
Dress for success.




- ✓ Ideally stop using diapers at home when you start toilet training. A child used to going in his diapers is much harder to toilet train. Diapers are more convenient, but underpants generate better awareness of body, the need to go, the 'wet' or uncomfortable feeling. Further, it is very confusing for the child to understand when is it okay to 'go' in their diaper, and when it is not. Introduce underpants as soon as possible. You may also use a social story to teach the child to wear underpants. Suggestions have been given in the *Overview* that may be adapted to the individual child's needs and the objectives.
- ✓ If the child is comfortable, start with loose fit clothes with elastic waistbands that a child will be able to adjust easily and quickly on their own. This will promote independence, minimize the chance of toilet accidents, and make for a positive experience for the child and the adult.

TOILETING SKILLS

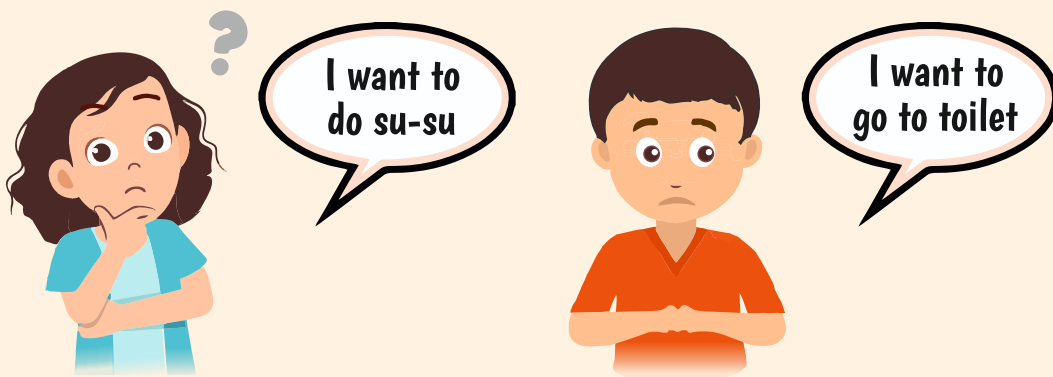
- ✓ When using clothes with fasteners (such as zips, buttons, drawstrings etc.) provide the support the child requires to open/close the fasteners till such time as the child is independent in other aspects of toileting. Teach manipulation of fasteners as a separate activity as described in the module *Dressing Skills*.



- ✓ Additional suggestions to adapt clothes have been given in the modules *Personal Care* and *Dressing Skills*.

 Teach appropriate language and behaviour.

- ✓ Children developing typically understand how people perceive them and the social skills to regulate their interactions. They choose their words, regulate their volume based on who they are talking to and where. For instance, a five-year-old neuro-typical child may say "I want to do su-su" at home, to a parent, and will also know to whisper the same words at a party or in front of guests. The child may also know to say "I want to go to toilet" at a school or when visiting friends. Autism impacts understanding of social rules and many children with autism



continue to use the words learnt as a child as they grow older, unaware of what others think of them. Even when the autistic child is very young, use socially appropriate adult words such as washroom, toilet or bathroom, that the child can continue to use as a grown up. Avoid using baby talk like su-su, wee-wee, potty, washy-washy, that can lead to awkwardness and teasing if said aloud by an adolescent or adult in a social situation.

- ✓ You may also use a discreet or a neutral word for private parts. This word would be known and used only by adults involved in child's toilet training program.
- ✓ Teach the child a way to communicate need to use the toilet whether the child uses speech or not.
- ✓ Even though not typically expected of a little child, shut the bathroom door each time the child uses the bathroom. This introduces a positive routine that can continue into adulthood, as well as introduce the concept of privacy to the child. Shutting the door each time will help the child learn to do so incidentally, without having to teach this as a skill later.

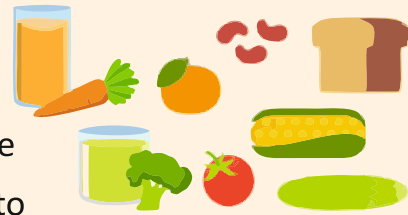
Avoid using baby talk like su-su, wee-wee, potty, washy-washy, that can lead to awkwardness and teasing if said aloud by an adolescent or adult in a social situation.



SU-SU POTTY
WASHY-WASHY
WEE-WEE

TOILETING SKILLS

- Be mindful of the child's dietary habits. Make sure the child has sufficient water and other fluids through the day. This will ensure more opportunities to practice appropriate use of the toilet. For some children, a hot beverage 15 minutes before the expected time can increase the chance of bowel movement at the scheduled time. Sufficient fluids and fibre in the diet can help the child feel the urge to use the toilet.



- Ensure consistency. If there are multiple people who are likely to take the child to the toilet, identify the people who will be involved in a child's toilet training program. This may include specific members of the family, *didis*, *ayahs* or caregivers, and teachers. It will be useful for everyone to be know about the child's schedule and as much as possible use the same routine and language.
- In case of any toilet accidents stay neutral and comfortable. Do not use negative language. Do not reprimand, tease, or shame the child. Avoid talking about it or discussing with others in negative terms and especially in the presence of the child.
- Review the illustrations provided for each activity when beginning to teach a skill.
- Refer to other modules to identify activities that may be integrated alongside toileting routines. For instance, the module *Personal Care* gives steps to wash hands that may be incorporated after using the toilet.



EXPRESSING NEED TO USE THE TOILET

ONCE THE CHILD is consistently using the toilet, it is time to teach a simple way for the child to communicate the need to 'go'. It is important for every child to have a way to indicate their toileting needs. Regardless of their verbal skills, many young children on the autism spectrum struggle to spontaneously communicate when they need to use a bathroom. The reasons are often multiple, vary for each child and are important to understand.

- 🕯 As discussed in the *Overview*, many young children on the spectrum may not have started to recognize their body's signals such as the urge to pass urine, or relate the 'feeling in the tummy' or passing wind as a signal to have a bowel movement. If they do not yet recognise the need to relieve themselves, it will be hard for them to express that need.

TOILETING SKILLS

- Many children communicate but in ways that others may not necessarily understand, or desire. Some children, including those who have speech, may touch themselves when they need to use a toilet, others may try and pull an adult or cry. Over time, they learn that whenever they do this, the adult takes them to a toilet or cleans them up. So, they continue to use these ways till they learn an alternate way of communicating their needs.
- Some children have difficulty with spontaneous communication and express their need only when they are 'asked'. Some may use the toilet when they are 'told' to go, or when they are taken to the toilet. So, if an adult does not take the initiative, they may continue to hold for long periods until they can hold no longer and have a toilet accident. As mentioned above, others may express in ways considered 'challenging'. For instance, they may cry to express or cry out of sheer frustration at the inability to express.
- Some children spontaneously communicate some of the time, but may forget to do so at other times such as when they are absorbed in some activity or when they are distressed. This inconsistency is often misinterpreted as them being naughty or doing it purposefully.



Some children, including those who have speech, may touch themselves when they need to use a toilet, others may try and pull an adult or cry... Some may use the toilet when they are 'told' to go, or when they are taken to the toilet.

EXPRESSING NEED TO USE THE TOILET

🪿 In the home environment there is no need to 'ask' to use the toilet and many children are independent in their toilet habits. However, there are other places such as in a school when the expectation is for the child to let the teacher know that s/he needs to use the toilet. If the child does not communicate spontaneously and simply walks out of the classroom without asking the teacher, s/he is considered ill-behaved and undisciplined. If the child holds on too long, the stress of the situation may make the child 'inattentive' or 'hyperactive'; and when the child is unable to hold on any longer and has an accident it significantly impacts his/her self-esteem, in addition to attracting punishment from the teacher and mockery of other children.

🪿 Similarly, children are expected to communicate their need when in unfamiliar environments such as when visiting a friend or family; or attending a wedding or a party or in public spaces such as a mall, market, or movie hall. In such places the child may be unaware of the location of the bathroom or it may be unsafe for young children to go by themselves. So, even if the child is completely independent, it is essential for him/her to let another person know.

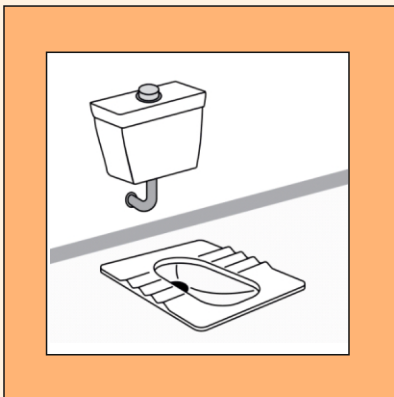
🪿 It may be necessary for the child to communicate and have an adult to accompany them when they require support to complete activities such as washing bottom after defecation or to wash hands, or wear clothes etc.



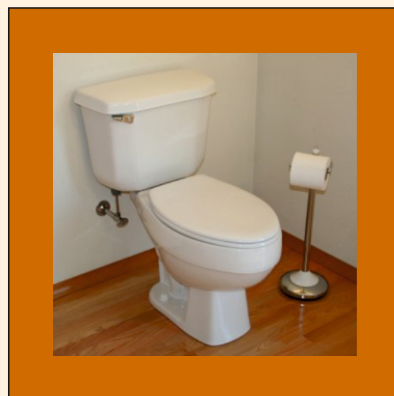
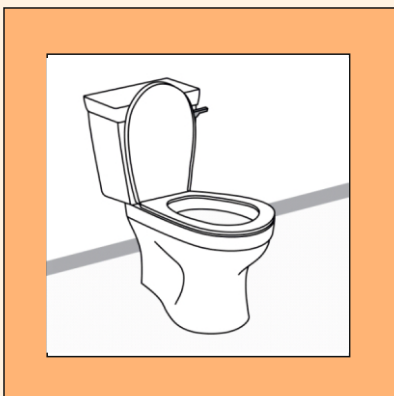
TOILETING SKILLS

To be able to communicate to another person that they want to go to the toilet, a child needs to learn to:

- ✓ Become aware of and understand their bodies' needs regardless of what they are doing or how they are feeling.
- ✓ Hold the urge to eliminate till they are on the toilet. Thus, the child will stay dry at all other times including when wearing a diaper.
- ✓ Understand that if they communicate their need, someone will take them to the toilet.



- ✓ Learn different verbal and non-verbal ways to communicate in different environments such as school, when visiting friends or family, in public spaces etc.
- ✓ Use a designated object or card as a communication tool as shown here.



EXPRESSING NEED TO USE THE TOILET

Getting Started

🪵 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ Toilet Object or Toilet Card
- ✓ Bucket / Mug of Water / Water Jet / Toilet Paper
- ✓ Foot Stool (if sitting)
- ✓ Baby seat for Commodes (optional)



🪵 Set up the toilet as required for the child. Some suggestions have been given in the introduction to this module.

