Holy Cannoli, Two Peds in a Pod® turns ten!



This little ten-month-old wishes Two Peds in a Pod® a happy ten-YEAR-old birthday!

Let’s take a stroll back ten years to 2009. Ten years ago

Facebook was just five years old. Back then there was no Instagram (2010), no Pinterest (2010), no Snapchat (2011). People were mesmerized by virtual vegetable picking (FarmVille) and taking care of Zhu Zhu pets. Bulky video gaming consoles ruled. The "New" Super Mario Bros. Wii really was "new." Apple's "pile of poo" emoji had just arrived the year before. And ten years ago, Two Peds in a Pod® was born. The idea that doctors would write advice on the internet was so novel that even NPR thought the concept worthy of a story. Today we take a Happy Birthday look back at our first five posts:

Then and now

Our blog's first five posts, from the summer of 2009, include the very same topics parents ask us about now in the summer of 2019.

Back then parents wondered about infant sleep, or lack thereof. Please note that we began our infant sleep podcast with the reminder that newborns are not meant to sleep through the night. Fisher Price should have listened to our podcast, because now in 2019 we are writing about rock' n play recalls.

Two posts tackled **Potty training** and **picky eating**. Spoiler to both posts: you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink!These days, we're still talking about both topics in the office. But now, people also ask about the need for probiotics to regulate bowels and digestive health in their child. Unfortunately, in 2019 probiotics have not panned out to be the hoped-for panacea for all gastrointestinal ailments. But they are helpful in some types of diarrhea.

In 2019 we talked about the tick borne illness **Lyme disease** and we're still talking about ticks now. As for the **mystery object** Dr. Lai found in a drawer, ten years later the models are kinder and sport a raised lip instead of a contraption

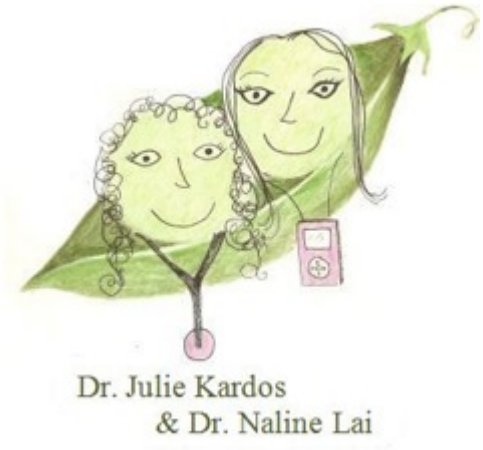
that can break off.

Blog writing a decade later

Internet traffic has grown exponentially. Possibly because of so many sources of misinformation, we see more and anxious parents who receive conflicting information about how to raise their kids. We depend on you to let your friends know about this site. We would rather spend more time on writing than on search engine optimization. Despite the congested writing climate, our mission (read our maiden voyage) remains the same, to bring you practical pediatric advice. What fuels us? Our intense and comprehensive pediatric training from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, our combined **over forty years** of practicing pediatrics, and our passion for helping children and their families, give us the experience and the motivation to continue to help all of you whether online or in our offices.

A last blast from the past

How many of you remember our initial logo penned by the combined efforts of Dr. Kardos's brother and her sister-in-law? That's an iPod dangling from Dr. Lai's neck-remember those?



It's good to be ten.

Julie Kardos, MD and Naline Lai, MD
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A guide for parents of one-year-olds



When your baby turns one, you'll realize he has a much stronger will. My oldest threw his first tantrum the day he turned one. At first, we puzzled: why was he suddenly lying face down on the kitchen floor? The indignant crying that followed clued us to his anger. "Oh, it's a tantrum," my husband and I laughed, relieved.

Parenting one-year-olds requires the recognition that your child innately desires to become independent of you. Eat, drink, sleep, pee, poop: eventually your child will learn to control these basics of life by himself. We want our children to feed themselves, go to sleep when they feel tired, and pee and poop on the potty. Of course, there's more to life such as playing, forming relationships, succeeding in school, etc, but we all need the basics. The challenge comes in recognizing when to allow your child more independence and when to reinforce your authority.

