

# A Guide to Baby-led Potty Training (BLPT) for Childcare Providers

This concise guide is for childcare providers who work with families using BLPT. It offers an introduction to how you can offer continuity of care and help meet babies' individual needs.

## What is Baby-led Potty Training?

BLPT is a method of actively helping babies urinate and defecate. Parents and carers support baby on the potty or hold the baby in an optimal 'squatting' position for passing waste. By utilising natural reflexes and through conditioning, babies quickly come to learn how to use the potty. Parents and carers begin to notice when baby needs to go.



## What are the benefits?

Actively helping babies to pass waste helps them to be more comfortable. It builds confidence and connection in babies and carers. It increases hygiene and helps to prevent nappy rash. It reduces the number of nappies used saving money and the environment.

## Why should we help?

Parents who practise BLPT will really appreciate your help in providing continuity of care. Many babies who use this method show a distinct preference for using the potty, so the familiarity may help them settle more quickly. BLPT will help you get to know the child better and once you have got the hang of it you may find it surprisingly fun!

## How can we help?

### Expectations

In partnership with parents, work out clear expectations about how BLPT will work in your setting.

### **Work out a plan:**

There is no single way to incorporate BLPT in the setting. This will depend on your facilities, parents' expectations and wishes, the baby's development, and what 'back up' (i.e. nappies/training pants) she is wearing.

Options include:

- Holding baby out or offering the potty at regular times, especially when changing nappies.
- Offer the potty when you suspect baby is signalling a need to go.
- Communicate with baby about misses, and change her regularly, or as soon as she is wet or dirty.
- For mobile babies and toddlers, keep a potty in an accessible place so that baby can independently use the potty or show she wants to use it.

### **Spotting signals**

Some babies will make very clear signals to indicate they are uncomfortably full. Younger babies will make unconscious signs of discomfort: crying, grunting, or wriggling. Older babies may make more conscious signals such as staring, tugging their nappy, using sign language, pointing to the potty, or saying a word.

Discuss with parents what these signals might be and how you can act on them if you spot them. Remember: signals often change from hour to hour and week to week, and some babies signal differently with different carers. Baby may act differently in a busy environment.

### **Make it fun**

Potty time should be a fun bonding time for you and your charge. Have toys to hand, play games and sing songs together.

### **Keeping it baby-led**

BLPT is about working in partnership with baby: it shouldn't be coercive. So if baby is showing resistance or distress when using the potty, don't press it. Older babies, especially at around 12 months, sometimes become resistant to using the potty as they assert their independence and take more control of the process. It may be best to back-off during this phase.

### **Communication**

Keep talking with parents so you can share how baby is using the potty at home and at your setting.

### **Further information**

[www.nappyfreebaby.co.uk](http://www.nappyfreebaby.co.uk)

***Nappy Free Baby: a practical guide to baby-led potty training from birth***  
by Amber Hatch (Vermilion 2015)