Potty Training Strategies

Toileting Readiness:

* Awareness of being wet or having a bowel movement
* Has a dry period for at least 2 hours
* Ability to pull up/down
* Ability to get up and down from toilet
* Ability to sit on toilet
* Shows interest in others going to the bathroom

Schedule Training Approach:

* Visual Schedules
  + Identify appropriate times for toileting and build those into main visual schedule
  + Develop a visual schedule for bathroom routine
  + Caregiver guides the process and provides the minimum amount of physical assistance required to complete all steps on the schedule
* Reinforcers
  + Routine Reinforcer: the last step of the bathroom routine visual schedule should be a choice based activity or reinforcer that can happen in the bathroom (Ex. Sticker, high fives, or blowing bubbles). This reinforcer is not tied to success in toileting but for completion of the routine.
  + Success Reinforcer: a highly motivating reinforcer should be in place for successful elimination in the toilet (candy, small toy, tv time, etc.)
* Basics
  + Aim for 6 bathroom trips per day
  + Stick to the routine
  + Determine words to use and have all caregivers using the same words (potty, poo poo, etc.)
  + Encourage fluids
  + Dress child in easy to manage clothing

Sensory Tips:

* Sensory break prior to going to scheduled bathroom time
* Use a smaller bathroom if possible (half-bathroom)
* Make sure feet are planted on floor or a stool
* Use a visual timer to make sure child stays on potty until time is up
* Social stories
* Reading books about going to the potty
* Bathroom play time: caregiver and child engage in a fun activity each day in the bathroom (bubbles, water toys in sink, or finger painting in sink or tub)
* Calming sensory input, music, or a favorite toy during bathroom time