



## Strategies for Success! DIAPER CHANGES

In this handout, you will find ideas and strategies that may be helpful when managing diaper changes with your child.

- ☆ **Establish a predictable routine** for diaper changes by saying the same thing each time before changing the child's diaper, taking him to the same place, etc.
- ☆ **Change your child's diaper regularly** and talk to him about what you are doing, what he feels, etc.
- ☆ **Play games to get to the diaper changing area**, such as racing, jumping, kicking a ball, etc.
- ☆ **Look at your child's diaper changing area and his position.** Don't let his head or legs hang off of the area. Try to make him comfortable.
- ☆ **Change the place where you change him**, especially if he has outgrown the changing table. For some children, changing the area may be distressing; you can experiment with this and judge how well this might work.
- ☆ **Try to distract your child to help him keep still while you change his diaper** by:
  - Singing with him
  - Telling him a story
  - Talking to him about what you are doing as you do it
  - Offering him a special toy or book that he *only* gets during diaper changes
  - Listening to music
  - Hang or tape pictures or a mirror on the wall or ceiling so he can look at himself
- ☆ **Change the diaper as quickly as you can** without making your child uncomfortable.
- ☆ **Try using a picture schedule** of the steps involved in getting ready for a diaper change, changing the diaper, and cleaning up. Try indicating that it is time for a change by giving your child a clean diaper as a cue of what is coming.
- ☆ **Consider which diapers and wipes you are using.** Has your child outgrown the diapers or have they become uncomfortable? Does the texture or temperature of the wipes bother your child?
- ☆ **Help your child learn how he should behave.** If your child kicks and rolls, stop what you are doing and wait for him to stop while making sure he is safe where he is by keeping your hand on his tummy. As soon as he stops, praise him and continue with the diaper change. Don't let the kicking or rolling get him out of the diaper change because he will quickly learn that this works.
- ☆ **Remember to keep yourself under control and try to keep the activity of diaper changes as positive as possible. Praise your child when he behaves well and tell him specifically what he did well!**



## Strategies for Success! POTTY TRAINING

In this handout, you will find ideas and strategies that may be helpful when managing potty training with your child.

- ☆ **Establish a potty training routine** that you and your child can do together.
- ☆ **Begin by teaching your child how to let you know when he is wet or soiled.** Use consistent words/signs for these feelings.
- ☆ **Make the potty chair available** in the bathroom and work visiting the potty chair in to your routine, perhaps at bath time, first thing in the morning, etc.
- ☆ **Praise your child** when he goes near the chair, sits on it, etc. Don't wait to praise only when he uses it. Remember that this is a learning process.
- ☆ **When you think your child is ready, have him spend a day in underwear without his diaper and be ready to help him go to the potty frequently.**
- ☆ **Whenever your child soils his diaper, take the full diaper to the potty and dump it in while your child watches.**
- ☆ **Try a picture schedule** of how the potty training routine will work.
- ☆ **Establish a system of praise** – stickers, stars, M&Ms, etc. and save these treats so that he *only* gets them during potty-training
- ☆ **Offer your child books to read, music or a story to listen to, or other fun activity** that he can do while he sits on the potty. Make these available only during potty time.
- ☆ **Realize that nighttime potty-training often takes longer** than learning to use the potty during the day.
- ☆ If needed, there are devices that can help your child know when he needs to get up and use the potty at night. **Consult your pediatrician if assistance is needed.**
- ☆ **Understand that each child is ready at his own pace for potty-training** and that potty-training should be attempted when your child is ready, and when you are ready to devote time to helping him be successful.
- ☆ **Keep potty training positive and supportive.** If either of you is getting too upset, it may be a good idea to stop and try again in a week or two.



## Strategies for Success! DISCIPLINE

In this handout, you will find ideas and strategies that may be helpful when managing discipline with your child.

- ☆ Discipline starts at birth with predictable routines, positive time spent together, and boundaries so children learn what to expect from you and from their day.
- ☆ Use discipline to **teach** your child what you expect and how to behave. Children are not born knowing what adults want or how to act in a given situation.
- ☆ Remember the three keys to positive discipline:
  - Be *consistent*
  - Manage the behavior and consequences *immediately*
  - Make the consequences *appropriate* to the misbehavior and the child's age
- ☆ When you face a discipline problem, first look at your own behavior and how you are interacting with your child. A change in the adult's behavior may make a big difference in helping the child learn to behave well.
- ☆ Praise your child when he is behaving well – catch him being good!
- ☆ Tell your child what you expect before going into a situation. Praise his efforts and help him learn from his mistakes.
- ☆ Get down on the child's eye level and use short, simple words to talk to your child about what you expect and/or his behavior.
- ☆ As appropriate, give your child warnings so that he has a chance to correct his behavior. Try using the 123 Magic techniques.
- ☆ Understand that when you try to change a child's behavior, it may get worse before it gets better as he tries to make sense of the new/changed expectations.
- ☆ Remember that you cannot make your child stop having tantrums. You can teach him how to behave and this process takes patience and time.

- ☆ Choose your battles and determine what will result in a timeout ahead of time. If you tell your child “no” or put him in timeout for every misstep, “no” and timeout may lose their impact and he may begin to ignore them.
- ☆ When you use timeout, keep the number of minutes spent in timeout equal to *no more than the number of years in the child’s age*. Use a timer to monitor how long your child is in timeout.
- ☆ Be sure that your child gets lots of daily exercise and outside time to burn off extra energy.
- ☆ Try to determine *why* your child is behaving in a certain way. Consider:
  - Is he tired or hungry?
  - Does he misbehave at certain times of day? Can you help him through those times of day in a different way?
  - Is he trying to tell you something? Could you help him tell you in a more appropriate way?
  - Is there a sensory processing concern that is affecting his behavior (i.e., problem with his senses that needs to be addressed)?
  - Is he trying to get your attention? Could *you* react differently to help improve his behavior?
- ☆ Try to balance ignoring whatever behaviors you can and disciplining others that you cannot ignore. (Do not ignore unsafe behaviors or those that hurt others.)
- ☆ Consider whether a behavior that is acceptable now will also be acceptable when the child is older. It is best to deal with problem behaviors when children are younger.
- ☆ If a behavior is NOT acceptable at home, it should not be allowed in other locations/situations, and vice versa. Consistency is the key!
- ☆ Monitor how much TV and which programs your child watches. Young children cannot tell what is real and what is pretend and will often act out what they see (i.e., violence, wrestling). Keep TV watching to a minimum and when your child watches, make sure the programming is appropriate to his age.
- ☆ Try using a flowchart or picture schedule to help your child see how to act in a given situation.
- ☆ For more information, see *101 Positive Principles of Discipline* by Dr. Katharine Kersey:
 

<http://www.odu.edu/~kkersey/101s/101principles.shtml>