Here's the mantra: **Parents provide unconditional love while they simultaneously make rules, enforce rules, and decide when rules need to be changed.** Parents are the safety officers and provide food, clothing, and a safe place to sleep. Parents are teachers. Children are the sponges and the experimenters. Here are concrete examples of how to provide loving guidance:

Eating: The rules for parents are to provide healthy food choices, calm mealtimes, and to enforce sitting during meals. The child must sit to eat. Walking while eating poses a choking hazard. Children decide how much, if any, food they will eat. They choose if they eat only the chicken or only the peas and strawberries. They decide how much of their water or milk they drink. By age one, they should be feeding themselves part or ideally all of their meal. By 18 months they should be able to use a spoon or fork for part of their meal.

If, however, parents continue to completely spoon feed their children, cajole their children into eating "just one more bite," insist that their child can't have strawberries until they eat their chicken, or bribe their children by dangling a cookie as a reward for eating dinner, then the child gets the message that independence is undesirable. They will learn to ignore their internal sensations of hunger and fullness.

For perspective, remember that newborns eat frequently and enthusiastically because they gain an ounce per day on average, or one pound every 2-3 **weeks**. A typical one-year-old

gains about 5 pounds during his entire second year, or one pound every 2-3 **months.** Normal, healthy toddlers do not always eat every meal of every day, nor do they finish all meals. Just provide the healthy food, sit back, and enjoy meal time with your toddler and the rest of the family.

A one-year-old child will throw food off of his high chair tray to see how you react. Do you laugh? Do you shout? Do you do a funny dance to try to get him to eat his food? Then he will continue to refuse to eat and throw the food instead. If you say blandly," I see you are full. Here, let's get you down so you can play," then he will do one of two things:

1) He will go play. He was not hungry in the first place.
2) He will think twice about throwing food in the future because whenever he throws food, you put him down to play. He will learn to eat the food when he feels hungry instead of throwing it.

Sleep: The rule is that parents decide on reasonable bedtimes and naptimes. The toddler decides when he actually falls asleep. Singing to oneself or playing in the crib is fine. Even cries of protest are fine. Check to make sure he hasn't pooped or knocked his binky out of the crib. After you change the poopy diaper/hand back the binky, LEAVE THE ROOM! Many parents tell me that "he just seems like he wants to play at 2:00am or he seems hungry." Well, this assessment may be correct, but remember who is boss. Unless your family tradition is to play a game and have a snack every morning at 2:00am, then just say "No, time for sleep now," and ignore his protests.

Pee/poop: The rule is that parents keep bowel movements soft by offering a healthy diet. The toddler who feels pain when he poops will do his best not to have a bowel movement. Going into potty training a year or two from now with a constipated child can lead to many battles.

Even if your child does not show interest in potty training

for another year or two, talk up the advantages of putting pee and poop in the potty as early as age one. Remember, repetition is how kids learn.

Your one-year-old will test your resolve. He is now able to think to himself, "Is this STILL the rule?" or "What will happen if I do this?" That's why he goes repeatedly to forbidden territory such as the TV or a standing lamp or plug outlet, stops when you say "No no!", smiles, and proceeds to reach for the forbidden object.

When you feel exasperated by the number of times you need to redirect your toddler, remember that if toddlers learned everything the first time around, they wouldn't need parenting. Permit your growing child to develop her emerging independence whenever safely possible. Encourage her to feed herself even if that is messier and slower. Allow her to fall asleep in her crib and resist only rocking her to sleep. Everyone deserves to learn how to fall asleep independently. You don't want to train a future insomniac adult.

