

# Potty Training

IN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

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**Potty training** is a significant milestone in a child's development. This guide is designed to support parents, caregivers, and educators in navigating this process with patience, empathy, and respect for the child's unique needs.

We prioritize the child's emotional safety, autonomy, and dignity throughout the journey.

# Potty Training..



# What is Potty Training?

**Potty training** is the process of teaching a child to use the **toilet independently**. This includes helping them recognize their **body's** signals, understand the purpose of the **potty**, and develop the **skills** to use it **consistently**. While it's a **practical skill**, it's also **an emotional journey** and can significantly impact a child's **confidence** and sense of **autonomy**.

**As educators**, you play a **vital role** in supporting children through **the potty training journey**. By **observing** and **recognizing the signs of readiness**, you can create a **supportive environment** that encourages **independence** and **builds confidence**.



# Principles for Success



### Follow the Child's Lead

Look for readiness signs and let the child set the pace. Avoid pressure, which can create stress and resistance.



### Create a Positive Environment

Make the potty familiar. Use encouraging language; avoid negative reactions to accidents.



### Be Patient and Consistent

Accidents are normal. Celebrate small successes to build confidence and motivation.



### Respect the Child's Feelings

Acknowledge fears or discomfort. Offer reassurance without forcing them into unready situations.





# Signs of Readiness

Staying dry for at least 2 hours, predictable bowel movements, discomfort with dirty diapers, recognizing the sensation of needing to go, following simple instructions, and hiding to poop/pee.

Every child is different. If they're showing multiple signs and seem interested, it might be a good time to start! Keep it positive, pressure-free!





# Timing and Approach Matter



### Developmental Readiness

Potty training works best when the child is physically, emotionally, and cognitively ready. Rushing can lead to frustration.



### Emotional Safety

A positive, low-pressure approach helps the child feel secure and confident, fostering trust and a smoother experience.



### Individual Differences

Some children take longer to feel comfortable. What works for one may not work for another, so flexibility is key.





# Ready to Begin?

# Let's Set the Stage for Success

## 1. Introduce the Potty

- ✓ Place a child-sized potty in the classroom or bathroom area for children to explore during free play.
- ✓ Read books about potty training during storytime (e.g., *Once Upon a Potty* or *Potty*).
- ✓ Use dolls or stuffed animals to playfully demonstrate how to use the potty.

Familiarity reduces fear and makes the potty a normal part of their environment.

