



# ABC's of Potty Learning - SOS

## After a Few Good Weeks of Potty Learning Did They Forget?

### Takeaway messages

It's common for children to resist or refuse potty reminders or pee themselves rather than visit the potty. After several days, you're frustrated and wondering what to do. Your calm response is essential to overcoming this setback. Do not return to using diapers! Observe when refusals/accidents occur. Consider these 5 reasons why they might happen.

1. Children learn to sense the urges to pee and poop in their body. If praised for how they respond, they'll repeat, make it familiar and master it. Innovating is a part of learning and can look like they forgot what is expected. They want to try something different. Respond with calm. Give a reminder and then praise effort and success.
2. Do you remind them to use potty out of the blue? Children get absorbed in what they are doing; play is more important than peeing. Be consistent. Use a 3-minute reminder. "Time to try peeing in 3 minutes!" Acknowledge feelings calmly and steer to potty with a song or rhyme.
3. Has your child had a recent change in daily routines? A new classroom or caregiver? A move? A parent recently away? Patience and empathy are important if there's been a loss of familiar people and places. Stress interferes with memory and learning. Acknowledge feelings and reassure your child you will help them. Remind gently – using a potty is important.
4. Does your child have pee accidents when upset? Strong emotion can cause pee to release. Acknowledge feelings first "You seem very disappointed not to go along today. A pee accident happened. Let's clean up together." A bit later, remind your child those strong feelings are okay. Using the potty is important.
5. Does your child have a pee or poop accident in a corner? Respond calmly with frown - not anger - to show it's not okay. Remind them, "Pee and poop go in the potty." Ask child to help with clean up. Avoid berating your child or reassuring that it's okay. Sometimes secretive accidents are a signal your child needs more privacy. Consider changing your behavior: do you hover over them while they try to pee or poop? Make up a reason to leave them alone on the potty for a few minutes