🪵 Set up the Toilet Object or Toilet Card as shown in the examples.

- ✓ Preferably select an object that the child associates with a toilet such as a miniature toy toilet, diaper, or baby seat. For the toilet card select a realistic image of a toilet. Alternately use a neutral object. For younger children it is better to use a representational object than a card.

- ✓ With the help of Velcro, place the toilet card/object on a wall or a communication board (if the child uses it) within child's reach. You can place the toilet card/object in multiple places within the child's environment. Ensure the toilet card/object is always in the same place(s) so that the child can learn where to go each time.
 - ✓ Check the card/object is in place ahead of time.
- 🚽 Follow the toilet schedule where applicable.

Suggested Sequence to Teach

1. A minute or two before the scheduled toilet time, lead the child to the toilet object/card.



2. Assist the child, hand over hand, to pick the toilet object/card and place it in the adult's outstretched hand. In addition to toilet card/object, use a sign, gesture, or appropriate words at the same time.
3. Have the child go to the bathroom.
4. Follow the steps as given in the respective sections for passing urine or having a bowel movement. Even a small dribble of urine is a success.

EXPRESSING NEED TO USE THE TOILET

As discussed earlier, if the child relieves:

- ✓ Praise child as soon as s/he finishes relieving.
- ✓ Follow steps for urination or defecation as described in the following sections.
- ✓ Continue to follow the times on the toilet schedule.








If the child does not relieve immediately:

- ✓ Wait for a few minutes. Some children benefit from additional time: 2-3 minutes to urinate, and 5-6 minutes for defecation. Perhaps s/he may not need to go.
 - ✓ Praise the child for trying.
 - ✓ Take the child off the toilet neutrally. Avoid reprimands or any negative language.
 - ✓ Try every 5-7 minutes till the child urinates, and every 30-45 minutes for 1-3 hours around anticipated time of defecation.
5. Make notes in the toilet schedule. Note any variations in routine, timings, when and where (toilet/outside) and note any significant changes. This will help adjust the schedule as per the child's need.
 6. Place the toilet object/card back in its original position for the next time.

Teaching the Sequence

- 💡 To facilitate teaching the target skill viz give the toilet object/card to the adult, start with providing as much support as the child requires and gradually reduce support in the following sequence:
 - ✓ Take the child to the toilet object/card. Gently, physically guide the child's hands to pick up the toilet object/card and place it in the adult's hand.
 - ✓ Take the child to the toilet object/card. Extend palm to remind the child to give the toilet object/card.
 - ✓ Take the child to the toilet object/card. Stand a few steps away from the child, so that the child has to walk a few steps towards the adult to give the toilet object/card. Gradually increase this distance.
 - ✓ Take the child close to the toilet object/card. Stop a few steps before the toilet object/card so that the child independently walks up to the toilet object/card, pulls it out, then walks back to the adult to give the toilet object/card. Gradually increase the distance.

Things to Keep in Mind





-  A toilet object is especially useful with young children and early learners as well as with children who have fine motor issues and may find it hard to hold a toilet card.
-  Have several identical objects/cards. It makes the experience relatively stress-free for the adult if an object/card goes missing.
-  In addition to toilet card/image, use a sign, gesture, or appropriate words at the same time. However, the child may use ANY ONE medium to indicate his/her needs. This may or may not be spoken language.
-  When using words, start with one or two consistent words that may be used by everyone involved in the toilet training program. Having too many words (e.g. toilet, bathroom, washroom, loo, latrine, su-su, potty, pee-pee, poo etc.) can make it confusing for some children. Ideally use words that the child can continue to use as a young adult in social situations.
-  When outdoors, discreetly clip the toilet card/object in a child's pocket such that the child can pull it out easily.
-  Appropriate increase in fluid intake may also provide for more toilet training opportunities.
-  Praise the child for attempts to communicate.




RELIEVING IN THE TOILET

IT IS HELPFUL to observe children's toilet behaviours and existing routines to create a toileting schedule in order to introduce new toilet habits that facilitate independence. However, despite these efforts, there will be children who may not use the toilet when taken and instead urinate or defecate outside the toilet. Some may not relieve inside the toilet but urinate or defecate immediately after coming out. Some will persistently relieve only in the diaper and not on the toilet. Despite our best efforts, sometimes it can be difficult to identify the reasons behind the behaviour. In some instances, it appears that the child may have developed a strong, unpleasant, or negative association with the toilet. While it is useful to identify the reason for this, it may not always be possible to discern. Regardless, it is imperative to establish a new and positive association with the toilet and build tolerance to sitting longer on the toilet.





Getting Started

-  Ensure everything you need is in place:
 - ✓ Bucket / Mug of Water / Water Jet / Toilet Paper
 - ✓ Foot Stool (Optional)
 - ✓ Baby seat for Commodes (Optional)
-  Set up the toilet as required for the child. Some suggestions have been given in the *Overview* and the introduction to this module.
-  If following a toilet schedule, use as described in the introduction to this module.
-  If teaching the child to express the need to use the toilet, follow the steps as given in this module.

Teaching the Sequence

-  In the beginning, consistently use one toilet at home. Similarly, if the child goes to a school and/or a creche or any specific place every day, then identify one specific toilet that the child will use. This will help the child identify the specific toilet as the place to go to whenever he or she needs to relieve. Once the child learns to relieve only in a toilet and has no toilet accidents, we may introduce use of other toilets.

RELIEVING IN THE TOILET

-  Start building a positive association with the toilet. So, not as per the toilet schedule, but at other times too, take the child to the bathroom, let him stand near the toilet, get something s/he really likes, and come out of the toilet. Start with the child being in the toilet for only one second and very gradually build on it. The expectation is NOT for the child to relieve self, but just to get comfortable being inside a toilet.
-  If following a toilet schedule, as soon as it shows toilet time on the schedule, gently guide the child to the toilet. In addition, whenever you notice behaviours indicating the need to use the toilet (such as making a face, squatting, touching diaper etc.) quickly guide the child to the toilet. Do this even if the child is wearing a diaper.
-  Support the child in all aspects of toileting such as closing the door, taking off clothes etc. and focus on having the child sit comfortably on a toilet. As discussed, adapt the toilet to make it child friendly. Provide the support he or she needs to make sitting or squatting a comfortable experience.
-  At toilet time, focus on making relieving in a toilet a positive experience for the child. Some children enjoy singing while others may like playing with a toy or holding a favoured object (like a string or leaf) when sitting / squatting on the toilet. The toy or the item may also be reserved for toilet time to encourage appropriate toileting routines. Ideally, choose an item that is large and will not accidentally fall in the toilet. Alternately, have several

identical items so if it was to fall in the toilet, we are able to provide a substitute. It helps to have items and activities that will not be overly stimulating or distract the child from relieving self.

- 💡 Consider, even a small dribble of urine is a success. So, if the child relieves:



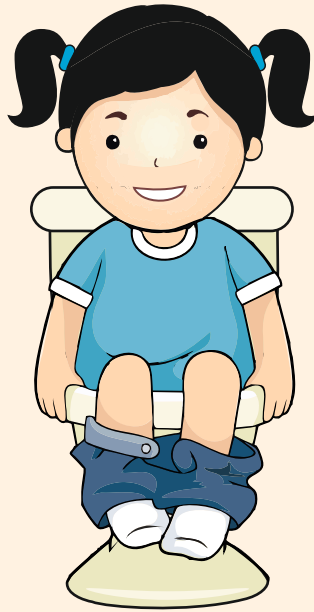
- ✓ Praise child as soon as s/he finishes relieving.
- ✓ Follow steps for urination or defecation as described in the following sections.
- ✓ Continue to follow the times on the toilet schedule.

- 💡 If the child does not relieve immediately:

- ✓ Wait for a few minutes. Some children benefit from additional time: 3-5 minutes to urinate, and 5-10 minutes for defecation. Perhaps s/he may not need to go.
- ✓ Praise the child for sitting on the toilet.
- ✓ Take the child off the toilet neutrally. Avoid reprimands or any negative language.
- ✓ Try every 5-7 minutes till the child urinates, and every 30-45 minutes for 1-3 hours around anticipated time of defecation.

RELIEVING IN THE TOILET

- 💡 In case of any toilet accidents stay neutral and comfortable. Do not use negative language. Do not reprimand, tease, or shame the child. Avoid talking about it or discussing with others in negative terms and especially in the presence of the child.
- 💡 If the child continues to resist relieving in the toilet, persist. Also review:
 - ✓ The *toilet setup* to ensure it meets the motor and sensory needs of the child.
 - ✓ The objects or activities being used in the toilet to check if the child really enjoys them. Avoid the adult biases about what a child 'would' like.
 - ✓ The efforts to *strengthen positive association with the toilet*. See if the child truly enjoys the interaction; is there a need and the possibility to increase the number of such interactions; are there things that may be reserved exclusively for toilet time; are there social stories or jingles that may be introduced to teach the concept in a fun way, are there any negative interactions in the toilet or about toilet related aspects.
 - ✓ The time spent on teaching this skill. Each child takes different amount of time, so do not give up. Over time, when practiced consistently most children learn to relieve inside a toilet.






SITTING OR SQUATTING TO URINATE

ONCE THE CHILD begins to consistently urinate in a toilet, it is time to support the child towards independence in other aspects of toileting. The first step would be for the child to learn the different steps or sequence of the toilet routine inside a toilet.

Getting Started

- 🕯️ Ensure everything you need is in place:
 - ✓ Bucket / Mug of Water / Water Jet / Toilet Paper
 - ✓ Foot Stool (Optional)
 - ✓ Baby seat for Commodes (Optional)

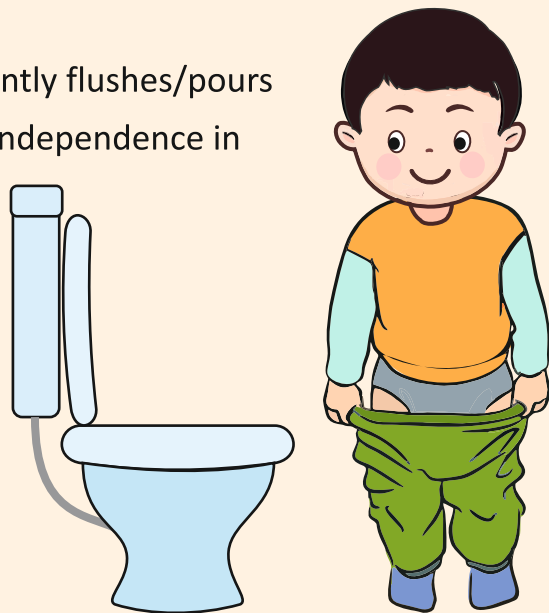
-  Set up the toilet as required for the child. Some suggestions have been given in the *Overview* and the introduction to this module.
-  Wherever applicable, follow the toilet schedule as described in the introduction to this module.
-  Follow the steps to express need to use the toilet as described earlier.