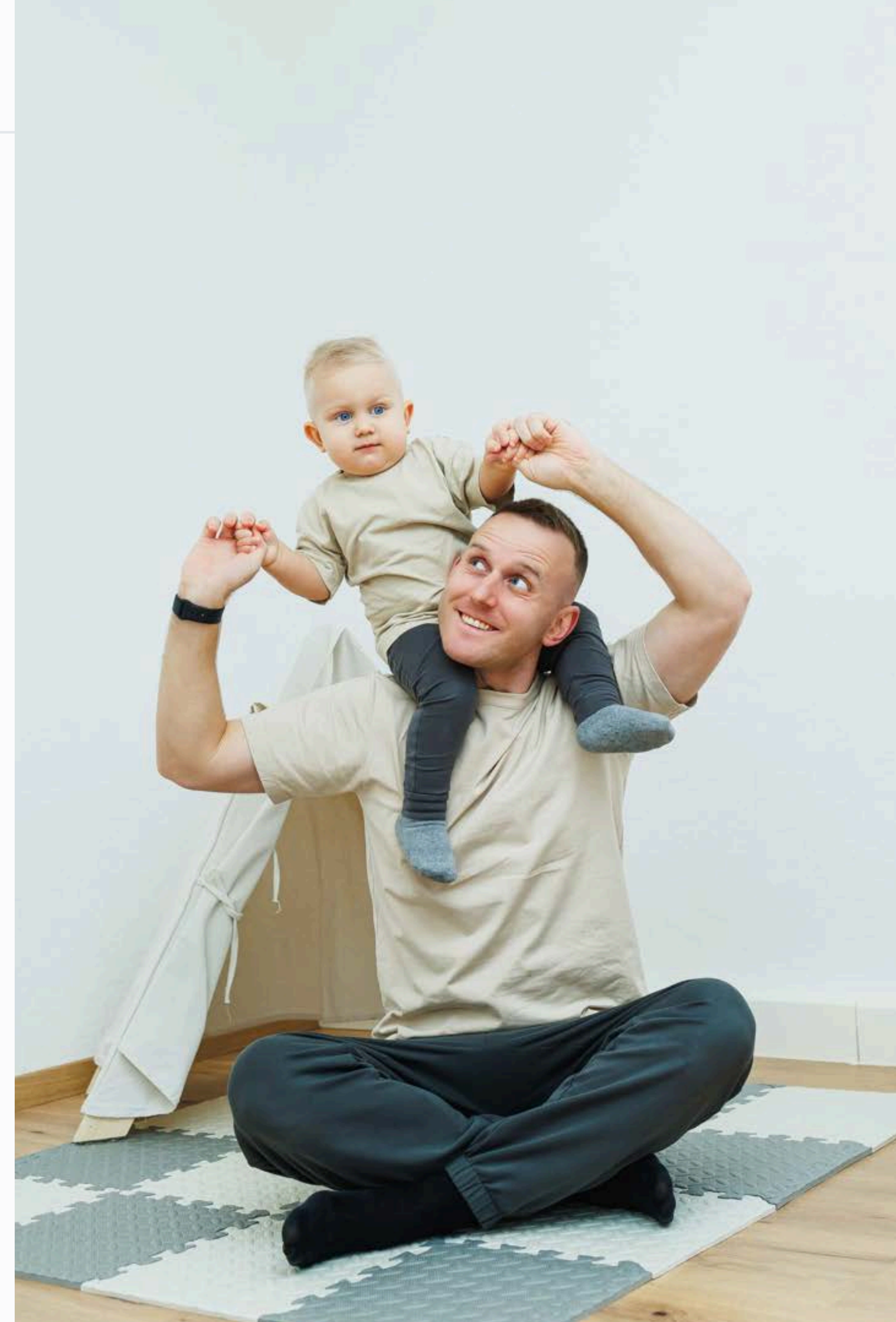




## 2. Use Positive Language

- ✓ Use simple, encouraging phrases like, *"The potty is here when you're ready"*, or *"Your body is learning something new!"*
- ✓ Avoid negative words like *"dirty"* or *"yucky"*. Instead, say, *"Let's clean up together"*, or *"We can try again next time"*.
- ✓ Create a *"potty song"* or chant to make the process fun and engaging (e.g., *"Flush, flush, wash your hands, you're a potty superstar!"*).

Positive language builds confidence and reduces anxiety around using the potty.





### 3. Model Behavior

- ✓ Use role-playing with dolls or puppets to demonstrate the steps of using the potty (sitting, wiping, flushing, washing hands).
- ✓ Create a visual step-by-step guide (with pictures or photos) and place it near the potty or bathroom area.

Children learn through observation and imitation, making the process feel more familiar and less intimidating.





# Is the Child Ready?

# Signs of Readiness

1

## General Signs

- **Physical:** Staying dry for longer periods, ability to pull pants up and down.
- **Cognitive:** Understanding and following simple instructions.
- **Emotional:** Showing interest in the potty or wearing "big kid" underwear.

2

## Avoiding Pressure

- Do not rush the process. Every child develops at their own pace.
- Be mindful of external stressors (e.g., moving, new sibling) that may affect readiness.



# Printable Potty Readiness Checklist



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# Printable Potty Readiness Checklist

In Class Guide

**Potty Training Readiness Checklist**

Free

Powered By: Parent Aps

**Potty Training Readiness Checklist**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Physical Signs**

- ☐ Can walk and run steadily
- ☐ Urinates a fair amount at one time
- ☐ Has regular, well-formed bowel movements at predictable times
- ☐ Stays dry for at least two hours or during naps

**2 Behavioral Signs**

- ☐ Can sit quietly in one position for 2 to 5 minutes
- ☐ Can pull pants up and down independently
- ☐ Dislikes wearing a wet or dirty diaper
- ☐ Shows interest in others using the bathroom
- ☐ Gives physical or verbal cues when having a bowel movement (e.g., grunting, squatting, telling you)
- ☐ Demonstrates a desire for independence
- ☐ Takes pride in accomplishments
- ☐ Wants to use the toilet (not resistant)

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# Preparing for Potty Training..

# Steps & The Environment

### Create a Safe and Supportive Environment

- ✓ Choose a child-friendly potty or toilet seat.
- ✓ Ensure the bathroom is a calm, non-threatening space.

### Set Realistic Expectations

- ✓ Let them pick out their potty or underwear.
- ✓ Read books or watch videos about potty training together.

### Involve the Child

- ✓ Accidents are normal and part of the learning process.
- ✓ Celebrate small successes without over-praising.





# Practical Steps for Potty Training..

# Practical Steps for Potty Training

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## Step 1

Introduce the Concept

- Use simple, positive language to explain what the potty is for.
- Demonstrate by letting the child observe you or a trusted adult using the toilet.

## Step 2

Establish a Routine

- Encourage sitting on the potty at regular intervals (e.g., after meals or before bedtime).
- Use a timer or visual cues to make it fun and predictable.

## Step 3

Respond to Accidents Calmly

- Avoid punishment or shaming. Instead, say, "Oops! Let's clean up together."
- Reassure the child that accidents happen and they're learning.

## Step 4

Encourage Independence

- Teach the child to recognize their body's signals.
- Gradually reduce reminders as they gain confidence.



# Tips for Challenging Moments..

## Tips for Challenging Moments



### Handling Resistance

- If the child resists, take a break and try again later.
- Explore underlying reasons (e.g., fear, discomfort) and address them with empathy.



### Supporting Children with Trauma Histories

- Be extra patient and attuned to their emotional cues.
- Avoid forcing or coercing, as this can re-traumatize the child.

