DISPOSABLE TOILET SEAT COVER FOR USE IN POTTY TRAINING

Inventor: JOHN F. YOUNG, Oconomowoc, WI (US)

Correspondence Address:
GODFREY & KAHN S.C.
780 NORTH WATER STREET
MILWAUKEE, WI 53202 (US)

Assignee: YSquared Enterprises, Inc.

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ABSTRACT
A collapsible, portable, lightweight, disposable potty training device that may be carried inconspicuously into any private or public restroom and that may be securely fitted onto a conventional toilet seat quickly and effortlessly, with the use of minimum stall space, to be used in teaching children to use toilets and at the same time to maintain the utmost hygiene. The training device is disposable and constructed of inexpensive materials for single use.
DISPOSABLE TOILET SEAT COVER FOR USE IN POTTY TRAINING

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION


FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to the field of devices used to teach and assist children to use toilets. Specifically, the invention relates to a device that may be easily and inconspicuously transported and fitted onto a toilet seat to permit a child to use a toilet while preventing the child from coming into contact with the toilet seat or fluids located within the toilet bowl, and is also designed for single-use and easy disposability.

BACKGROUND

[0003] The use of potty-chairs as potty training devices is well known among parents. When choosing a potty training device, parents are typically concerned with hygiene, transportability and adaptability. This is the case particularly with parents that travel often or enjoy outdoor activities such as visiting public parks or camping with their children.

[0004] Hygiene is a concern when using toilets in public places such as parks or campgrounds because these places are usually equipped with a limited number of toilets, the toilets are not cleaned regularly, and because hundreds of people may use the same toilet within a single day.

[0005] Transportability and adaptability are a concern because parents must be able to simultaneously transport their children and the potty training devices. In addition, parents must be able to quickly assemble the potty training devices to standard toilets within standard size stalls. Simplicity of use is important because it ensures that the device can be used in the same manner every time thereby making the use of toilets second nature.

[0006] To address these needs, various potty training devices have been designed and are known in the prior art, for instance, U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,777,672, 5,991,938, 6,473,911, 6,647,560. While other portable potty training devices are known in the prior art, such as that in U.S. Pat. No. 7,047,573, which is incorporated herein by reference for all purposes, such devices are not designed for single-use and easy disposability. While the structures described in those patents may address some of the needs previously discussed, those structures have numerous shortcomings.

[0007] Thus, a need exists for a potty training device which is easily transportable, easily and quickly fitted onto standard toilets, and is inexpensive such that it is ideal for single-use and can be easily disposed of.

SUMMARY

[0008] The present invention resolves the shortcomings and fulfills the needs identified above. The invention relates to a highly collapsible, highly portable, extremely lightweight, potty training device that may be reusable or disposable, and that may be fitted onto a conventional toilet seat effortlessly, without need of additional stall space, to allow children to use toilets safely. To fulfill these needs, the invention provides a compactable, lightweight enclosure that is to be fitted around a toilet seat; multiple openings on the enclosure to be aligned over the toilet bowl, and some attachment for removably attaching the device to the toilet.

[0009] Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent hereinafter.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of a toilet seat cover for use in potty training, shown on a toilet;

[0011] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of one embodiment of a toilet seat cover for use in potty training, shown in an exploded view away from the toilet;

[0012] FIG. 3 is top view of one embodiment of a toilet seat cover for use in potty training;

[0013] FIG. 4 is a bottom view of one embodiment of a toilet seat cover for use in potty training;

[0014] FIG. 5 is side view of one embodiment of a toilet seat cover for use in potty training, shown on a toilet seat;

[0015] FIG. 6 is cross section view of one embodiment of a toilet seat cover for use in potty training taken along line 6 in FIG. 1, shown on a toilet seat;

[0016] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a toilet seat cover for use in potty training, shown on a toilet;

[0017] FIG. 8 is a bottom view of the embodiment shown in FIG. 7, shown on a toilet seat; and

