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## POTTY TRAINING MULTIPLES



*Potty training Multiples can seem like a daunting task but do not despair! We have some tips for you and some stories on very successful potty trained multiples.*

- ⇒ The question that is on every parents mind is WHEN is the right time? You hear wonder stories about the babies that are out of nappies as early as 18mths, and then the other end of the scale of the children that LOVE their nappies and have them as late as 4 years old. There is no right or wrong! You have to watch your children individually and watch for readiness - the most common is taking an interest in others going to the toilet. They are individuals so remember they may very well not be ready to start at the same time.
- ⇒ Buy at least two pottys! If you try to get by with one -- even if they are training at different times -- I guarantee that there will be a showdown when they both try to go at the same time. For that reason, to reduce squabbles, We recommend pottys rather than inserts that fit into the toilet. If your twins are stingy about sharing, you can designate ownership, but in the long run, this may cause extra drama for children who only want to go in "their" potty.
- ⇒ You know your children best, and can determine the approach that will be most effective—praise, sticker charts, prizes and routines. While you may develop a successful routine during the day at home, different tactics may be required for other times. How will you handle naptimes, overnights, outings or day care? Flexibility is the key to success.
- ⇒ Training twins at the same time can be the easiest approach. If that's the path that you choose, you'll find more success by keeping your twins on a similar schedule. Many parents relied on a schedule for their twins when they were infants and they find that it works effectively for potty training also. When twins eat, drink and sleep on the same schedule, they're also more likely to "use the pottys" together. Introducing potty time as part of their daily routine can help them use the toilet consistently.

*Keep it in perspective. Like all phases of parenting multiples, potty training is a temporary transition. Your children WILL learn to use the toilet. You WILL get rid of nappies. You can look forward to a day when they stay dry and use the bathroom independently. It WILL happen. Be patient, flexible and loving. Down the road, you'll look back on this experience and think, "What was the big deal?"*

## TOILET TRAINING – KODY & SAMANTHA IRWIN

Well I think I can quite safely say that we are more or less toilet trained in the Irwin household. And how did it happen??... hmmm, I have to ask myself that constantly, as the whole hair raising, traumatic, frustrating life changing transition in the twins life ended up being a total walk in the park for both myself and the twins. I had worked myself up mentally to think that it was going to be a mammoth undertaking and decided that when, I, thought the time was right to potty train, then I would get every toilet training book from our Club Library and read them from cover to cover to help accomplish this mission.

But the job was made easy for me – the twins decided when the time was right – they were ready before I was! We had a couple of months of sitting on the potty before bath time but that was all they did – it was a neat game which became the nightly ritual before “bubbles”. The game started to take a different angle when the Wylie twins, George and Erin, would come to visit. They were full swing into potty training and all of a sudden our potty was no longer a sitting apparatus before “bubbles” but was actually getting used constantly while they were here. This absolutely fascinated Kody and Sammy and the potty all of a sudden took on a whole new meaning.

The day before the twins 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday (May 12<sup>th</sup>), Sammy christened the potty for the first time. It was high fives as a celebration – no other puppy treats, just cheering and high fives. The day after their birthday, Kody christened the potty – again cheering and high fives. The neighbours now hear “wee wee’s” or “sausage” (or both) coming from our house, day and night now – the twins are so proud of themselves and aren’t afraid to let everyone know!

The next day hubby is off to purchase some more potties – one just isn’t going to cut it! Our house now has 3 potties, and the “big toilet” has the step and kiddy seat. However, the toilet paper is no longer on the holder and is now out of little arms reach, and the water to the cistern is about to be turned off as the little people have grown and now know how to constantly flush! We have the odd accident but that is usually during their day sleep as Sammy especially, has become an expert in taking her nappy off and then redressing herself in the hope we don’t realise she has taken it off!

We are lucky that potty training has been so easy and I think that they key is not to push your kids, and let them give you the signals and signs that they are ready. After all, it is not about when you yourself are ready, but when they are. Roz Irwin



## Estelle and Lucy Wright

I decided when the girls were 2 that they were going to be potty trained! My motivation was mainly having three in nappies (their younger brother was 9 months old). They had ALOT of accidents in the first two weeks. I kept two potties in the kitchen/lounge so they were ready at hand & let them run around with nothing on their bottom halves so it was quick & easy for them to make it in time! I decided after two weeks that I'd had enough of the little puddles everywhere, however when I tried to get them back into nappies they were having none of it! We then moved on to knickers at home & pull ups when we were out. This probably made potty training longer but it worked for us. They worked out the wee's first..... unfortunately for me! It probably took about a month all up for them to be fully potty trained, some days were a nightmare..... one day in particular I had 8 accidents of the number 2 kind! I've heard some mums through number 2 knickers straight into the rubbish..... if mums of multiples did that we would need to take out second mortgages just for the knickers!! Anyway thats ancient history..... its now time for no naps at night & time for Mr Floyd to start potty training. I'm in denial about my wee man..... perhaps I'll let him be till summer!!!!  
The Wrights

## Danielle & Keely Schoonderwoerd

When or how to start...we would put them on the potty just before bath time, now they are 3 and always go to the toilet before they hop into the Bath...stops any accidents too. Start off by putting them on the toilet, potty on the hour every hour to start a routine and then when they actually go, praise them. I used the timer on the oven to remind me and then also it wasn't just me telling them to go to the toilet it was the timer. Make a reward chart or I used sticker books so they got to add an extra sticker every time they went. Stickers as rewards are better than lollies. These are just some things that I tried and some worked and some didn't but always nice to have options.  
Cheers Nichole

## Jayden, Daniel and Lucas Steward

I started last year as the boys approached 3 and it was a complete disaster. They weren't registering wees or poos at all and I spent 3 weeks up to my elbows in both at which point I decided they weren't ready at all...duh! After that experience I decided that if it felt too hard then they probably weren't ready. Daniel then showed signs just after he turned 3 and Lucas was motivated by competition (which is a good thing about multiples) but to make it easier on myself I chose to do them 1 at a time. The boys are 3 1/2 now and it is only in the last couple of weeks that Jayden has sorted the toileting out. So my advice is let go of any age expectations you have, they will do it when they are ready. I also couldn't be bothered with a potty so went straight to the toilet with a little insert seat, just depends what works for you really. Also make sure you have some interesting books for them to pursue so they actually sit still for more than 1 minute. Once you get the toileting sorted I reckon you are over the last big hurdle with multiple toddlers and life gets so much easier.  
Julz