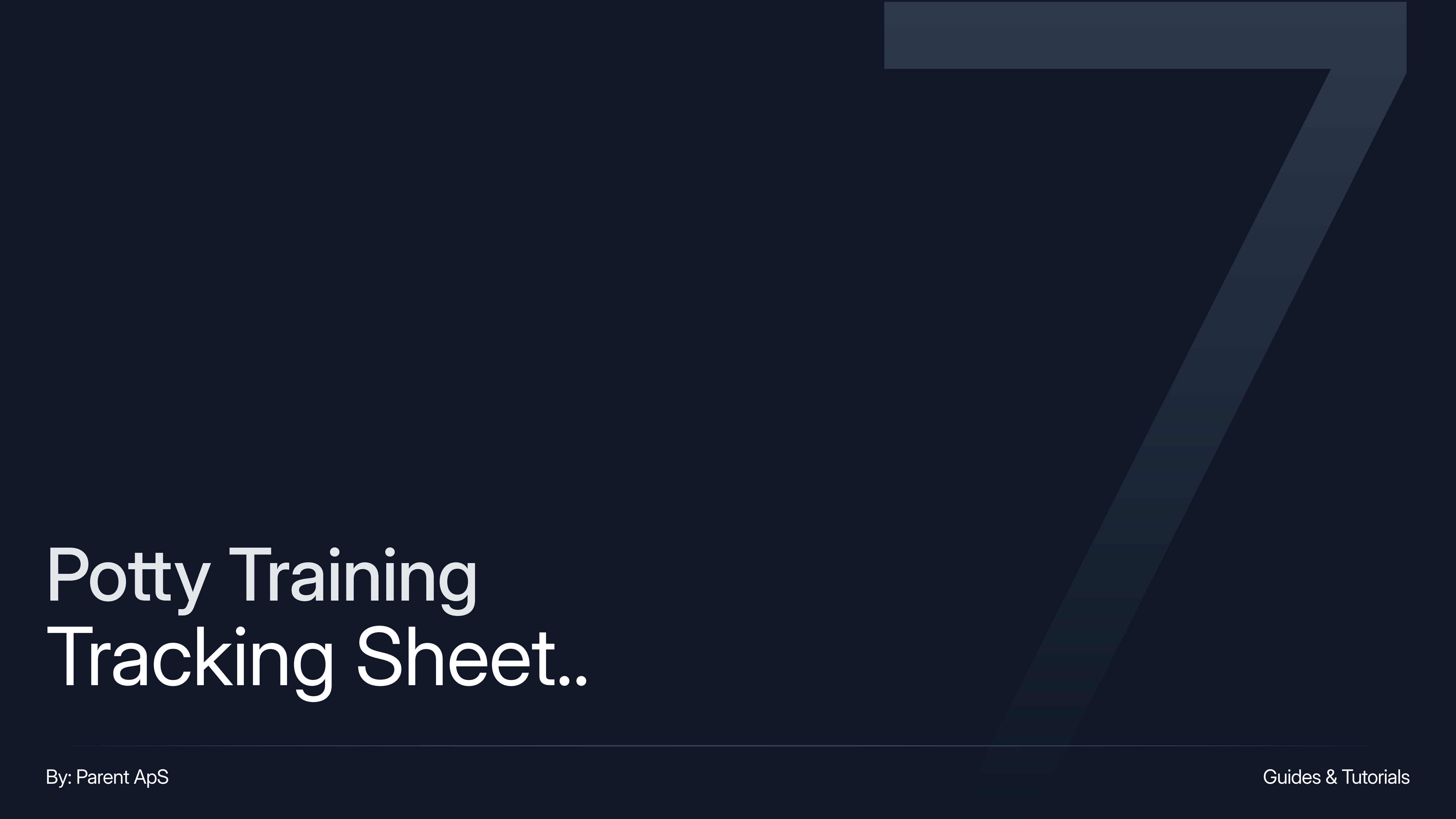


### Self-Care for Caregivers

- Potty training can be stressful. Take breaks and seek support when needed.







