

# Potty Training

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# Potty Training

Children are able to control their bladder and bowel when they're physically ready and when they want to be dry and clean. Every child is different so it's best not to compare your child with other children.

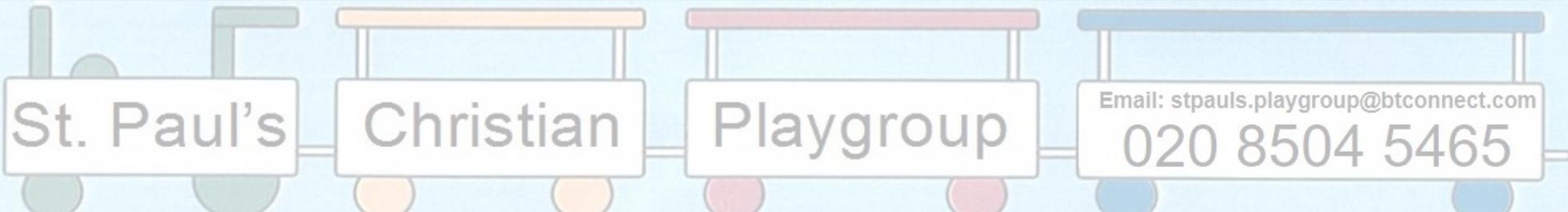
## **Bear in mind the following:**

- Most children can control their bowel before their bladder
- By 2 years of age - some children will be dry during the day, but this is still quite early
- By 3 years of age – 9/10 children are dry most days, but even then, most will have the odd accident especially when they're excited, upset or absorbed in something else
- By 4 years of age - most children are reliably dry
- It usually takes longer to learn to stay dry throughout the night. Although most children will learn this between 3-5 years of age.

## **When to start potty training**

It helps to remember that you can't force your child to use a potty. If they're not ready, you won't be able to make them use it – but in time they will just want to. The best thing you can do in the meantime is encourage the behaviour you want. Do it over a period of time when there aren't going to be any disruptions/changes to your child's or your family's routine. You can try to work out when your child is ready - there will be signs that your child is starting to develop bladder control:

- they will know when they've got a wet or dirty nappy
- they will get to know when they're actually doing a wee and may tell you
- they will know when they need to have a wee and may tell you so in advance
- the time gap between wetting is at least an hour



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## How to start potty training

Leave a potty where your child can see it and can get to know what it's for.

If your child has regular bowel movements at the same time each day, leave their nappy off and suggest they go on the potty.

However, if your child becomes upset, put their nappy back on and leave it a few weeks before trying again.

As soon as you see that your child knows when they're going to wee encourage them to use their potty.

Don't make a fuss when your child has an accident, then they won't feel anxious and worried - and will be more likely to be successful the next time.

Your child will be delighted when they succeed and praise from you will help a lot (but don't give treats/sweets as rewards as that could end up causing more problems!) When the time is right your child will want to use the potty and just be happy to get it right.

## Common potty training problems

*My child isn't interested in using the potty...*

Try not to worry - remind yourself that sooner or later your child will want to be dry for their own sake. If they start to see potty training as a battle of wills with you it'll be much harder.

*My child keeps wetting him/herself...*

You've got 2 options; you could go back to nappies for a while and try again in a few weeks OR you can keep trying now, but be prepared to change and wash a lot of clothes. Whatever you decide don't let it get you or your child down - and don't put pressure on them. You also don't want to confuse your child by stopping and starting too often.

*Just when I think things are going well – there's an accident...*

Accidents will happen for a while so when your child does use the potty or manage to stay dry for a short time let them know how pleased you are. Even though accidents can be frustrating, try not to show your child your frustration. If your child starts to worry, the problem could get worse.

*My child was dry but now started wetting themselves again...*

If your child has been dry for a while and then starts wetting themselves again it can mean they have an illness (bladder infection, constipation, threadworms etc.) or there may be an emotional reason such as moving house, a new baby or change of routine - all can have an effect. Be understanding and sympathetic - your child will almost certainly be upset about the lapse and won't be doing it on purpose.



