



The Baby Signs® Potty Training Program Fact Sheet

The Problem

Believe it or not, the average age at which American parents potty train their babies is higher than at any time in history –37-38 months. And that is just the *average* –many 3-1/2 and even 4-year olds are still in diapers. Why? Because many parents today have been led to believe that it is easier and healthier to potty train their babies if they wait until their child is *ready* –typically 2-3 or even later.

Until the late 1950s, American children were potty trained by 12-18 months. Why the dramatic change over the last 50 years? The answer is simple: The introduction of the disposable diaper in the early 1960s made it possible for parents to avoid the more labor-intensive cloth diaper –and in doing so, removed a major incentive to completing potty training as soon as possible. At the same time, diaper companies actively promoted a “modern approach” to potty training whereby parents were advised to wait until their child was “ready” –with readiness defined as *wanting* to be trained and *being able to communicate effectively*. And now, with the creation of size 6T diapers for children over 35 lbs., parents are beginning to postpone potty training even longer. The results of these changes are higher frustration levels for parents and babies – as well as higher profits for the diaper companies.

The Surprising Facts

Potty training under the age of 24 months is actually *easier* than potty training an older child. Why? Because as children get older they want to make more and more decisions on their own. This natural progression towards independence is healthy, but it often sets the stage for a battle of wills when it comes to potty training.

Today’s parents are *unknowingly* setting themselves up for a power struggle when they delay potty training until after the age of 2. Late potty training is likely to result in:

- **Oppositional behavior.** Late potty training is more likely to result in a “battle of wills” between child and parent due to the rise of oppositional behavior after age 2. These battles are ones the parents, by definition, cannot win. The resulting ill-will can damage the parent-child relationship.
- **Feelings of shame.** Late potty training is more likely to create potentially long-lasting feelings of shame and doubt in the child due to the development of the capacity to feel “self-conscious emotions” after age 2.
- **Feelings of low self-esteem.** Late potty training is more likely to result in lowered self-esteem when children get the message that “*only* babies wear diapers,” not “big kids.” These feelings can have negative effects on budding relationships with peers.

The Solution: The Baby Signs® Potty Training Program

By bringing the power of signing to the task of potty training, the Baby Signs® Potty Training Program makes it possible –and easy – for parents to complete potty training before their child’s 2nd birthday. By using five potty-time signs, babies can reach communication readiness well before they can talk.

Advantages of the Program

1. **Easier for Parents.** Potty training a baby under the age of 24 months is actually *easier* than potty training an older child. Why? Because as children get older, they want to make more and more decisions on their own. This natural progression towards independence is healthy, but it often sets the stage for a battle of wills when it comes to potty training.

The Baby Signs® Potty Training Program makes it easier for parents to train their babies because it gives babies a way to communicate even before they can talk. It gives them a way to *tell* parents when they need to go potty!

2. **Fun for Babies.** The Baby Signs® Potty Training Program provides parents with the resource they need to make potty training simple *and* fun. The Potty Training Complete Starter Kit comes with a full set of fun and motivational products babies will love –all designed to inspire them to “get on board the Potty Train.” An illustrated board book, a full-length DVD, conductor’s whistle and reward stickers all work together to make potty time both fun and successful. Additional motivational tools are available free at www.PottyTrainWithBabySigns.com.



3. **Good for Babies' Development.** The Baby Signs® Potty Training Program not only helps babies reach toileting independence earlier, it also gives them the benefits of signing as well. Over two decades of scientific research, much of it funded by the National Institutes of Health, has shown that the Baby Signs® Program:
 - Reduces frustration and aggressive behaviors
 - Builds trust between babies and their parents
 - Promotes positive emotional development
 - Boosts babies' self-confidence and builds self-esteem
 - Helps babies learn to talk
 - Boosts babies' intellectual development
4. **Good for the Environment.** Potty training by the age of 2 will prevent 1500-3000 diapers from entering landfills. Diapers represent a significant danger to the environment. For example:
 - In the year 2006, over 7.25 billion pounds of disposable diapers went into US landfills.
 - It can take up to 500 years for one disposable diaper to decompose in a landfill.
 - Even so-called biodegradable disposables often don't decompose in landfills as they are designed to do so because they don't receive the oxygen necessary for decomposition.
 - Cloth diapers aren't the solution because they have their own environmental costs, especially in water. Many argue it's a "draw."

5. **Good for Family Budgets.** Disposable diapers are a significant drain on the financial resources of young families. When a baby becomes diaper free, parents are free to use those resources in better ways. Parents can typically save about US\$1,500 for each year their child is diaper-free.

For more information about the Baby Signs® Program and its resources, please email info@babysignshongkong.com or call 96333117.

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