Suggested Words to Use

1. Close door
2. Pull up /down clothes (specify the name of garment)
3. Pull down underpants
4. Sit / squat
5. Finish toilet
6. Wash / wipe (to be taught independently as described in *Cleaning Up*)
7. Pull up underpants
8. Pull up / down clothes (specify the name of garment)
9. Flush / pour water (in the toilet)
10. Wash hands (to be taught independently as described in the module *Personal Care*)

Teaching the Sequence

- 💡 Focus on teaching the target skill viz urinating in the pot. In the meantime, provide the support the child requires, to wash hands and to open/close the fasteners such as zips, buttons, drawstrings in pyjamas etc. Teach these skills as discrete activities as described in the modules Personal Care and Dressing Skills.
- 💡 Using the suggested words, teach the skill using backward chaining, viz prioritizing independence in the last step first, as described in the *Overview*.
- ✓ Focus on teaching the child to independently flush/pour water in the toilet (i.e. the last step). Support the child as s/he requires through all preceding steps. Gradually reduce the amount of support provided to complete this step, so that the child learns to flush/pour water independently.
- ✓ When the child independently flushes/pours water, focus on achieving independence in pulling up/down clothes (such as smoothening dress, or pulling up the pyjamas etc.). Support the child through all other steps before this step. Gradually reduce support so the child learns



to independently pull up pants or straighten the skirt as required. At all times, have the child flush/pour water independently.

- ✓ When the child independently adjusts clothes and flushes /pours water, focus on achieving independence in the step before that i.e. to pull up underpants. As before, support the child through the preceding steps. Gradually reduce support so the child learns to pull up underpants independently. Then have the child independently pull up other clothes and flush the toilet.




Continue teaching each step till the child can carry out the entire activity independently.

- 💡 Follow the child's individual pace. Start with providing as much support as the child requires and reduce it gradually. The level of support that a child requires may vary at each step and a child may achieve independence in some steps sooner than others.



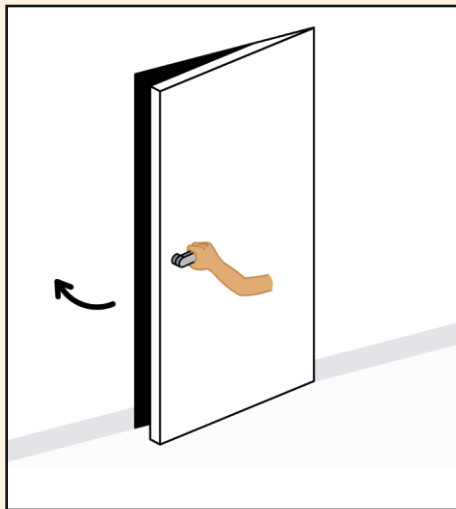
For instance, some children may need continued support to remember to flush toilet, even after s/he is independent in other steps.

Things to Keep in Mind

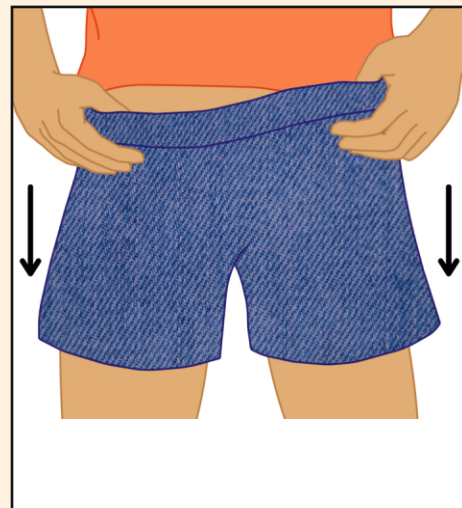
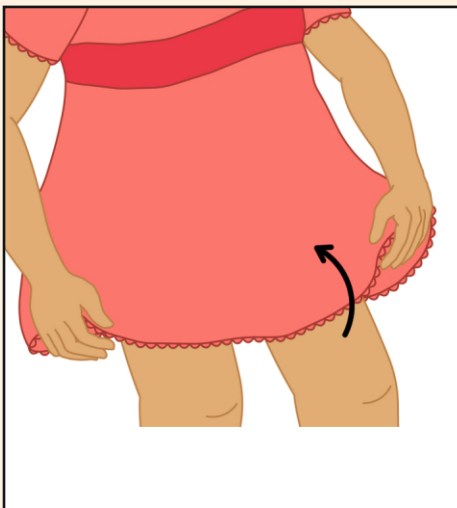
-  Teach squatting concurrently through other games and activities.
-  Although some boys are taught to sit or squat to urinate, standing to urinate allows them to use urinals available in schools and other public spaces.
-  Appropriate increase in fluid intake may also provide for more toilet training opportunities.

SITTING OR SQUATTING TO URINATE

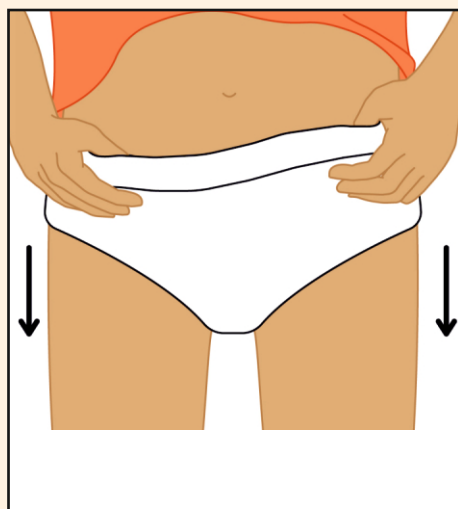
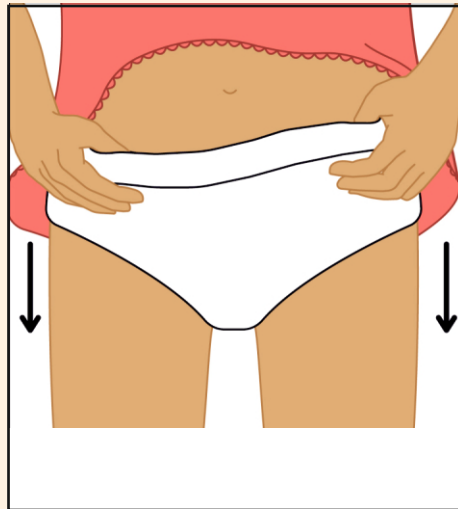
Close Door



Pull Up / Pull Down Clothes

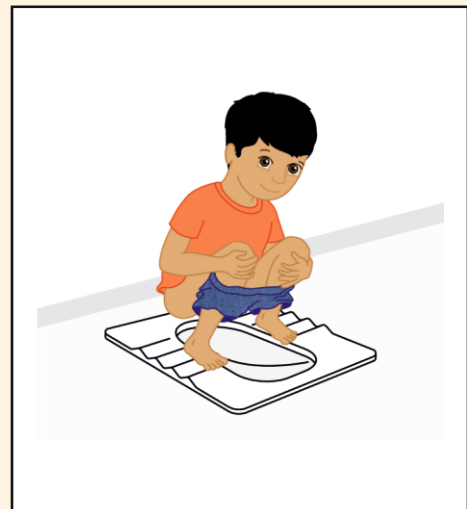


Pull Down Underpants



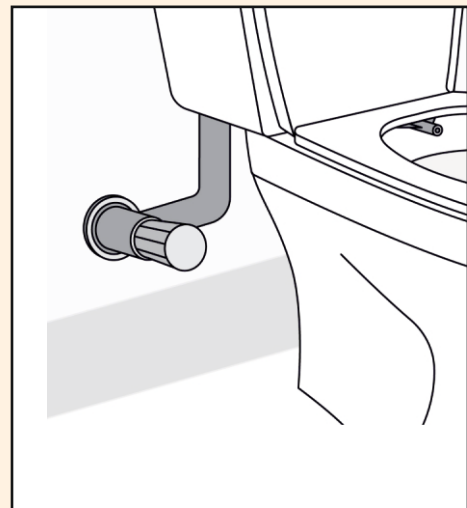
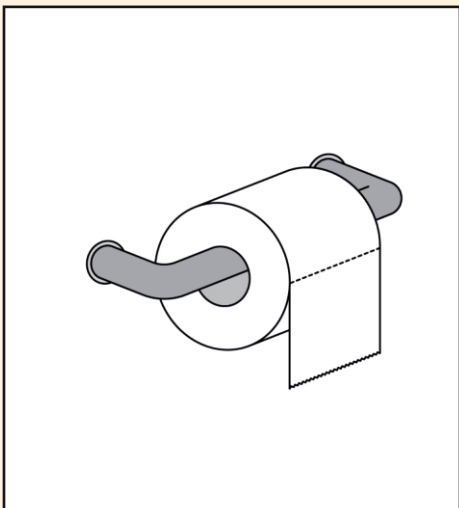
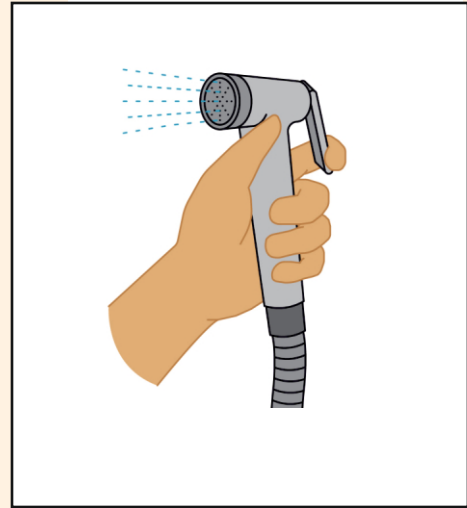
SITTING OR SQUATTING TO URINATE

Sit / Squat



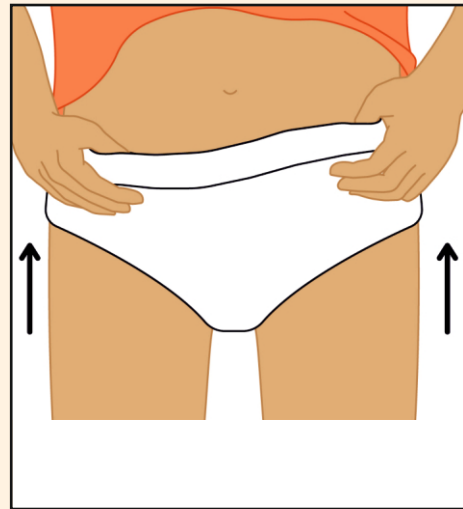
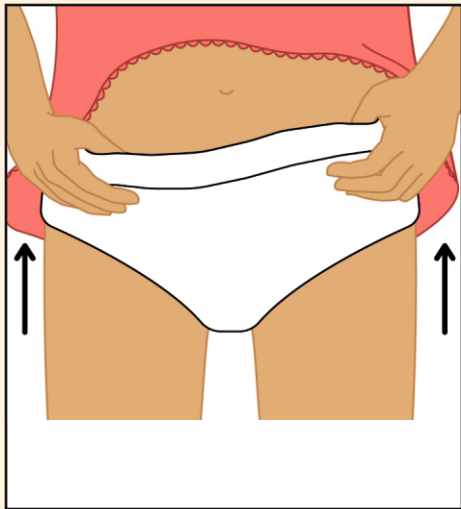
SITTING OR SQUATTING TO URINATE