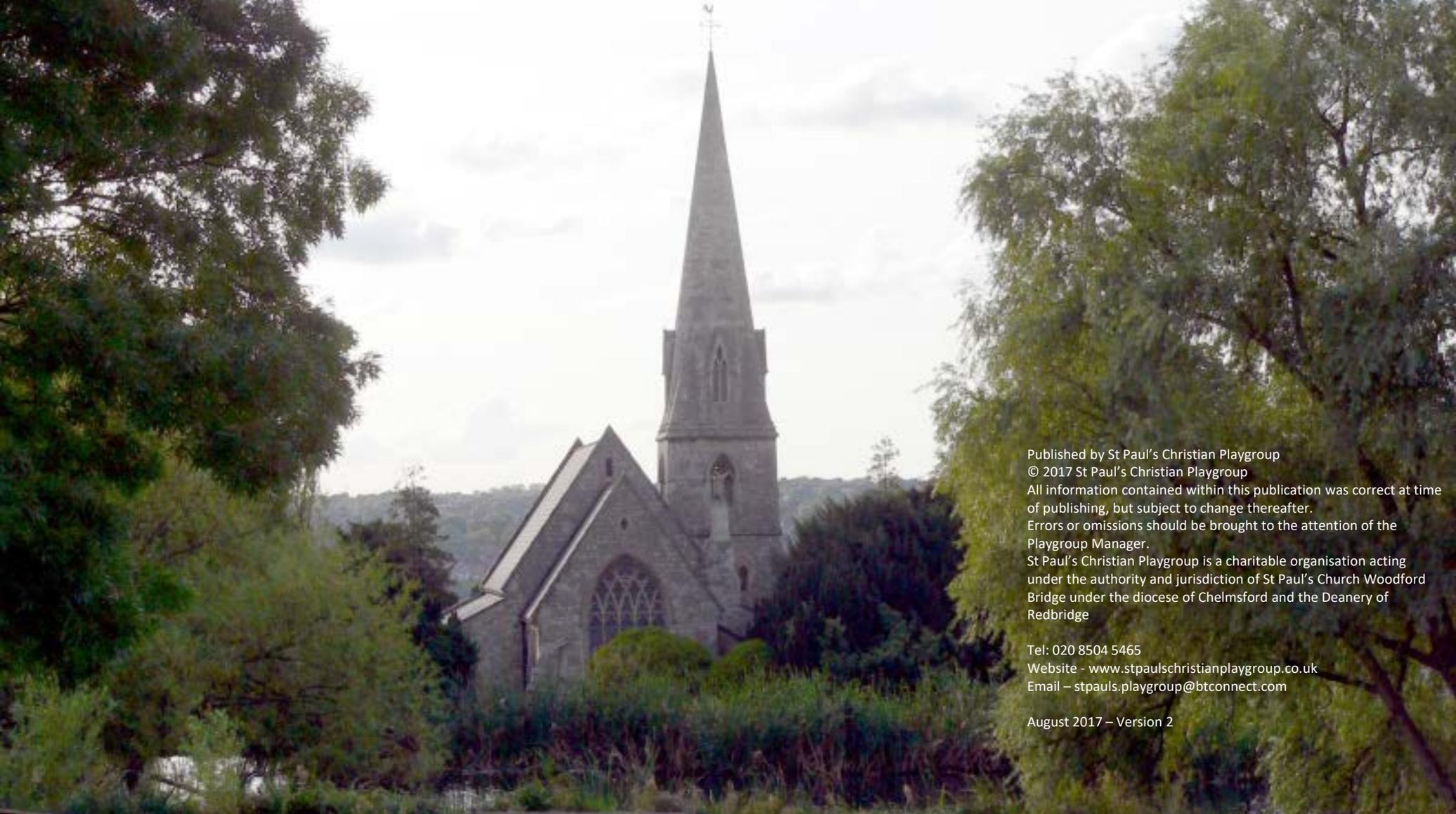
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