And if you are baffled by your child's running away from you one minute and clinging to you the next, just think how confused your child must feel: she's driven towards independence on the one hand and on the other hand she knows she's wholly dependent upon you for basic needs. Above all else, remember the goal of parenthood is to help your child grow into a confident, independent adult… who remembers to call his parents every day to say good night… ok, at least once a week to check in…. ok, keep in touch with those who got him there!

Julie Kardos, MD with Naline Lai, MD

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Potty training 101: the nuts and bolts



A shout out to Trinity Day School in Solebury, PA where we spoke with a group of parents yesterday about the pearls and pitfalls of potty training. Today we share some of what we discussed.



At Trinity day School

“Will it ever end?” many parents ask. Time moves in slow motion for parents teaching their kids to use the potty. For those trapped in a potty training time warp, take heart. It’s been seven years since we first released out podcast on potty training and we’re proud to report that the parents who first listened to that podcast have moved onto new parenting challenges like helping with homework. For those in the midst of training, and those who are contemplating training, this post is for you.

Children master potty training typically between the ages of two and four years. Be patient, not everyone is “typical.” **More important than your child’s age is whether she shows she is developmentally ready to train.** These signs include:

– is generally agreeable/ can follow directions.

– gets a funny expression before passing urine or poop, or runs and hides, then produces a wet or soiled diaper.

-asks to be changed/ pulls on her diaper when it becomes wet or soiled- remains dry during the day time for at least two hours (look for a dry diaper after nap time.)

-NOT because grandparents are pressuring you to start training their grandchild.

– NOT if the child is constipated–the last thing you want to do is to teach withholding to a kid who already withholds.

-NOT if a newborn sibling has just joined the family. A new baby in the house is often a time of REGRESSION, not progression. However, if your toddler begs to use the potty at this time, then by all means, allow him to try.

Make the potty a friendly place. Have a supply of books to occupy your child while she sits. Make sure her feet are secure on the floor if using a potty chair or on a stool if using the actual toilet. If using the real toilet for training, consider placing a potty training rim on the

toilet seat to prevent your child from jack-knifing into the toilet. If your child is afraid of the bathroom, put the potty chair in the hall just OUTSIDE of the bathroom.

Have reasonable expectations based on age. A two year old's attention span is two minutes. Never force your child to sit on the potty. If he doesn't want to sit, then he isn't ready to train.

Your can lead a horse to water… Reward your child for sitting on the potty, even if she does not "produce." Reward by giving a high-five, verbal praise, or a small, cheap trinket such as a sticker. Do NOT promise your child a trip to Disney for potty training—otherwise, what will you do when she learns to ride a bike or tie her shoes? Plus, unless you are prepared to leave right away, the toddler/preschooler does not developmentally understand the concept of long term reward. Accept that she may simply enjoy sitting fully clothing on the potty while singing at the top of her lungs for a few weeks.

Let your child learn by imitation At home, have an open door bathroom policy so she can imitate you and her older siblings. At school, she will imitate her potty-trained classmates.

Initially, kids rarely tell their parents they "have to use the potty." For these kids, schedule potty visits every 2-3 hours throughout the day. Do potty checks at key times such as first waking up, right before nap, and before bedtime. Be sure to spend extra time a half an hour after meals or after a warm bath. Both meals and warmth stimulate poop!

A child is potty trained when she can do the whole deal: use the potty, help wipe, help un-dress and re-dress, and wash hands.

If the child refuses to wash hands after using the potty, she is not trained. Ultimately, the goal is for her to gain independent toileting skills. However, she will

need your supervision for a while.

Important note for parents of BOYS: First potty train your son to sit for ALL business. Teach him to gently press his penis downward so pee lands in the toilet and not all over the room. Once your son stands up to urinate, he may become so excited that he may never sit down again. Better to wait until he uses the potty consistently with few accidents before teaching him to stand up. Even after he begins to stands to pee, have him sit on the potty daily to allow him time to poop.

Don‘t be surprised if your child trains for pee before poop. In fact, many kids go through a phase when they ask for a diaper to poop in. After all, it’s frightening to see/feel a chunk of your body fall into an abyss. Dump the poop from the diaper into the potty and practice waving bye-bye.