# Potty Training Tracking Sheet..

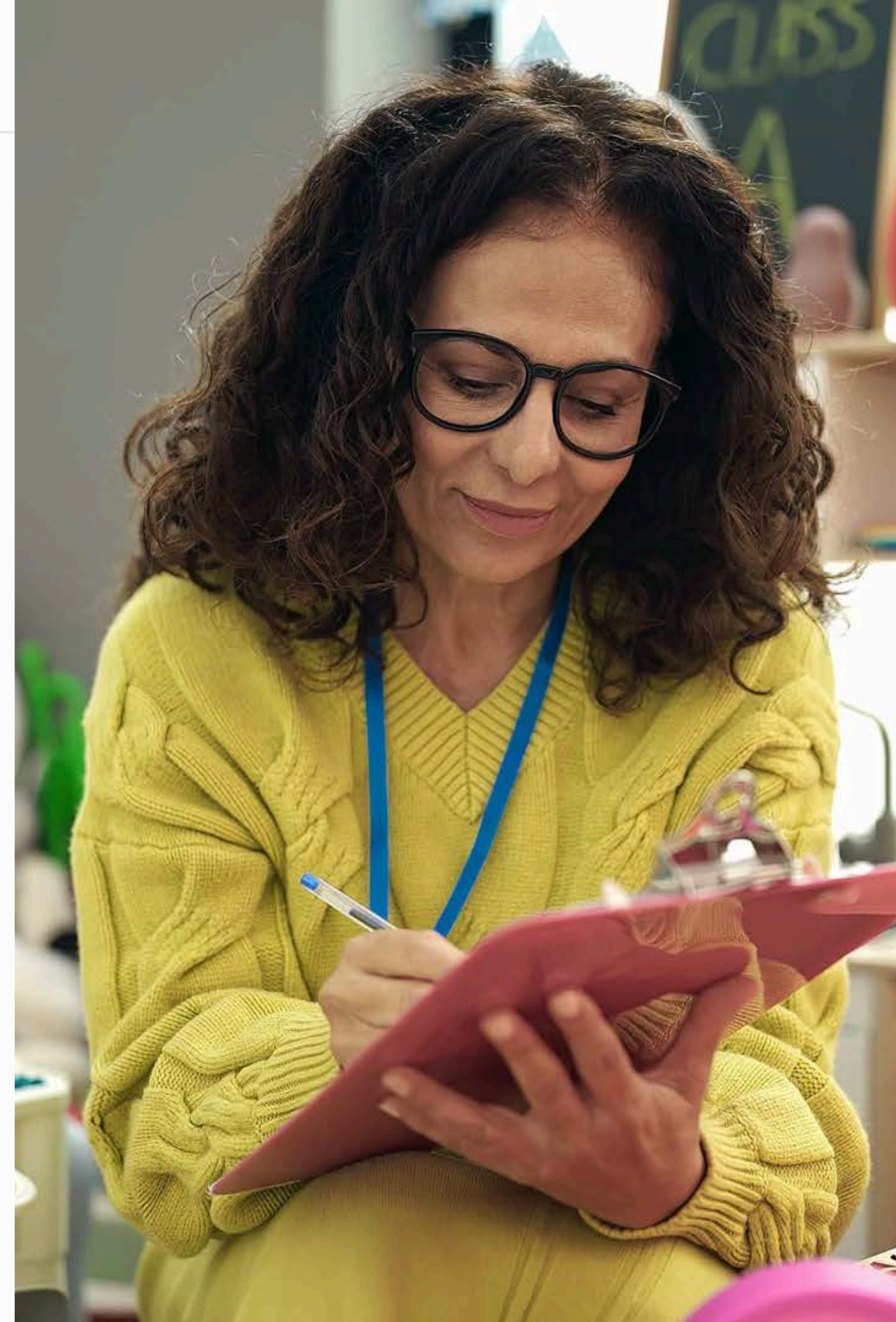


### Why Use a Tracker?

- Helps identify patterns and celebrate progress.
- Reduces pressure by focusing on small wins.

