

### A wall trail

Creating a wall trail to the toilet can be useful for your child to remember the location of the toilet. This can be done simply with raised / foam stickers. This is also a useful, early introduction to orientation and mobility training.



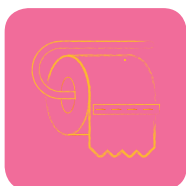
### Object of reference

Using an indicator such as a piece of tissue can help to assist your child in establishing a routine. Place this object on the door of the bathroom for the child to become more familiar with this.



### Potties

These can be easier to access as they are close to the ground and therefore the child feels more secure. This is best located near a wall for a sense of security.



### Toilet Paper

To get the appropriate amount of paper try using a toilet roll holder, placing an elastic band around the toilet roll or you can make a high contrast tactile mark on the wall of how long the paper should be before tearing it from the roll.



### Tactile

Add tactile discriminators where necessary. For example, place a rubber band on the hot tap to discriminate this from the cold.

### Resources

[www.tsbvi.edu](http://www.tsbvi.edu) | [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk) | [www.perkins.org](http://www.perkins.org)

## Equipment

### Seats

If a child is unsteady on the toilet and it is too big, maintaining balance requires a lot of energy and concentration redirected from the task of toileting. Use a toilet seat insert that secures to the toilet and will not slide. Some children find using seat inserts with handles very reassuring.



### Footrest

Ensure appropriate height. Ideally, the child's knee should be bent at a minimum of 90° with feet flat on the floor. If the toilet is too high, place the child's legs on a footstool.



### Wall-mounted

Ensure that all items required are accessible to the child while seated on the toilet. A wall-mounted toilet roll holder are easier for a child to handle than an individual toilet roll.

# Toileting Tips & Visual Impairments

## Part 1: The Environment



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**Children with visual impairments often have difficulty moving towards independent toileting. Vision is often needed for targeted and effective cleaning. Simple environment adaptations can really support your child to progress towards independence in this area.**

Within this leaflet you will find suggestions to address various areas. It is important to note that this leaflet is to be used as a guide only. Please consult with your occupational therapist to address specific concerns or if seeking further advice...

**...please contact the Occupational Therapy Department at ChildVision on 01 837 3635.**

## Introducing The Toilet

Typically, children learn to use the toilet through watching their parents. Therefore, it is essential to provide an alternative method to allow children with visual impairments both the exposure and motivation to use the toilet.

The bathroom can be a scary place. It is full of a mixture of noises (tap dripping, toilet flushing, and fan) and sensations (cold toilet seat, water on hands, soft toilet paper) and can therefore be difficult to understand. Children with visual impairments require additional exposure to help them to understand them and alleviate any fears. The following is a list of suggestions to help your child on their toileting journey.



**1.** Use a toilet story box. Using a box, place all the items that your child would associate and use with the toilet such as toilet paper, a flush handle paired with a recording of a toilet flushing, towel, etc. Explain how the toilet works and why the toilet is used. A toilet story book could be used in conjunction with this.



**2.** Every bathroom is different so take time to orientate them and let your child explore, safely. This can involve feeling the objects, listening to the noises in the room and explaining the purpose of each. This will make orientation to new bathrooms easier as you can verbally explain what is in the room.

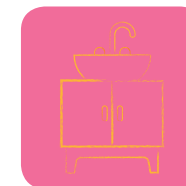


**3.** Allow your child to be in the bathroom when you or a sibling is using the toilet speaking through each step. Similarly, when you are assisting your child in the bathroom speak through the process, explaining what you are doing and why you are doing it. Support your child to participate in their toileting by placing their hand over yours while you complete each step, providing this additional prompt should alleviate some fears.



**4.** If your child has gotten a fright in the toilet or appears nervous start very slowly by doing something they enjoy in the room such as singing their favourite song.

## Making the Environment Accessible



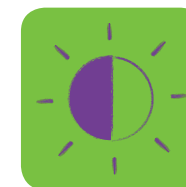
### Clutter

Minimise clutter around the toilet. Store toilet cleaning products in a press space.



### Lighting

Natural light is generally preferred with the exception of conditions with associated with light sensitivity. Control the level of light in your bathroom by using blinds, this can also help to minimise glare, particularly in glossy tiled surfaces.



### Contrast

Ensure that there are distinguishable colours between the objects that your child will be using and their surroundings. Highlight important objects such as a large flusher, large door handles and taps.



### Access

Ensure that there is a clear walkway for the child to manoeuvre around the bathroom. Remove any loose mats and check that any radiators beside the toilet are turned off or temperature restriction controlled.