

Ready, Set, Potty!

Brenda Batts

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One of the toughest challenges facing parents of children with special needs is potty training. Learning to use the toilet is a major challenge and change even for children without development disorders; imagine how hard it can be for a child who relies on routine and consistency to get through the day.

Luckily, behavioral consultant Brenda Batts has written the instructions parents need to successfully guide a child along the path toward bathroom independence. "...it is imperative to understand that our children are more like us than they are different," she says. Using this premise as the foundation, Batts shows how to create a simple, intelligent, logical process that a child will not find difficult to follow. Many of her techniques may also be used in other areas of life that need logic and clarification.

Batts begins with a discussion on how people with developmental disorders process the world around them, and why routine and predictability is so important. She offers questions so readers can determine whether or not their child is ready for potty training, and gently points out that potty training isn't an event, but a process.

The bulk of the book is a detailed exploration of seventeen steps in the potty training program, including: picking a theme, decorating the child's underwear, and creating a potty story. Step by step, Batts explains the reason behind each element along with its practical application. She also provides examples of how different families succeed, and often uses her own experience training her son, Alex, to illustrate a point. Quick tips at the end of each explanation provide more ways to avoid problems and ensure success.

Batts is terrific at presenting instructional material in a clear, easy-to-follow manner. She has structured her book in a way that allows for easy cover-to-cover reading but which also lends itself to later reference. Charts, pictures, and diagrams add clarity to her explanations; readers will be confident that they, too, will be able to teach children in this process.

Also evident in the text is Batt's utmost respect for her readers and their children; it shows in her treatment of the subjects in her examples. As the mother of a child with developmental disorders, she knows exactly what it's like to struggle with challenges like potty training, and offers warm understanding in addition to useful advice.

Care givers who need a useful, creative, and structured potty training program will do well to start with *Ready, Set, Potty*.

ANDI DIEHN (September 20, 2010)

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