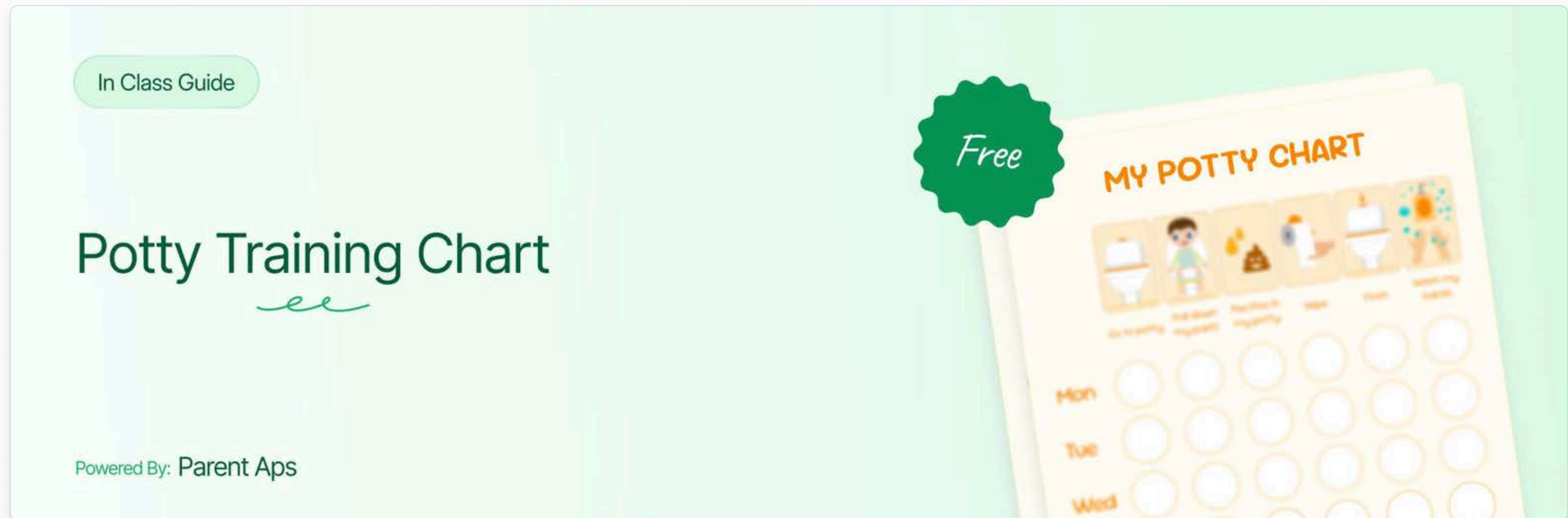
### How to Use the Tracker

- Record successful potty trips, accidents, and any observations (e.g., fears, preferences).
- Use stickers or drawings to make it fun for the child.



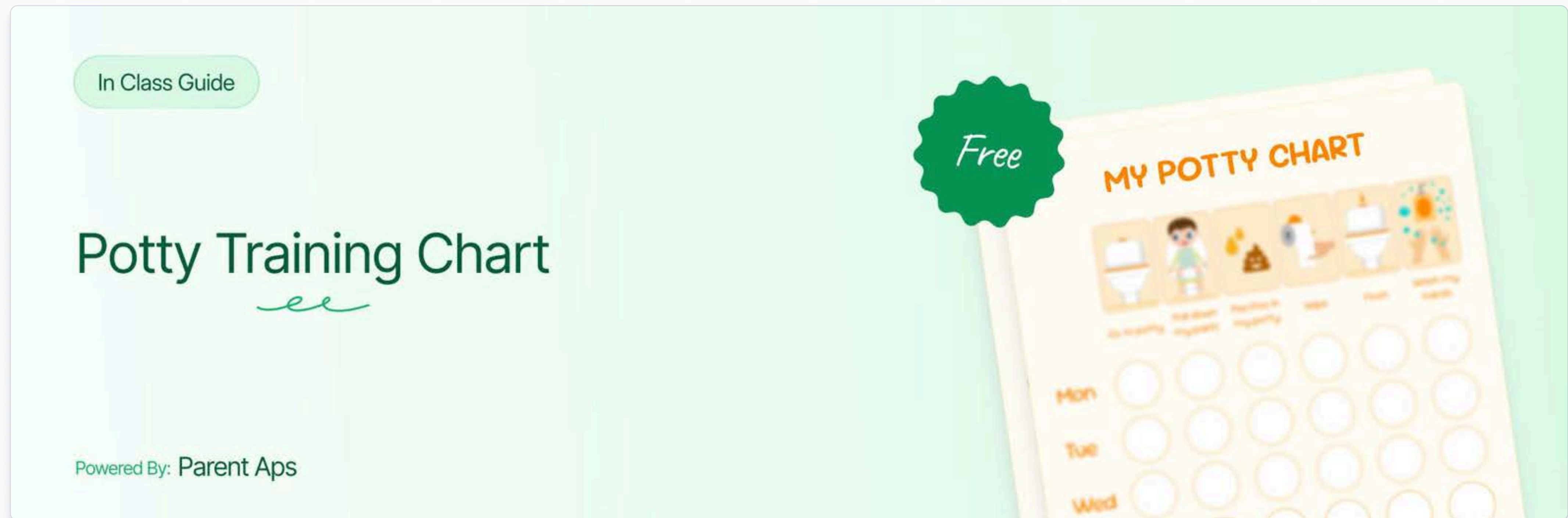


# Printable Potty Training Chart



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# Frequently Asked Questions..

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### **What if my child regresses?**

Regression is common and often linked to stress or changes. Offer reassurance and revisit earlier steps.

### **How long does potty training take?**

It varies. Some children learn in weeks, while others take months. Be patient and consistent.