A note about night time and naps: Potty train for when your child is awake. Your child will spontaneously, without any training, stay dry at night and during naps. Some kids sleep more soundly than others and some kids are not genetically programmed to stay dry overnight until they are elementary school aged. For more information about bed-wetting please see our post on this topic. No amount of daytime training will affect what happens during sleep. Moderate fluids right before bed and continue putting on the diapers at night until you notice that the diapers are dry when your child wakes up. After a week of dry mornings, try your child in underwear overnight. Occasional accidents are normal for years after potty training, so you might want to put a water proof liner under your child’s sheets when first graduating to sleep underwear.

Disposable training pants: We like sticking to underwear while potty trainers are awake and diapers while asleep. A reluctant trainer tends to find training pants just

absorbent enough that he does not care if he is wet. However, the pants are not absorbent enough to prevent rashes from stool or urine. Plus they are more expensive than underwear AND diapers. Explain to your child "sleep diapers" are perfectly acceptable until their "pee pee learns to wake them up." Use the training pants when your child is older and is mortified by the idea of a diaper or if your family is going on a long car ride and you don't want to risk urine on a car seat.

Above all: avoid power struggles. If potty training causes tears, tantrums, or confusion then STOP TRAINING, put those diapers back on, and try again a few weeks later.

After the training, keep an eye on how often he pees and poops. Older kids get "too busy" to go to the potty. Make sure he is in the habit of emptying his bladder four to six times a day and having a soft bowel movement every day or every other day.

Ultimately… you just have to go with the flow. And remember, everything eventually comes out right in the end.

Julie Kardos, MD and Naline Lai, MD

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Local Peeps, come talk with us about Potty Training!



We invite you to come out on Thursday, October 20, from 9:30 to 10:30am when we will lead a discussion for parents about a topic near and dear to all toddler parents' hearts. Join us for *Potty Training: Pearls and Pitfalls* at Trinity Day School in Solebury, PA, 6587 York Rd, Upper Solebury, PA. This talk is FREE & open to the community. Attendees from outside the school must pre-register by emailing dayschool@trinitysolebury.org with "Potty Training Talk" in the subject. There's even a potty training basket that they will raffle off at this event.

We are excited about the talk. And we are thrilled to be the inspiration for a potty training basket!

Julie Kardos, MD and Naline Lai, MD

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Raise a well-behaved child: set the stage while they are toddlers



Riding into toddlerhood

When your baby turns one, you'll realize he has a much stronger will. My oldest threw his first tantrum the day he turned one. At first, we puzzled: why was he suddenly lying face down on the kitchen floor? The indignant crying that followed clued us to his anger. "Oh, it's a tantrum," my husband and I laughed, relieved he wasn't sick.

Parenting toddlers requires the recognition that your child innately desires to become independent of you. Eat, drink, sleep, pee, poop: eventually your child will learn to control these basics of life by himself. We want our children to feed themselves, go to sleep when they feel tired, and pee and poop on the potty. Of course, there's more to life such as playing, forming relationships, succeeding in school, etc, but we all need the basics. The challenge comes in recognizing when to allow your child more independence and when to reinforce your authority.

Here's the mantra: **Parents provide unconditional love while they simultaneously make rules, enforce rules, and decide when rules need to be changed**. Parents are the safety officers and provide food, clothing, and a safe place to sleep. Parents are teachers. Children are the sponges and the experimenters. Don't be afraid of spoiling your child; be afraid of raising a child that acts spoiled. Here are concrete examples of how to provide loving guidance:

Eating: The rules for parents are to provide healthy food choices, calm mealtimes, and to enforce sitting during meals. The child must sit to eat. Walking while eating poses a choking hazard. *Children decide how much, if any, food they will eat*. The kids choose if they eat only the chicken or only the peas and strawberries. They decide how much of their water or milk they drink. By age one, they should be feeding themselves part or ideally all of their meal. By 18 months they should be able to use a spoon or fork for part of their meal.