Wash / Wipe

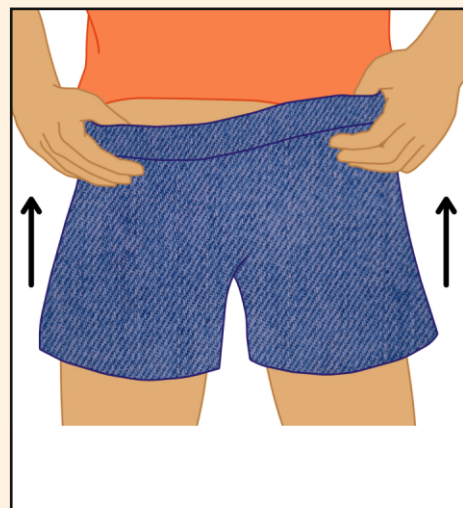
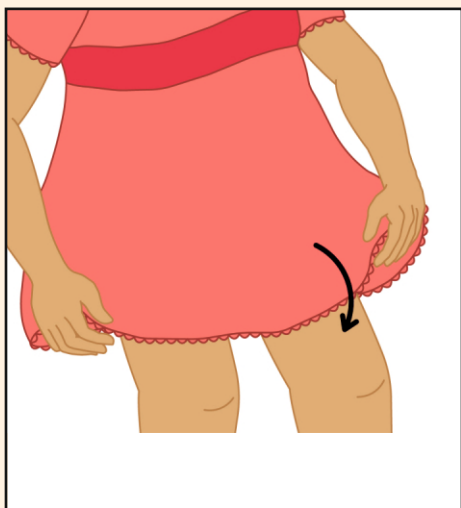


SITTING OR SQUATTING TO URINATE

Pull Up Underpants

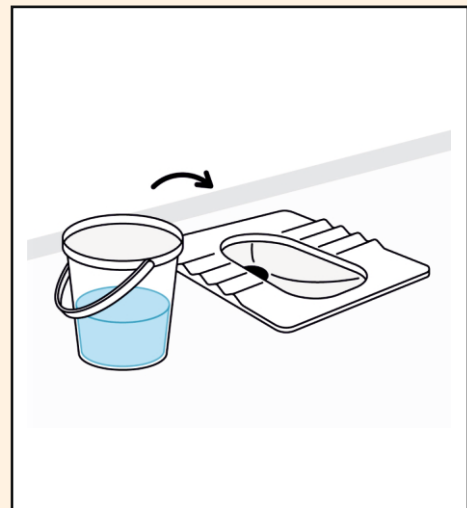
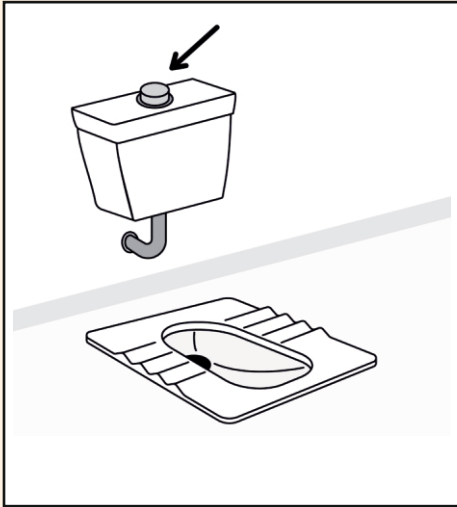


Pull Down / Pull Up Clothes



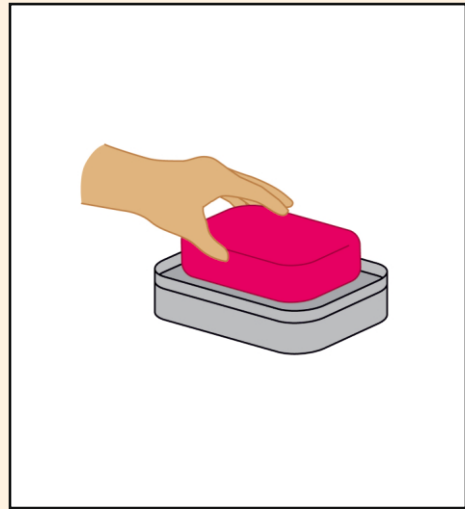
SITTING OR SQUATTING TO URINATE

Flush / Pour Water



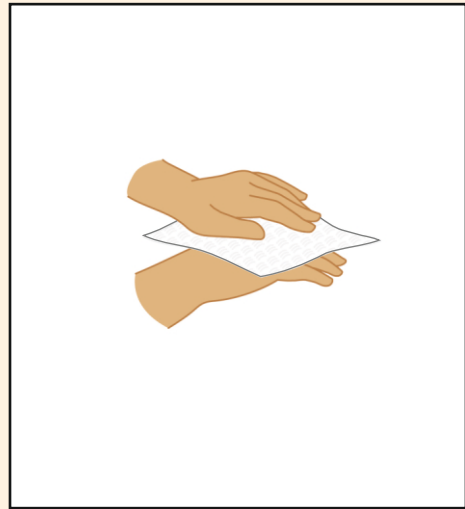
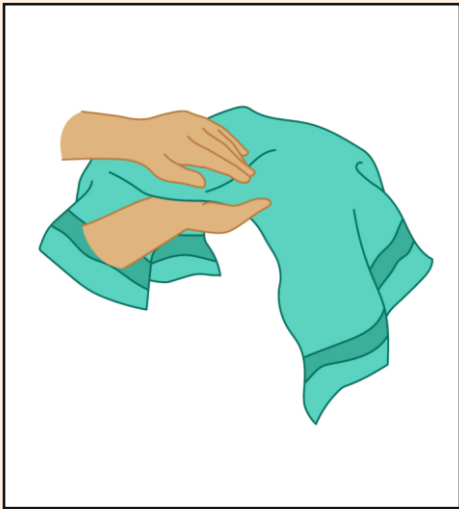
SITTING OR SQUATTING TO URINATE

Wash Hands

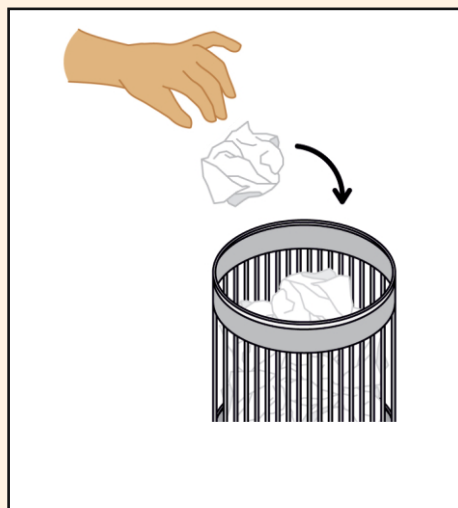


SITTING OR SQUATTING TO URINATE

Dry Hands



Throw in Dustbin





STANDING TO URINATE

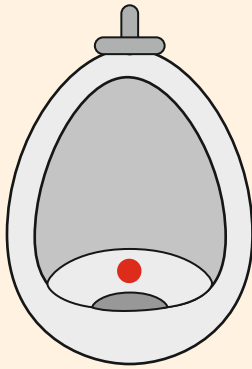
ONCE THE CHILD begins to consistently urinate in a toilet, it is time to support the child towards independence in other aspects of toileting. Urinating neatly in a toilet bowl, without spraying outside, is an important and necessary skill for all boys to maintain toilet hygiene. Although some boys are taught to sit or squat to urinate, standing to urinate allows them to use urinals available in schools and other public spaces. It is never too early (nor too late) to start learning the skill.

Getting Started

💡 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ Bucket / Mug of Water / Water Jet / Toilet Paper
- ✓ Foot Stool (Optional)
- ✓ Baby seat for Commodes (Optional)

- 🪿 Create a 'target' spot to direct the stream of urine at. Mark a spot in the toilet with a bright coloured permanent ink marker or paint, or stick a big 'bindi' ahead of time.
- 🪿 Set up the toilet as required for the child. Some suggestions have been given in the *Overview* and the introduction to this module.



- 🪿 Wherever applicable, follow the toilet schedule as described in the introduction to this module.
- 🪿 Follow steps to express need to use the toilet as described earlier.



Suggested Words to Use

1. Close door
2. Pull up / pull down clothes (specify the name of garment)
3. Pull down underpants
4. Lift seat
5. Stand
6. Hold (use hand to direct urine stream towards the 'target')
7. Finish toilet

STANDING TO URINATE

8. Shake (private part)
9. Wash / wipe (to be taught independently as shown in *Cleaning Up*)
10. Put down seat
11. Pull up underpants
12. Pull down / pull up clothes (specify the name of garment)
13. Flush / pour water (in the toilet)
14. Wash hands (to be taught independently as described in the module *Personal Care*)


Teaching the Sequence

-  Focus on teaching the target skill viz urinating in the pot. In the meantime, provide the support the child requires, to wash hands and to open/close the fasteners such as zips, buttons, drawstrings in pyjamas etc. Teach these skills as discrete activities as described in the modules *Personal Care and Dressing Skills*.
-  Using the suggested words, teach the skill using backward chaining, viz prioritizing independence in the last step first, as described in the *Overview*.
- ✓ Focus on teaching the child to independently flush/pour water in the toilet (i.e. the last step). Support the child as



required through all preceding steps and gradually reduce the amount of support provided, so that the child learns to flush/pour water independently.

- ✓ When the child independently flushes/pours water, focus on achieving independence in pulling up clothes. Support the child through all other steps before this step. Gradually reduce support so the child learns to independently pull up the garment. At all times, have the child flush/pour water independently.
- ✓ When the child independently pulls up pants and flushes/pours water, focus on achieving independence in the step before that i.e. to pull up underpants. As before, support the child through preceding steps. Gradually reduce support so the child learns to pull up underpants independently. Have the child independently pull up clothes and flush.

Continue teaching each step till the child can carry out the entire activity independently.

