



ABC's of Potty Learning – SOS

Learning to Stay Dry While Sleeping

Takeaway messages

If your child is able to stay dry for 2-3 hours at a time during the day, they may be ready to learn to stay dry while asleep. Limiting fluids an hour before going to sleep will help. Naptime is the best place to start. Create an easy routine.

- Naptime is a good place to start. Continue using a diaper until a week of dryness
- Keep an eye on fluids. Start naptime routine 60-90 minutes after lunch
- Visit potty and encourage peeing. Use a rhyme every day, like “It’s naptime, stay dry time, now it’s time to pee!”
- Praise a dry or not-very-wet diaper as well as peeing after the nap, like “You pee’d just little. Hurray! Let’s visit potty to finish peeing.”
- Nighttime dryness learning should wait until they are 3 – 3 ½ years. Continue to use a diaper until they are dry for a week.
- Spend a few weeks helping your child give up a bottle or sippy cup when going to bed. Stop fluids before the bedtime routine begins.
- Visit potty and encourage peeing before getting into bed. Use a rhyme to remind what you are helping them learn – “It’s bedtime, stay dry time, now it’s time to pee.”
- About 60-90 minutes after they fall asleep wake them to try peeing. Put a potty in room with them, use a dim night light and encourage quietly. Try not to fully awaken them and return to bed.
- If a few nights of this routine still produce a wet diaper, consider how much fluid they take in before the bedtime routine. Add a second wake-up time about 3-4 hours before they would normally wake. Children gradually learn to sense the urge to pee with your support; with practice they will get up and pee on their own.
- Children can benefit from an alarm to wake them to try peeing, especially if they are a bit older. There are mattress alarms that signal when peeing just starts.
- Always praise effort and partial success. Accidents will occasionally happen for a couple of years. Respond to accidents with reassurance, not anger, and have extra bedding nearby to make clean up quick and easy. In the morning, remind your child of the goal and what to do.