If, however, parents continue to completely spoon feed their children, cajole their children into eating "just one more bite," insist that their child can't have strawberries until they eat their chicken, or bribe their children by dangling a cookie as a reward for eating dinner, then the child gets the message that independence is undesirable. They will learn to ignore their internal sensations of hunger and fullness.

For perspective, remember that newborns eat frequently and enthusiastically because they gain an ounce per day on average, or one pound every 2-3 **weeks**. A typical one-year-old gains about 5 pounds during his entire second year, or one pound every 2-3 **months.** Normal, healthy toddlers do not always eat every meal of every day, nor do they finish all meals. Just provide the healthy food, sit back, and enjoy meal time with your toddler and the rest of the family.

A one-year-old child will throw food off of his high chair tray to see how you react. Do you laugh? Do you shout? Do you

do a funny dance to try to get him to eat his food? Then he will continue to refuse to eat and throw the food instead. Instead, you can say blandly," I see you are full. Here, let's get you down so you can play," then he will do one of two things:

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Sleep: The rule is that *parents* decide on reasonable bedtimes and naptimes. The toddler decides when he actually falls asleep. Singing to oneself or playing in the crib is fine. Even cries of protest are fine. Check to make sure he hasn't pooped or knocked his binky out of the crib. After you change the poopy diaper/hand back the binky, LEAVE THE ROOM! Many parents tell me , "He just seems like he wants to play at 2:00am or he seems hungry." Well, this assessment may be correct, but remember who is boss. Unless your family tradition is to play a game and have a snack every morning at 2:00am, then just say "No, time for sleep now," and ignore his protests.

Pee/poop: The rule is that parents keep bowel movements soft by offering a healthy diet. The toddler who feels pain when he poops will do his best not to have a bowel movement. Going into potty training a year or two from now with a constipated child can lead to many battles. Also the toddler decides when he is brave enough or feels grown up enough to sit on the potty. Never force a toilet training child to sit on the potty. After all, did you force your toddler to learn how to use a remote control for your television? Of course not- he learned to use it by imitating you and wanting to be like you and by being pleased with the result (Cool! I turned on the TV!). The same principle applies to potty training. He will imitate you when he is ready, and will be pleased with the

result when you praise him for his result.

Even if your child does not show interest in potty training for another year or two, talk up the advantages of putting pee and poop in the potty as early as age one. Remember, repetition is how kids learn.

Your toddler will test your resolve. He is now able to think to himself, “Is this STILL the rule?” or “What will happen if I do this?” That’s why he goes repeatedly to forbidden territory such as the TV or a standing lamp or plug outlet, stops when you say “No no!”, smiles, and proceeds to reach for the forbidden object.

When you feel exasperated by the number of times you need to redirect your toddler, remember that if toddlers learned everything the first time around, they wouldn’t need parenting. Permit your growing child to develop her emerging independence whenever safely possible. Encourage her to feed herself even if that is messier and slower. Allow her to fall asleep in her crib and resist rocking and giving a bottle to sleep. Everyone deserves to learn how to fall asleep independently (and to brush their teeth before bed). You don’t want to train a future insomniac adult.

And if you are baffled by your child’s running away from you one minute and clinging to you the next, just think how confused your child must feel: she’s driven towards independence on the one hand and on the other hand she knows she’s wholly dependent upon you for basic needs. Above all else, remember the goal of parenthood is to help your child grow into a confident, independent adult.

Julie Kardos, MD with Naline Lai, MD
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Potty Train your child



"Watch for signs of readiness... notice if the human is not carrying a plastic baggie or scooper - this is an opportune time to have a bowel movement."

How do you know your child is ready to potty train? A podcast on potty training how-tos.

https://www.twopedsinapod.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/Episode-1-Potty-Training.mp3

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