

How to help

Independence

# Why is independence important?

- Independence is about learning to do things for oneself, which includes making decisions and taking on responsibility.
- Building confidence. When independence grows a child's confidence also grows.
- Promoting physical development and learning life skills will also help your child's physical development, particularly their hand-eye coordination.

# Promoting independence:

In Nursery children are encouraged to:

- Take off and put on their shoes and jackets
- Pour their own water in a cup and drink it
- Take a piece of fruit, peel it themselves and feed themselves
- Choose learning activities independently
- Know when they need to go to the toilet
- Hold pens and pencils with good grip and control
- Talk and asking for things in simple sentences
- Recognise their own names

# Toilet training:

- Using a potty is a new skill for your child to learn. It's best to take it slowly and go at your child's pace. Being patient with them will help them get it right, even if you sometimes feel frustrated.
- Children are able to control their bladder and bowels when they're physically ready and when they want to be dry and clean. Every child is different, so it's best not to compare your child with others.
- It usually takes a little longer for children to learn to stay dry throughout the night. Although most learn this between the ages of 3 and 5, up to 1 in 5 children aged 5 sometimes wet the bed.
- Most parents start thinking about potty training when their child is between 2 and 2 and a half, but there's no perfect time. Some people find it easier to start in the summer, when there are fewer clothes to take off and washed clothes dry more quickly.

# Looking out for signs:

- You can try to work out when your child is ready. There are a number of signs that your child is starting to develop bladder control:
- they know when they've got a wet or dirty nappy
- they get to know when they're peeing and may tell you they're doing it
- they show they need to pee by fidgeting or going somewhere quiet or hidden
- they know when they need to pee and may say so in advance
- They also need to be able to sit on the potty and get up from it when they're done, and follow your instructions.
- Look on the NHS website if you need more information or support.

# Encourage independence at home

- Brush their teeth twice a day
- Reading books and folders – bring them in everyday
- Get their clothes ready the night before
- Give them time to dress themselves in the morning
- Give them simple options i.e chips or mash, read or play etc
- Let children feed themselves – give them healthy options
- Encourage them to make their own choices
- Be firm but fair! They do not need a reward every time.
- Do not use us as punishment, we want children to be happy to share their success with us
- Be consistent – use a time out if needed, they will soon understand