

POINTERS FOR PARENTS

Making Potty Training More Like Child's Play

(NAPSA)—Being ready to use the potty can be an exciting yet challenging time in a child's life. It doesn't have to be stressful if parents know what to expect.

There's no set age to start toilet training. Parents can watch for cues such as their child being able to follow simple instructions, helping to undress himself or giving verbal and facial clues that he needs to use the toilet.

A child should also be emotionally ready so it's important to be patient and encouraging.

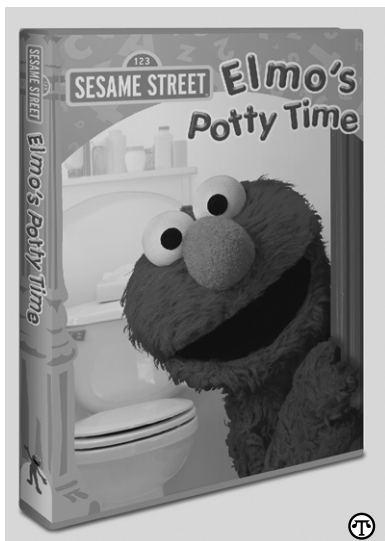
Here are a few tips from "Elmo's Potty Time," an entertaining DVD from Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit educational organization behind "Sesame Street."

Rather than taking a clinical approach to potty training, the video is full of songs, stories and entertaining live-action footage that promote self-confidence and togetherness. The DVD also features a printed parent guide on how to make learning to "go potty" a reassuring and positive experience:

- **My Very Own Potty:** If possible, take your child to the store to choose the potty and potty accessories together. Let him sit on the potty a few times with his pants on, so he learns he will not fall in. You can also read him a book about using the potty.

- **Uh-oh...Gotta Go!** Help your child learn to recognize the feeling she gets right before she has to go to the bathroom. Whenever she gets that feeling, tell her to stop doing whatever she is doing and say, "uh-oh, gotta go!"

- **Wipe, Flush and Wash!** Remind your child that after going he must wipe with a little



It's important to praise your child for small accomplishments, such as recognizing that she needs to use the potty.

bit of toilet paper, then flush. Finally, he must wash his hands with soap and water for at least as long as it takes to sing the ABC song.

- **Keep Trying!** Never scold or punish a child learning to use her potty. All children have accidents. Help your child regain confidence by saying, "That's okay: Next time you'll remember to use your potty."

Toys and DVDs can help children process the idea. In the "Potty Time" DVD, Elmo learns that everybody has to use the toilet and he can learn to do it, too.

- **Praise Your Child for Trying:** After a few successful tries, you can keep her motivated by buying big kids' underpants. Praise your child for small accomplishments.

For more information, visit www.sesameworkshop.com.