

SHEKNOWS PARENTING



Potty training, Round 2

What causes a potty-trained child to revert to former ways and refuse to use the toilet? Experts chime in with their thoughts and offer advice for getting rid of diapers for good.

Any number of behavioral and/or physiological factors can cause a child to regress from successful potty training. It's up to parents to identify potential factors and address them accordingly.

Why would a potty-trained child refuse to use the toilet?

"More conflicts over toilet training occur because parents are afraid to allow children to use the toilet on their own timetables," says Kelly Perez, director of the Natalie G. Heineman Smart Love Preschool. "Parents are often told children should be trained by a certain age, and this can result in parents pressuring children, which can leave children feeling bad or inadequate if they don't give up their diapers."

Life changes

According to Perez, regression is not usually associated with a particular age or time frame but rather with specific situations. "It is common after a new sibling is born, with stress or pressure in the child's life or when the child is not receiving enough one-on-one attention."

Bottom line: "The best way to address regression is to remove all the pressure and try to best understand developmentally where the child is coming from," says Perez. "When children feel heard and understood and are able to turn to a loving a warm relationship with their parents in times of regression, regression becomes phase-specific and not entrenched."