

Pointers For Parents

Study Supports Potty Training Approach

(NAPSA)—Parents wondering when and how to begin toilet training their children should look beyond current medical literature for the answers, according to study findings by the Medical College of Wisconsin, published in *Pediatrics*, the official publication of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The article, titled *Sequential Acquisition of Toilet Training Skills*, is the first study to document the toilet training process in normal children.

The study found that most children do not master readiness skills until after their second birthdays and that the normal age range might vary as much as a year.

“Contemporary medical literature has maintained that toileting readiness skills typically develop between 18 and 24 months, but our data challenges this conventional wisdom,” says lead author Timothy R. Schum, M.D., associate professor of pediatrics at the Medical College of Wisconsin and practicing pediatrician at Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin.

The study, supported by a grant from Kimberly-Clark Corporation, also found girls achieve toilet training skills earlier than boys. “There are several reasons,” says Dr. Schum. “Girls’ language skills mature sooner than boys’ and parents may initiate toilet training girls at younger ages than boys. Practice at an earlier age may lead to an earlier acquisition of skills.”

“As practitioners advocate that parents wait until their children



New research suggests girls potty train earlier than boys.

are ready to start toilet training, ages should be revised upward to 22 to 30 months, when children are typically ready for toilet training. Pediatricians should discuss the research-based Parent-Coached Approach developed from the study, and has three easy steps: Ready, Out and Coach.”

According to the Parent-Coached Approach, parents should watch for their child to show signs of readiness. Readiness skills include a child’s understanding of toilet training words, informing parents that he or she needs to use the “potty,” and staying dry for two hours. When the child has exhibited signs of readiness, the parent should make the switch out of diapers into disposable training pants such as PULL-UPS® pants, cloth training pants or underwear and stay consistent with the choice. Parents should then coach the child through the potty training process with effective techniques such as praise and rewards.

For more information on the Parent-Coached Approach, visit www.pull-ups.com.