

PEE TRAINING OUTDOORS

When my oldest son was a toddler he was, as I believe most boys are, totally uninterested in learning to use the toilet. He really didn't mind how wet, dirty and smelly he was and it was so easy to wait and let Mom (me) clean him up. Naturally, Mom (once again – that would be ME) wasn't enjoying this NEARLY as much as he! Having read the books and tried those ideas, along with the usual begging, bribing, punishing and screaming until my throat hurt, to no avail, I decided to get more creative.

At the time, we were living in a house in the woods with a lovely, gated deck off the kitchen. My husband often, because it was too much trouble to walk up the stairs to the bathroom on the second floor, peed off the deck. Having used all of the above training methods to break him of the habit, also to no avail, I stopped fighting with them and started thinking. Ah Ha! Plan (hmmm, I think it was...) "P" was born!

I drew "little boy's" attention to "big boy's" actions a few times and then took over. During the day I started encouraging him to pee off the deck. Boys of all ages love to wave that thing around, especially outside. It didn't take him very long to get the idea. Suddenly, as if it just started happening, he knew when he had to pee and ran for the deck to do the deed! The load of wet diapers was getting lighter so who cared if there was a ring of yellow grass around the deck!

I realized the next problem we had to solve was aim. I didn't care if several of the deck uprights got sprayed every time, because it was easy to hose off the deck, but he wasn't safe to bring inside! I convinced him to get close enough to pee out between the posts, and keep them dry but, since they were about 8 inches apart, there was still a wide splash zone at the other end.

Bugs! Yuck, nobody likes them! I took him down to the sidewalk and suggested he pee on them. That was TOO MUCH FUN! It didn't take long at all for him to perfect his aim! Then he figured out how to control the flow so he could get more bugs per pee! He was a happy little boy and I was a relieved Mom. I knew we were almost to the finish line!

On a rainy day, I entertained him by drawing bugs and ants on single squares of toilet tissue that he could throw into the toilet to pee on. That did the trick! By then he was used to having dry pants, and loved having control over something important in his life, so he was trained. About this time, he became uncomfortable with dirty pants too, so I told him the first time he used the toilet for that, I'd call his Dad at work and let him tell him all about it. I don't think his Dad was especially pleased to be called out of an important meeting for his son to brag about his new skill but, so what, it worked the first time! Life was GOOD!

I was lucky to live in the woods at the time, but this plan would work using the back porch of the house in town, where I live now. City or apartment dwellers will have to be more creative! You might have to invite yourselves for a week long visit with Grandma, or Aunt Nellie or friends with a yard. If you are really stuck, get more creative! Do you have a cat and a litter box? Hmmm.....

However, if you have a GIRL, you are on your own!

Patricia Kenworthy June 2006