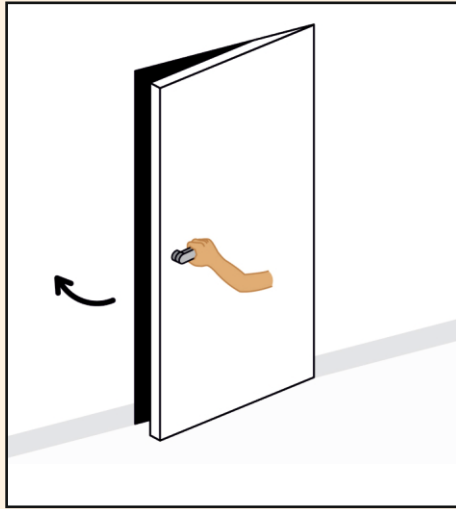
-  Follow the child's individual pace. Start with providing as much support as the child requires and reduce it gradually. The level of support that a child requires may vary at each step and children may independently complete some steps sooner than other steps. For instance, some children may need continued support to remember to flush the toilet, even after s/he is independent in other steps.

Things to Keep in Mind

-  When teaching to stand and urinate, pull down pants/underpants only from the front to pull out penis, rather than pulling the waist of the pants/underpants down till the knees or ankles.
-  Appropriate increase in fluid intake may also provide for more toilet training opportunities.

STANDING TO URINATE

Close Door

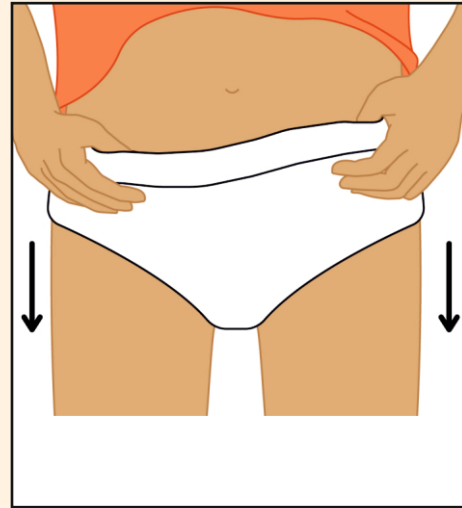
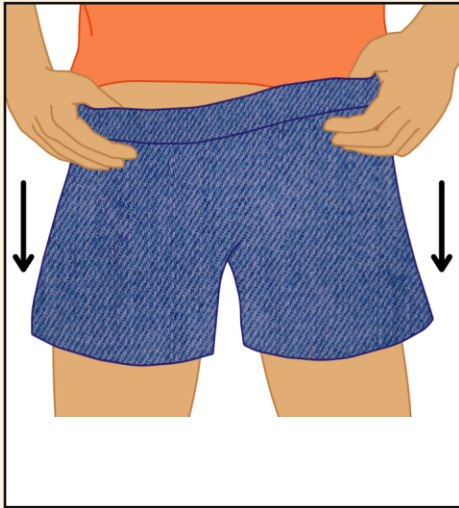


Lift Seat

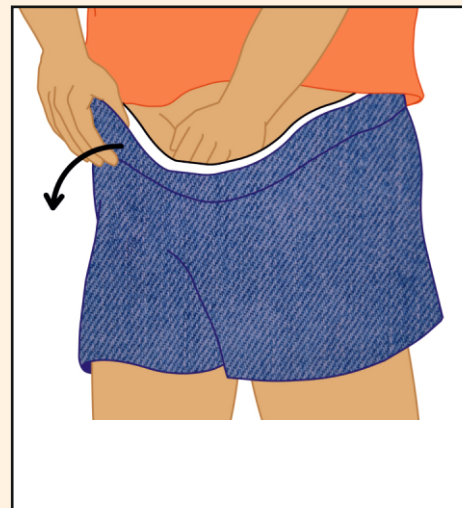
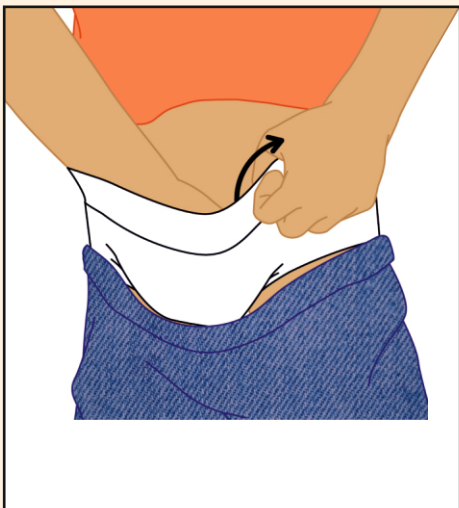


STANDING TO URINATE

Pull Down Pants / Underclothes

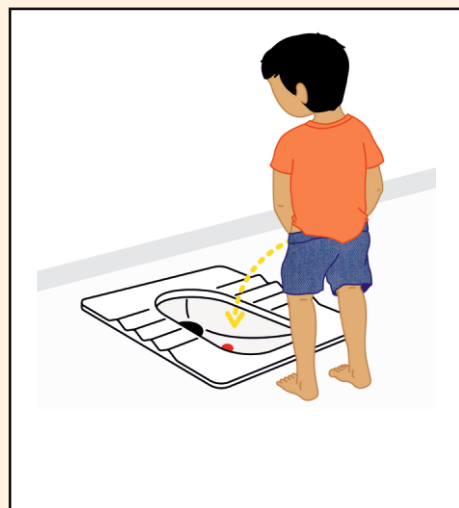
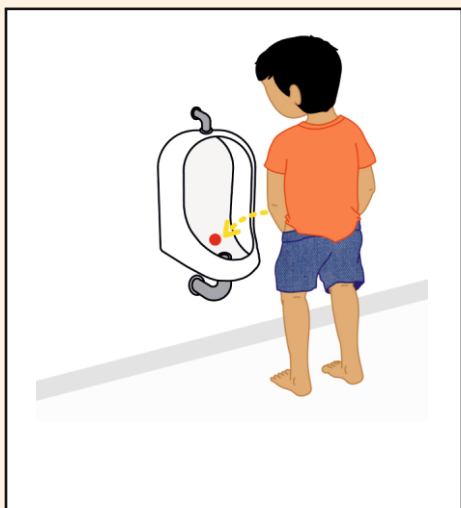


Pull Out



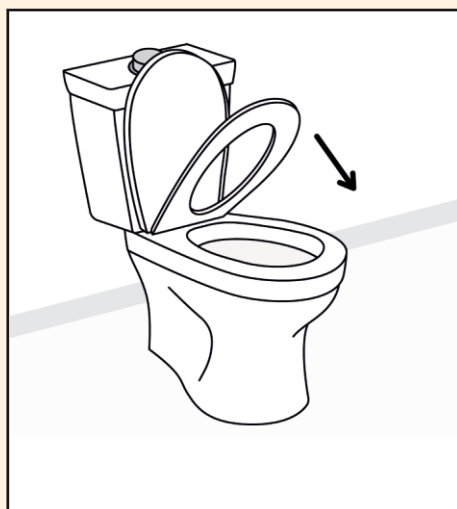
STANDING TO URINATE

Stand to Urinate



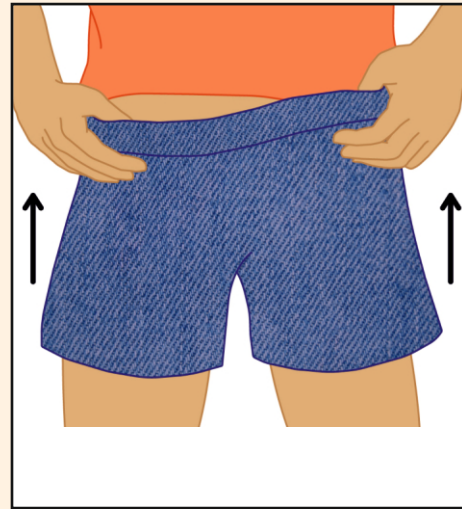
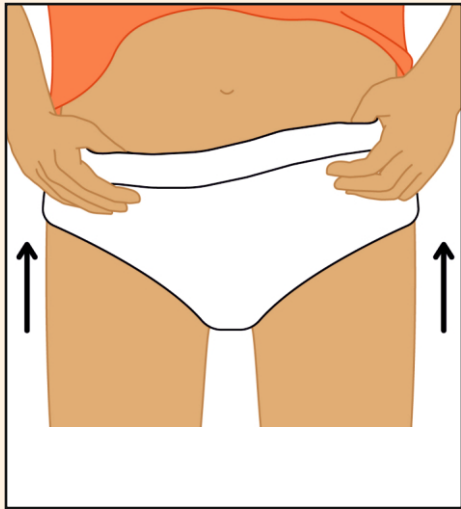
STANDING TO URINATE

Put Down Seat

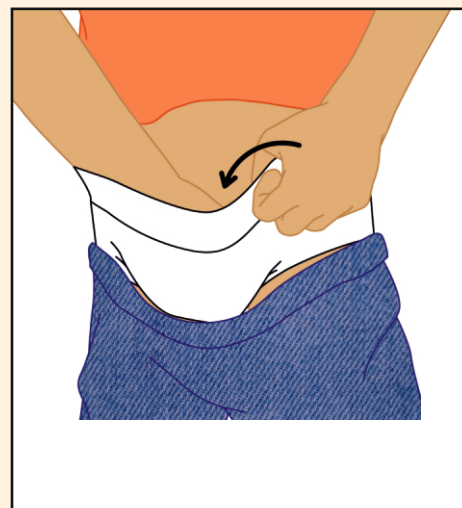
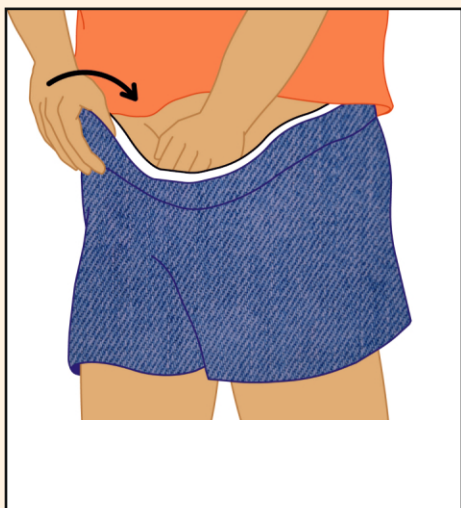


