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**Doggie Dynamics: Potty Training Your Pooch**

**By Jason Flintstone**

If you're thinking about adding a member to your family, you'll also want to consider that, that means having one more mouth to feed, and someone else to clean up after. And, this is especially true if you're considering a pet.

According to experts its imperative to teach pets, especially puppies about proper hygiene as soon and as early as possible. But, they note that you must remain realistic and not expect too much. Remember, much like babies, puppies are still in their formative years and should not be expected to have full or adequate control of their sphincter muscle. In fact, professionals point out that it's not uncommon for puppies up to six months old to use the living room floor or rug as a "potty". However, they note that with proper patience, love, and persistent training, such problems can be put in the past.

Denote a spot where your puppy IS allowed to "go" and point it out, making it obvious to him or her that's what the spot should be used for. Note his or her patterns and bring him or her to the spot soon after he or she wakes up and after eating, drinking or playing. If however your catch your canine peeing or pooping in an inappropriate spot, simply "escort" him or her to the proper area reinforcing it as an acceptable bathroom spot.

Make sure also to keep a system of proper scolding and rewarding for behaviors. Compliment your pooch verbally and rub his or her ears and back each time he or she goes to the right spot, and after a few compliments, you may also want to consider scolding when he or she disobeys. And, make sure that the "punishment" fits the "crime" and takes place immediately after the incident so that your pet can make the proper association.

Success say experts depends on repetition of action. Taking that into account, they suggest planning meals at regular times and intervals, about three times a day. And they suggest teaching your pet to ration his or her food by offering a large bowl of food and allowing him or her to figure out how often the bowl will be replenished.

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## **Potty Training After a Divorce or Separation**

**By Danna Henderson**

Many parents share custody of their children, which presents a unique problem when it comes to potty training. It's best to discuss potty training and agree on a strategy before you start. Both parents need to be informed about potty training and have the necessary potty training aids.

**Potty Training Aids** - To maintain consistency throughout the potty training process, it's best if both parents either share the potty training aids or purchase the same aids. This way your child will have a potty seat she is comfortable with at each parent's home.

**Potty Training Methods** – Both parents need to use similar potty training methods so your child doesn't get confused. Make sure you are both informed and decide how you're going to handle potty training instruction, rewards, and accidents.

In some cases, the divorced or separated parents don't have a good relationship and this level of communication is not possible. If this is your situation, it may be easiest to pack your child's potty seat along with a note describing your potty training strategy (and any other necessary information) and send it with your child.

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Danna Henderson started ZIP Baby in order to provide parents with comprehensive potty training information as well as a large variety of potty training products. For more information about potty training, visit

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