### **What if my child is afraid of the potty?**

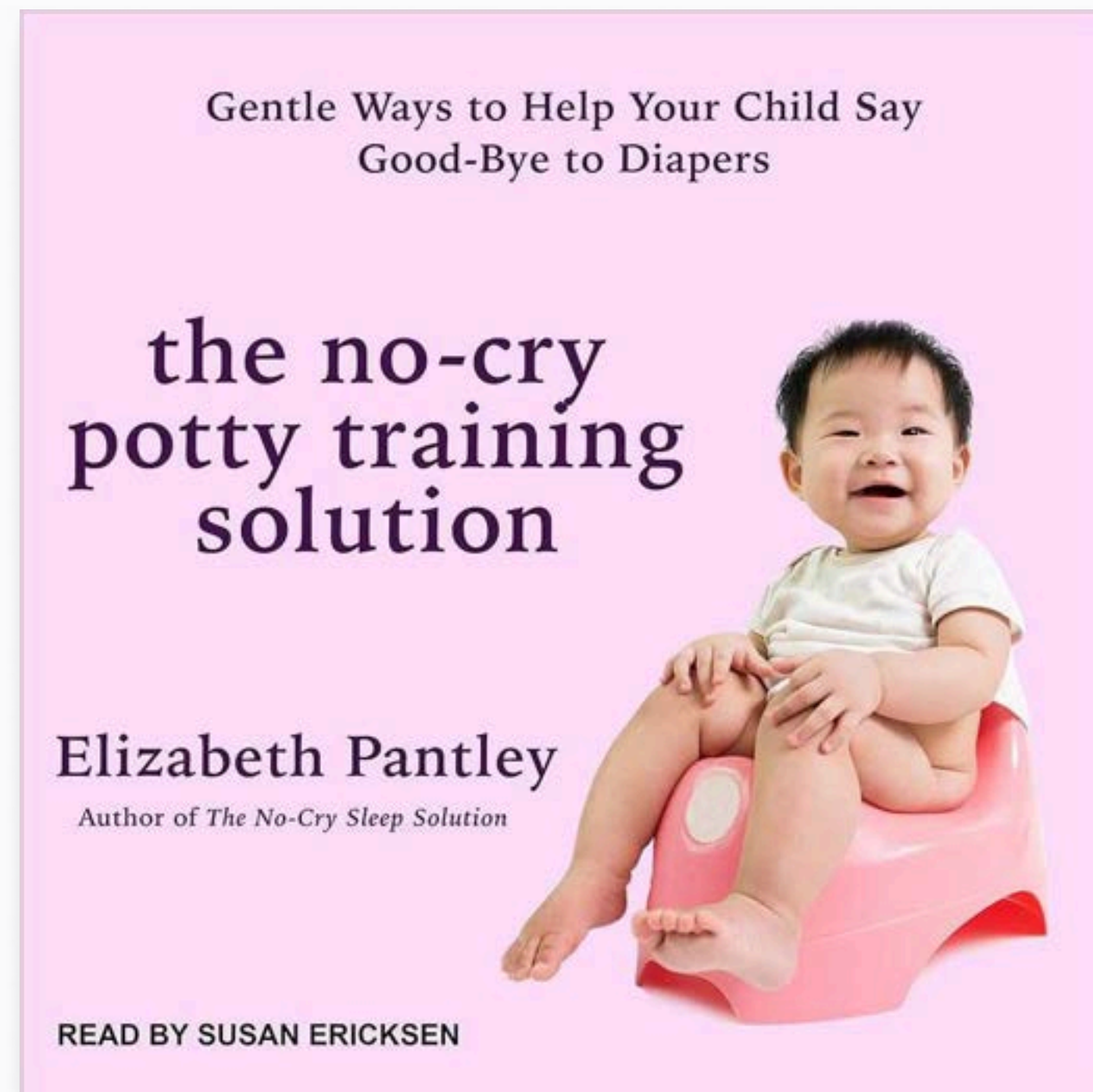
Address fears with empathy. Let them explore the potty at their own pace and use positive reinforcement.