STANDING TO URINATE

Pull Up Underpants / Pants

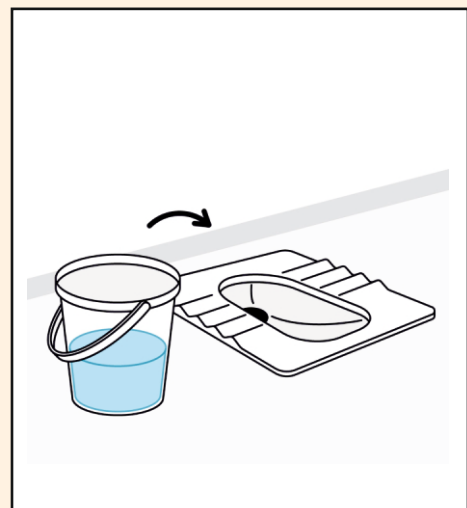
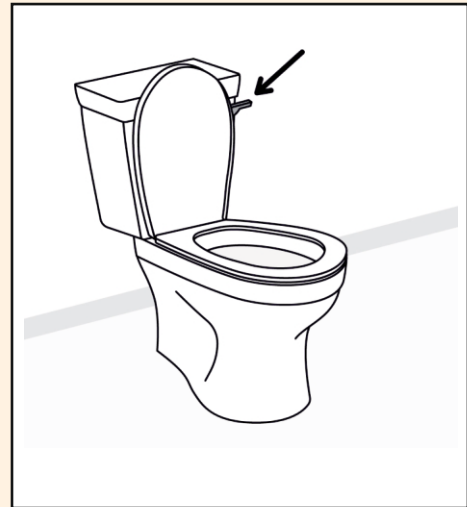
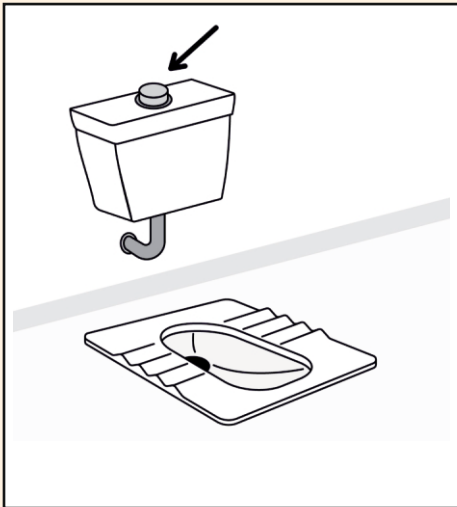


Put In



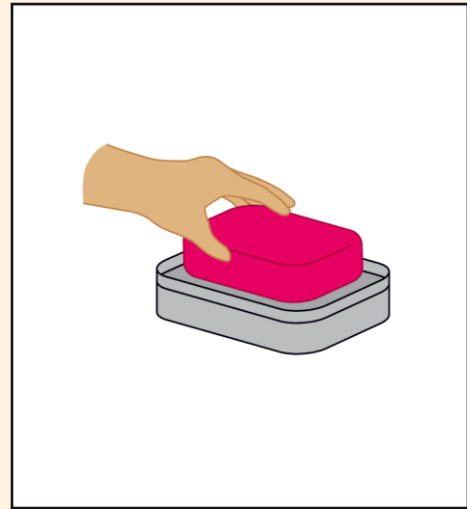
STANDING TO URINATE

Flush / Pour Water



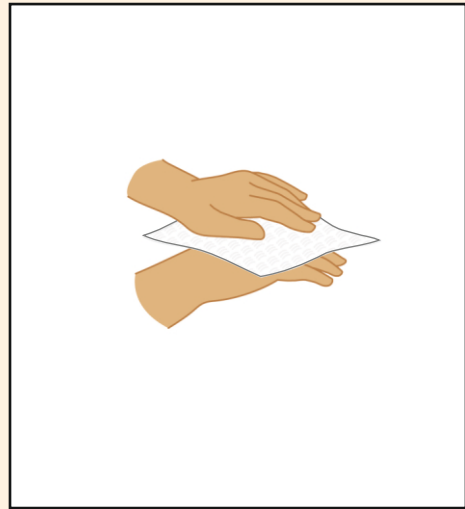
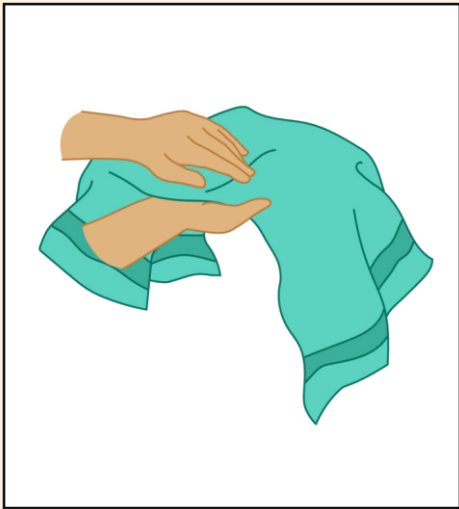
STANDING TO URINATE

Wash Hands

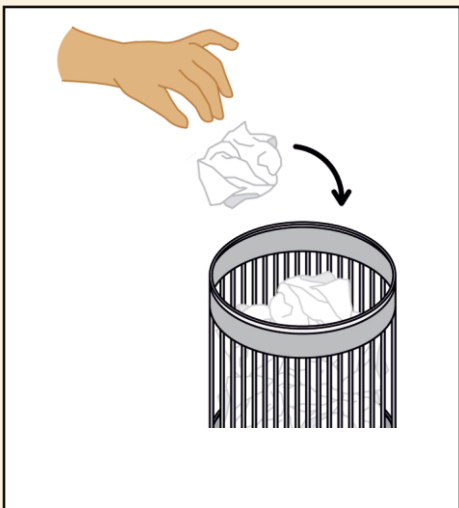


STANDING TO URINATE

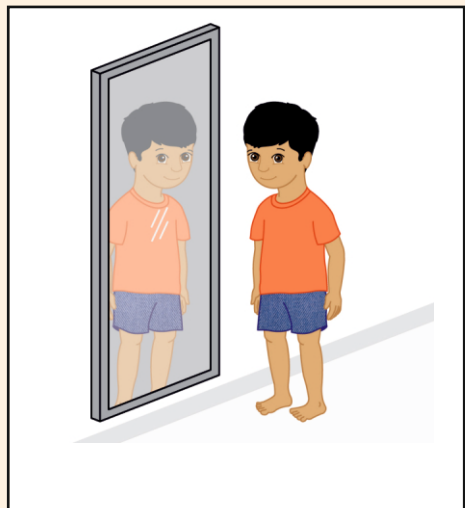
Dry Hands



Throw in Dustbin



Look in Mirror








DEFECATING

DEFECATION in the toilet is a complex set of multiple activities. Many of the steps have to be taught independently. Some children may find it hard to remember the sequence of steps. And those with motor or coordination challenges may find some aspects, such as cleaning afterwards, especially challenging. Given the importance of independence in toileting, it is best to start teaching this skill early and support the child towards independence.

Getting Started

👉 Ensure everything you need is in place:





- ✓ Bucket / Mug of Water / Water Jet / Toilet Paper
- ✓ Foot Stool (Optional)
- ✓ Baby seat for Commodes (Optional)

-  Set up the toilet as required for the child. Some suggestions have been given in the *Overview* and the introduction to this module.
-  Wherever applicable, follow the toilet schedule as described in the introduction to this module.
-  Follow steps to express need to use the toilet as described earlier.



Suggested Words to Use

1. Close door
2. Pull up /down clothes (specify the name of garment)
3. Pull down underpants
4. Sit / squat
5. Finish toilet
6. Wash / wipe (to be taught independently as described in *Cleaning Up*)
7. Pull up underpants
8. Pull up / down clothes (specify the name of garment)
9. Flush / pour water (in the toilet)
10. Wash hands (to be taught independently as described in the module *Personal Care*)
11. Dry hands
12. Look in mirror

Teaching the Sequence

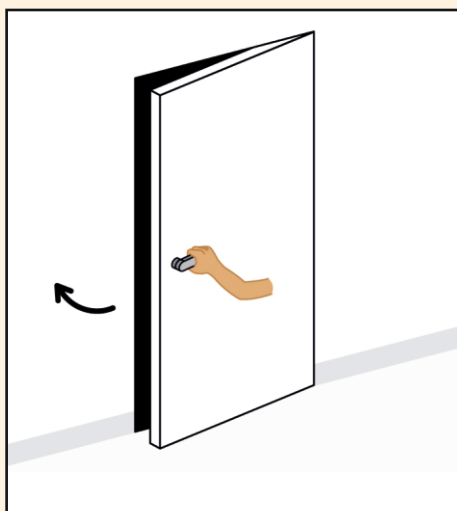
-  Focus on teaching the target skill viz having a motion in the pot. In the meantime, provide the support as the child requires, to wash hands and to open/close the fasteners such as zips, buttons, drawstrings in pyjamas etc. Teach these skills as discrete activities as described in the modules *Personal Care* and *Dressing Skills*.
-  Although washing up after is a part of the whole act of defecation, teach this as separate skill as described in the *Cleaning Up*.
-  Using the suggested words, teach the skill using backward chaining, viz prioritizing independence in the last step first, as described in the *Overview*.
-  Follow the child's individual pace. Start with providing as much support as the child requires and reduce it gradually.

Things to Keep in Mind

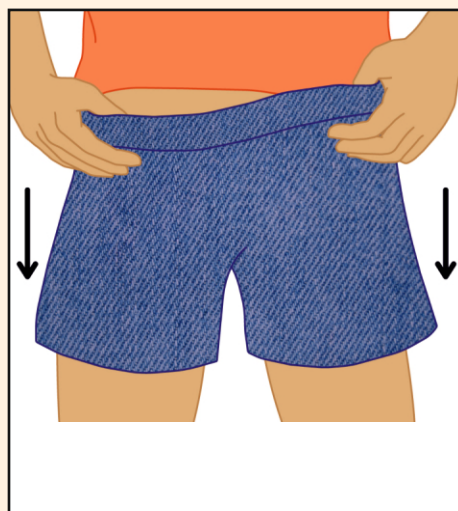
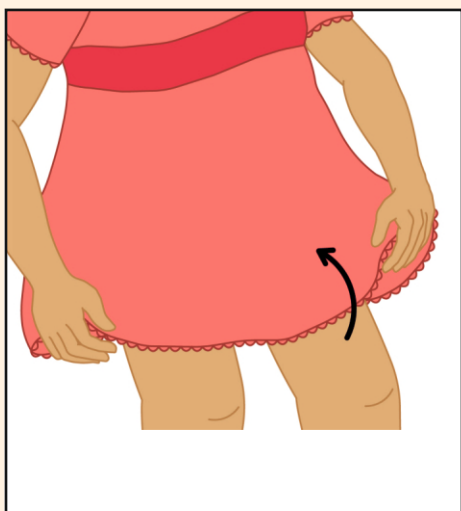
-  Check for possible constipation and dietary requirements that may facilitate defecation in the mornings. For instance, some children benefit from drinking hot water or a hot beverage.
-  Teach squatting concurrently through other games and activities.