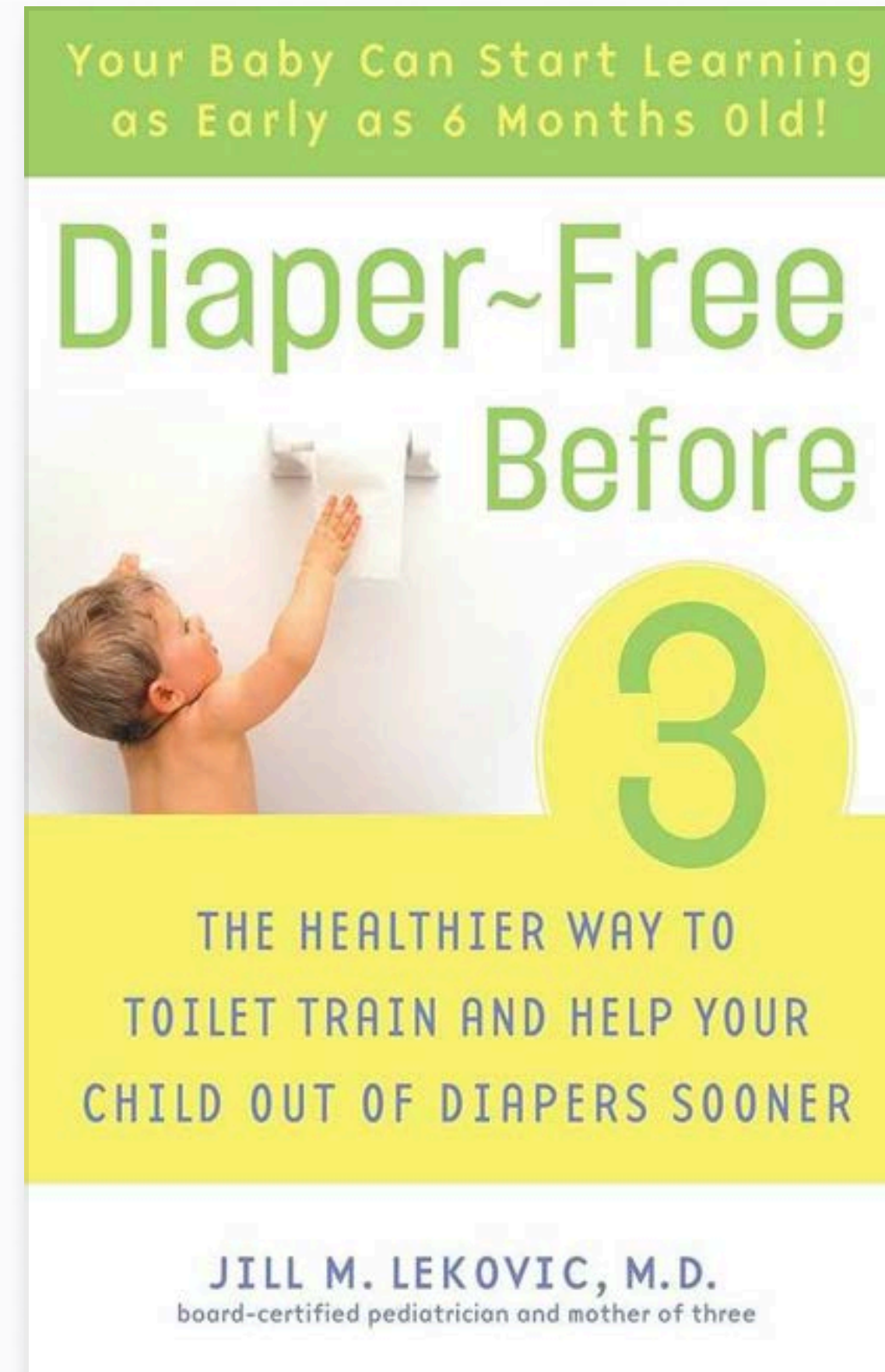


# Resources & Further Reading..

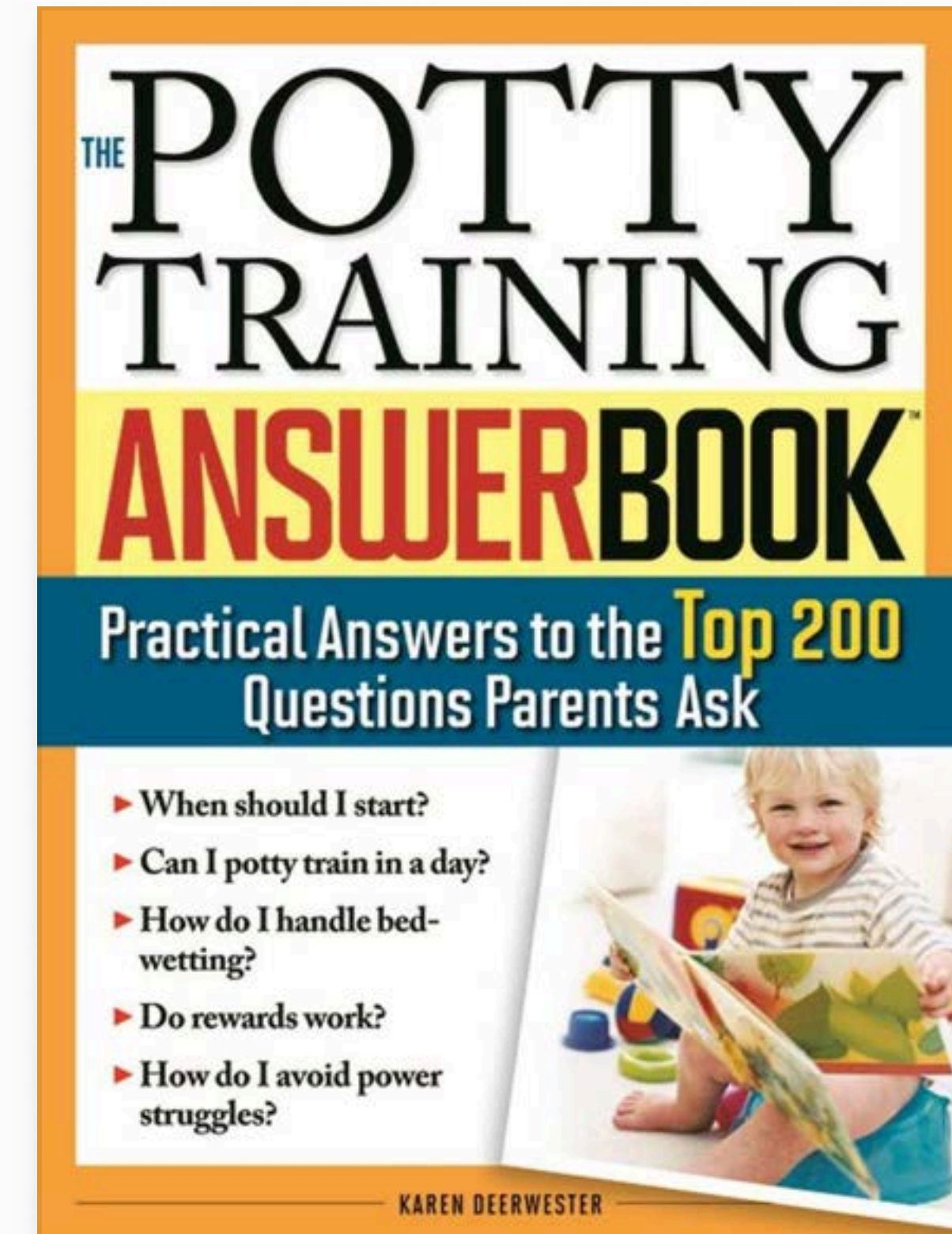
# Books



The No-Cry Potty Training Solution  
by Elizabeth PantleyThe Potty Journey



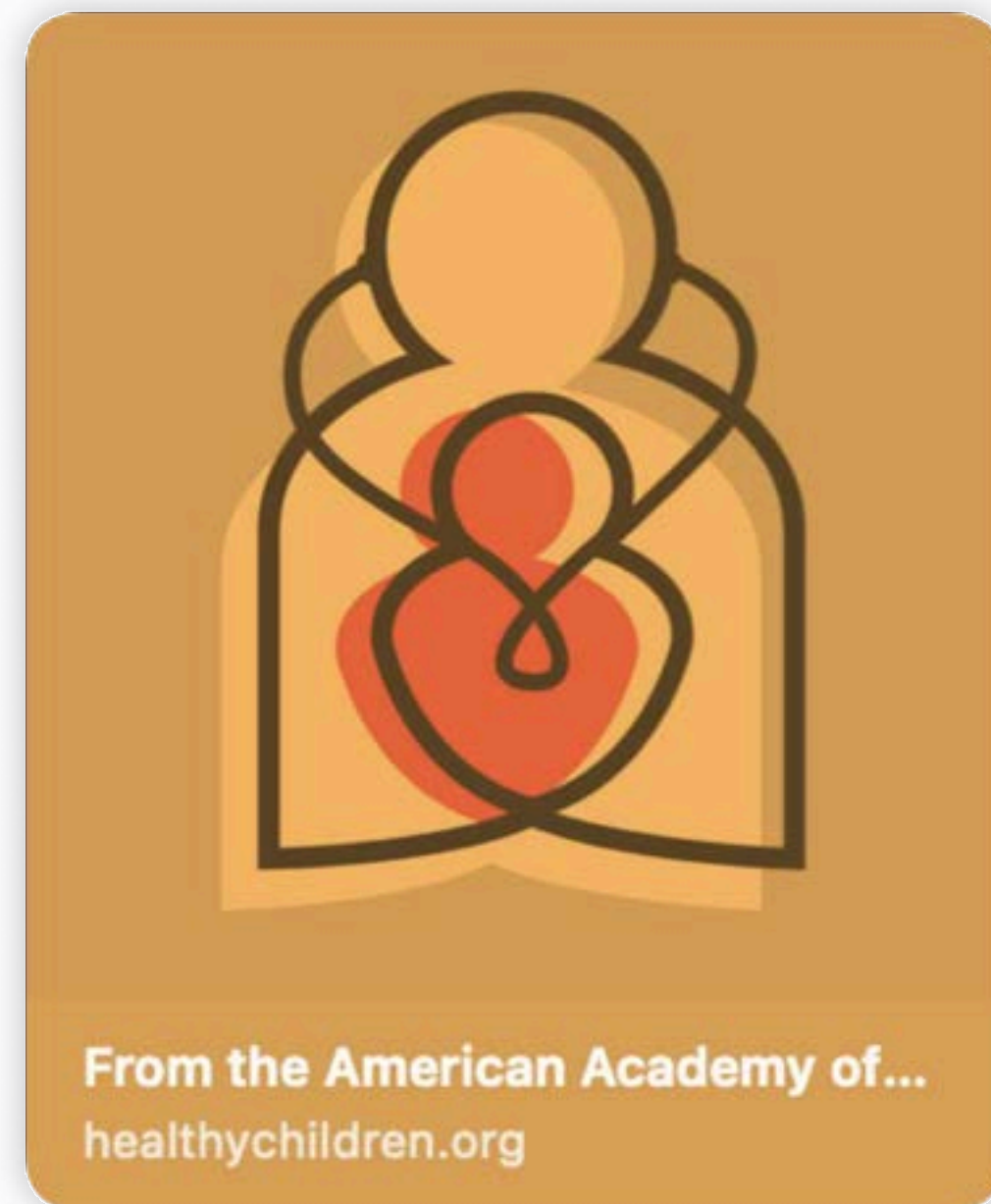
Diaper-Free Before 3  
by Jill M. Lekovic, M.D.



The Potty Training Answer Book  
by Karen Deerwester



# Websites



**Zero to Three**  
[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)



**American Academy of Pediatrics**  
[www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

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