DEFECATING

Close Door

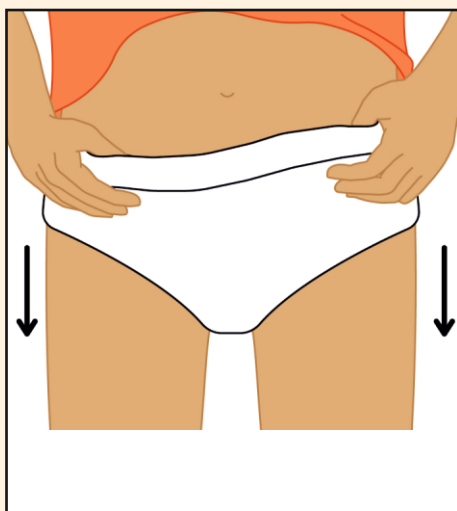
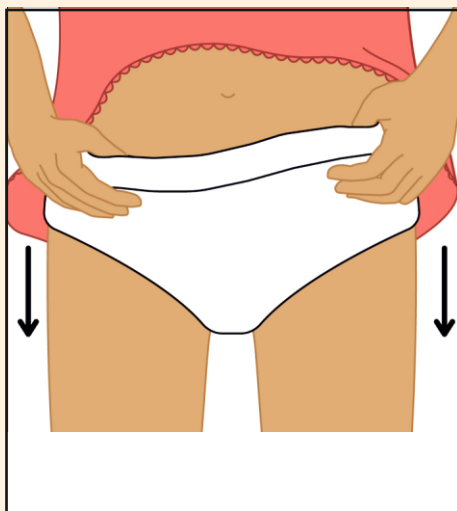


Pull Up / Pull Down Clothes



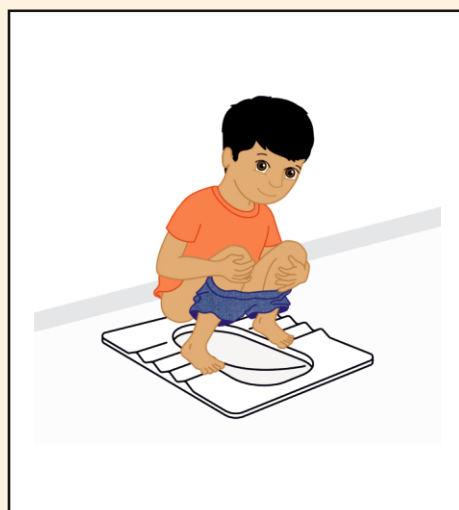
DEFECATING

Pull Down Underpants



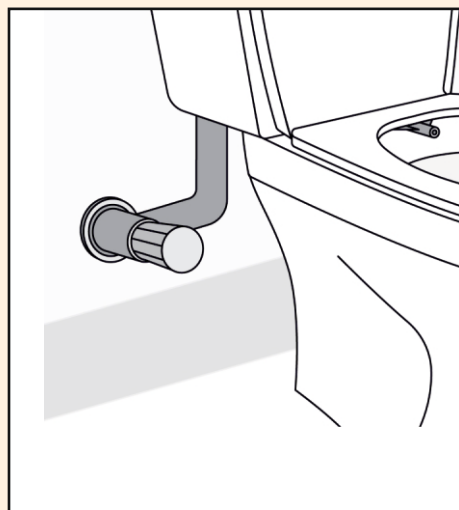
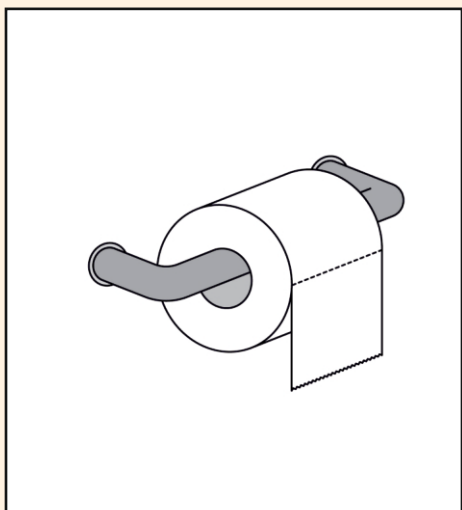
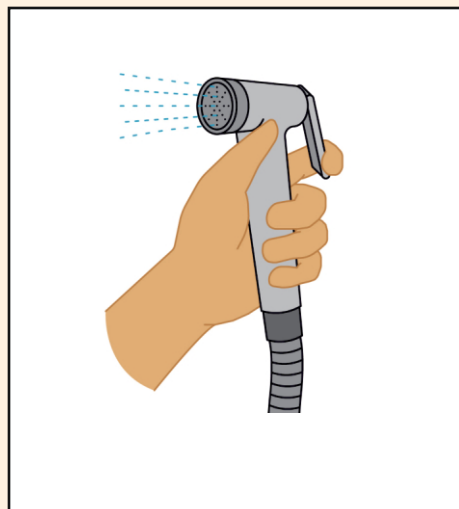
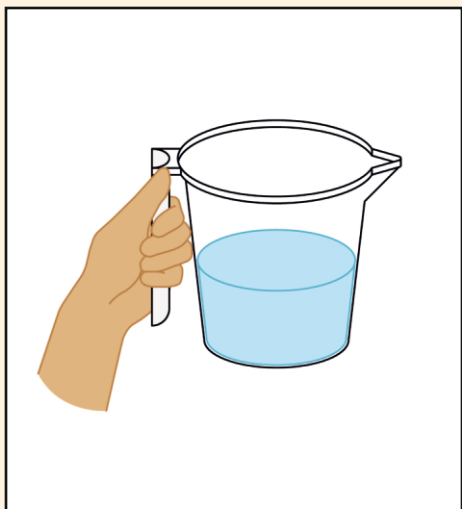
DEFECATING

Sit / Squat



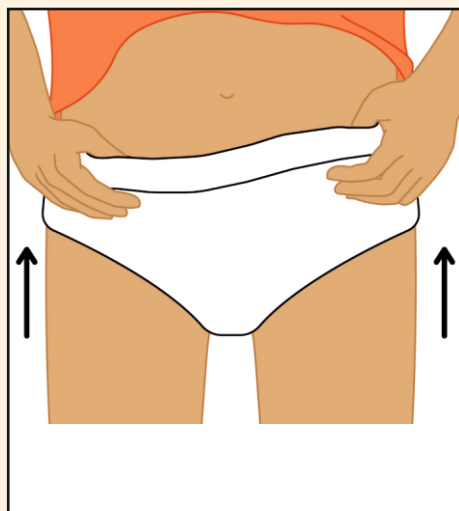
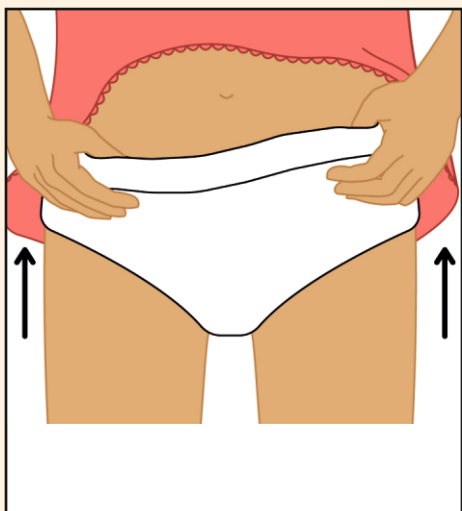
DEFECATING

Wash / Wipe

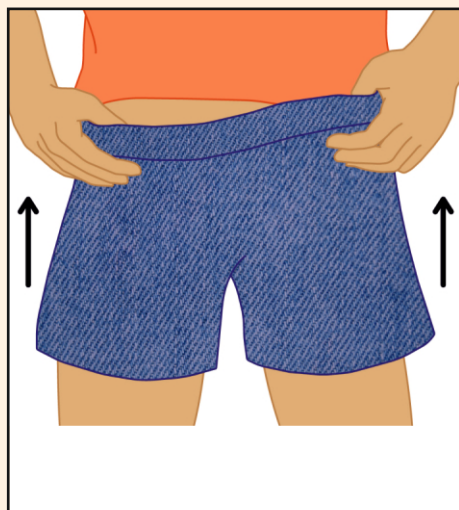
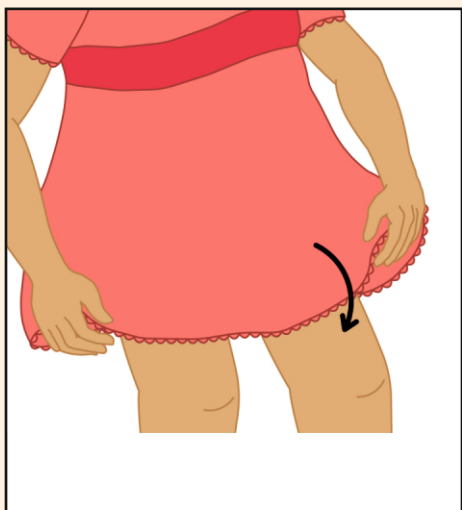


DEFECATING

Pull Up Underpants

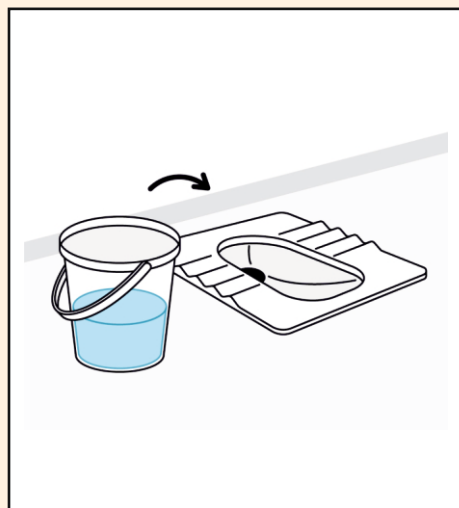
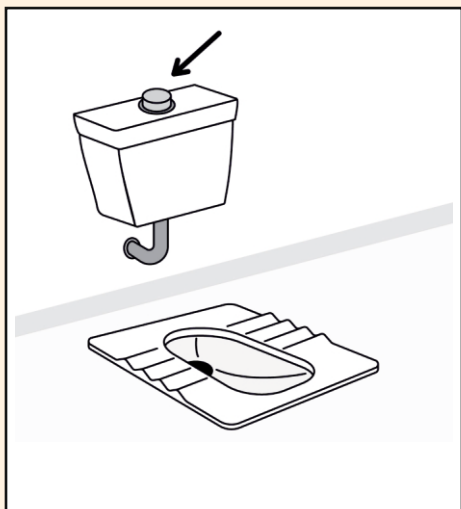


Pull Down / Pull Up Clothes



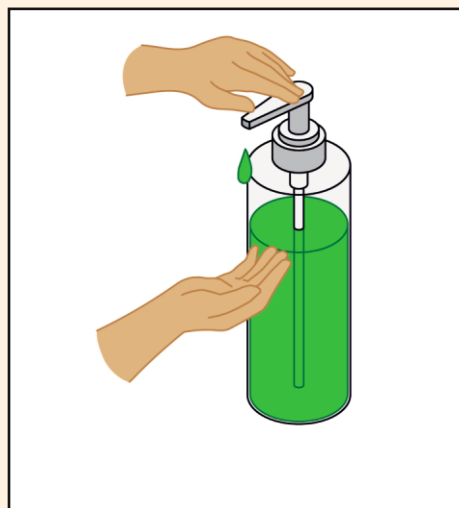
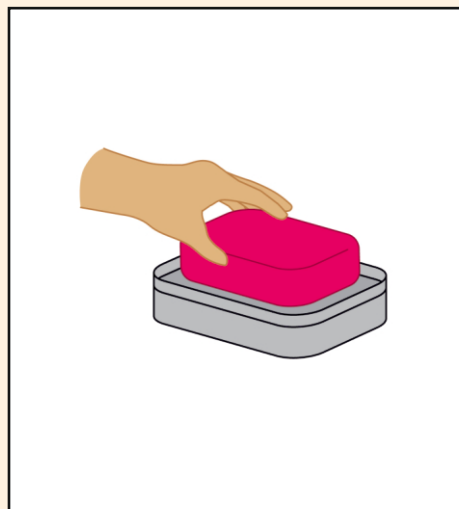
DEFECATING

Flush / Pour Water



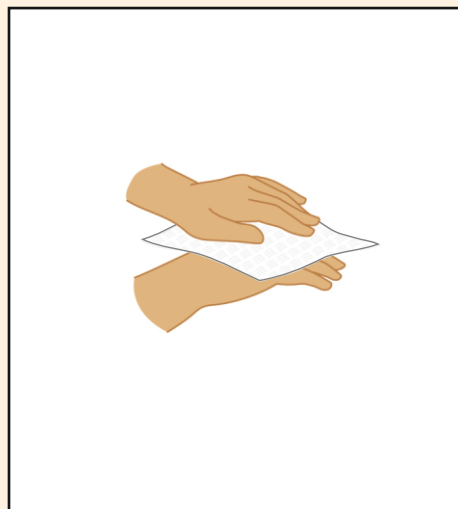
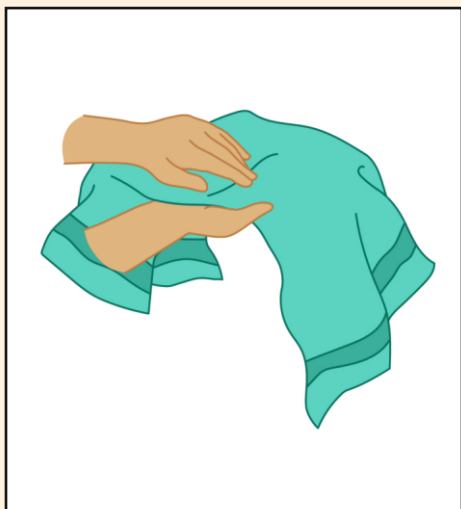
DEFECATING

Wash Hands

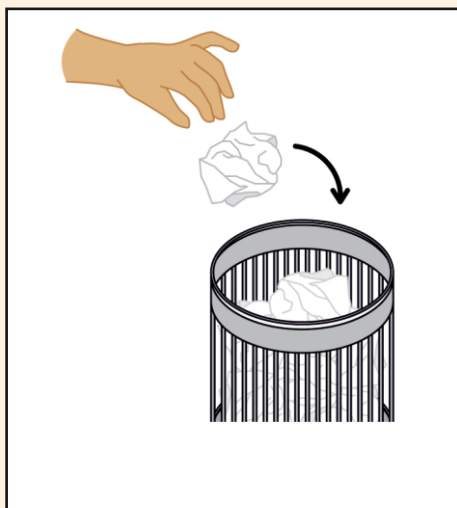


DEFECATING

Dry Hands



Throw in Dustbin





CLEANING UP

A VITAL STEP in achieving independence in toileting, this is also a hard skill for young children to learn. Challenges of motor coordination may make it harder for some children to be able to complete this step independently. Cleaning with a mug of water is particularly challenging as the child has to coordinate both hands simultaneously; pouring with one hand and cleaning with the other. Further, this is also complicated because the child has to make an estimate of how much cleaning is enough to maintain hygiene. This can be a slow process, so it is best to start early.

Getting Started

💡 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ Bucket / Mug of Water / Water Jet / Toilet Paper
- ✓ Foot Stool (Optional)
- ✓ Baby seat for Commodes (Optional)

- 👤 Set up the toilet as required for the child. Some suggestions have been given in the *Overview* and the introduction to this module.

Suggested Words to Use

Using Water in a Mug

1. Open tap
2. Fill mug (with water)
3. Close tap
4. Pour water
5. Wash / Wipe (with other hand)
6. Put mug back

Using Moveable Water Jet

1. Take water jet (near private part)
2. Press
3. Stop
4. Put back water jet

Using Fixed Water Jet

1. Open tap (water jet)
2. Adjust bottom (to ensure water stream is on the private part)
3. Close tap (water jet)

Using Tissue Paper

1. Pull tissue
2. Wipe
3. Throw tissue (in bin / commode)

Repeat all steps till clean

A combination of tissue paper and water may also be used keeping in mind the child's strength and the environment.

Teaching the Sequence

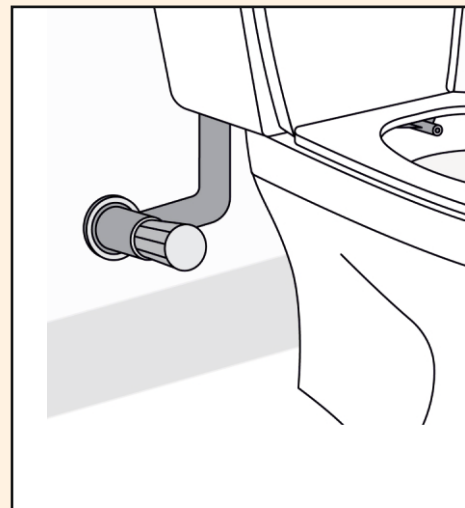
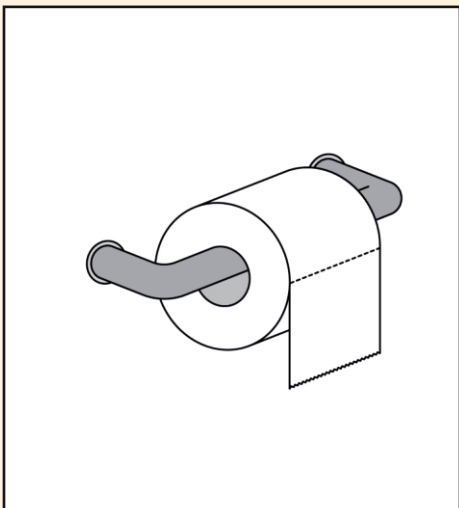
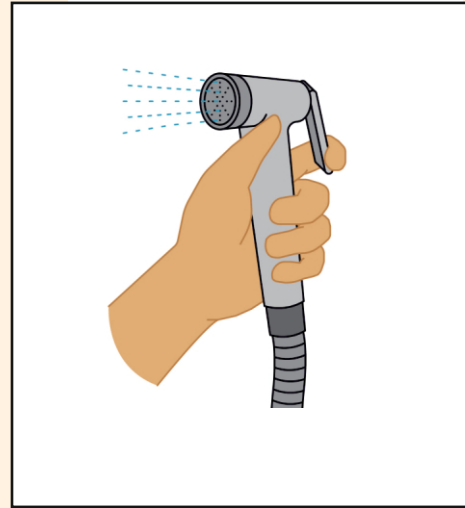
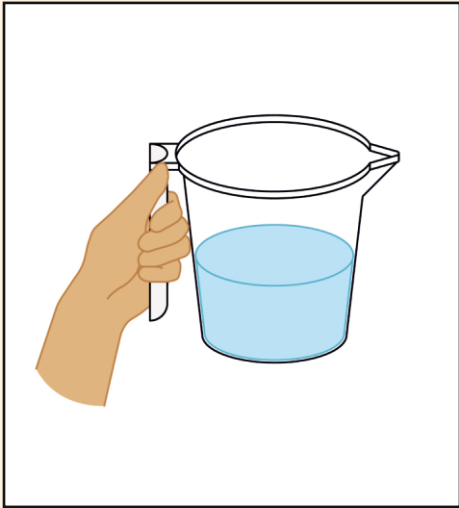
- 💡 Although washing up after is a part of urination and defecation, teach this as a separate skill.
- 💡 Teach using backward chaining, viz prioritizing independence in the last step first, using the words suggested. Backward chaining has already been described in the *Overview*.
- 💡 Follow the child's individual pace. Start with providing as much support as the child requires and reduce it gradually. The level of support that a child requires may vary at each step and across the different ways to clean up.

Things to Keep in Mind

- 💡 When teaching to wash bottom, have a specific number of times to complete action. For instance, start the jet, slowly count to 10, then close the jet; or pour water 10 times from a mug and so on.

CLEANING UP

Wash / Wipe










NEXT STEPS

NEXT STEPS

ONCE THE CHILD is independent, there are additional things you will want the child to learn to. The goals may be prioritised depending on the child's age, skills, strengths, and the family environment.

-  Let the parent know they want to use the toilet, without going off on their own when they are in public places or new environments. Teach them that spaces like their home and grandparents homes are safe places where they can use the toilet independently without having to inform the adult.
-  Return independently to the space (e.g. classroom) or the activity (e.g. game) s/he was in before taking a toilet break. Many young children with autism find it hard to organize their thoughts or retrace their steps. In addition, they can get distracted with fun things such as playing with water or bubbles while washing hands.
-  Be able to identify and use gender specific toilets in public places. Although it is common for little children to use the women's toilet, whenever possible, once boys are able to pass urine standing up it would be better for them to go with males to the men's bathrooms and girls with females to the ladies' bathrooms.

TOILETING SKILLS

-  Boys learn to use urinals (in addition to stalls) that are commonly available in schools and public spaces, and the associated social rules such as not looking at others who are urinating.
-  Check appearance in the mirror to confirm that clothes drape appropriately. Refer to the module on *Dressing Skills* when focusing on this.

Notes

[illegible]

Notes

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AFA's Vision is a society that views the interdependence of people of every ability as valuable and enriching and seeks to provide equal opportunities to all