[0018] FIG. 9 is a cross section view of the embodiment shown in FIG. 7, taken along line 9 in FIG. 7, shown on a toilet seat.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0019] Referring now to the drawings, a potty training device 10 is formed by an top layer 12 and a bottom layer 14, which are generally aligned over each other. As seen in FIGS. 1-6, the layers may be integrally formed together to constitute a bag. Alternatively, top layer 12 and bottom layer 14 could be joined at a seam about a portion of the outer edge. As shown in FIGS. 1-4, the top layer 12 and bottom layer 14 are generally of rounded or oval shape, or other shape suitable for fitting relatively closely over most toilet seats. The top layer 12 and bottom layer 14 are fastened together only part way around, leaving an open end 20. The proximal curved edge 26 is shaped similarly to the curved edge of a standard toilet seat 11, and the distal end 24 is generally straight, similar to the distal end of a standard toilet seat 11. Thus, the potty training device 10 is an enclosure that may be fitted onto and generally surrounding a toilet seat 11, and is easily fitted onto a toilet seat 11 with the use of minimum space, for example minimum stall space in the case of use in a public restroom stall.

[0020] In the preferred embodiments, shown in the FIGURES, the training device 10 is designed to be disposable after a single use. In one embodiment, shown in FIGS. 1-6, the training device 10 includes two holes 41, 42 for allowing a child’s waste to pass through. One hole 41 is in the top layer 12 and one hole 42 is in the bottom layer 14. The holes 41, 42 are positioned within the device 10 generally so that they are over the opening in the toilet seat 11. The holes 41, 42 are of sufficient size to permit a child to use the toilet comfortably without filling through the openings. The holes 41, 42 may be the same size, or, alternatively, as seen best in FIGS. 3 and 4, bottom hole 42 may be sized somewhat larger than top hole 41.
so that, when a child sits on the device, any stretching downward of the fabric and/or outward around the top hole 41 that would be caused by the weight of the child results in a clearer path through the opening formed by the two holes 41, 42 into the toilet bowl below. After the training device 10 is installed onto the toilet seat 11, the child sits down onto the training device 10 to relieve himself, and the waste passes through the holes 41, 42 to the toilet. The holes 41, 42 may include edges to ensure that the cuts in the fabric to form the holes 41, 42 stay intact. The holes 41, 42 may also be enlarged by removing perforated sections of fabric to allow children of different ages or sizes to use the training device 10 safely and comfortably. The top layer 12 and bottom layer 14 may be formed of one or more layers of fabric.

[0021] The device 10 is also designed to be easily collapsible for convenient and discreet transport for use in places such as restaurants and airports, and also constructed of inexpensive materials so that parents can buy numerous disposable training devices 10 at a reasonable cost. A typical use of the disposable embodiment would be, for example, as follows: The device 10 is easily folded to a small size to fit in a parent’s handbag or other small bag for transportation. The family goes to a restaurant. When the child needs to use the restroom, the device 10 is unfolded, slipped onto the toilet seat 11, and quickly secured to the seat 11 using an attachment device 30. The child then sits onto the device 10. When the child is finished, the device 10 is removed from the toilet seat 11 and placed into a garbage container for disposal. Thereby, an inexpensive and easily transported potty training device 10 is provided as an alternative to large potty training seats or chairs so that parents can continue potty training with the child away from home, while further providing a sanitary barrier between the child and the toilet seat 11.

[0022] In one embodiment of a disposable device 10 shown in FIGS. 1-6, the top layer 12 and bottom layer 14 may be joined together by sewing or other acceptable methods, such as RF/HF welding. The bottom layer 14 may be shorter than the top layer 12, to save manufacturing costs by using less fabric to form the device 10. The bottom layer 12 should extend far enough beyond the hole 42 such that it does not fold back toward the holes 41, 42 when the child sits down on the device 10. In this embodiment, the top layer 12 has a portion 22 which extends beyond the bottom layer 14, and this portion 22 terminates at a distal edge 24. Alternatively, however, the bottom layer 14 could extend all the way to the distal edge 24.

[0023] In a preferred embodiment, the top layer 12 is provided with a securement or attachment device 30 for use in attaching or securing the training device 10 to the toilet seat 11. In the most preferred embodiment, the attachment device 30 is an adhesive strip on the underside of the top layer 12 having a length generally no longer than the length of the distal edge 24. The strip may include a protective paper covering which can be peeled away from the strip to uncover the adhesive strip for sticking to the toilet seat 11. As shown in the figures, attachment device 30 connects the extension portion 22 of the top layer 12 to the toilet seat 11. The attachment device 30 may also be formed by adding an adhesive strip or other similar device to the distal end 24 so that the attachment device 30 extends beyond the distal end.

[0024] The material of which the training device 10 is fabricated is preferably a flexible, lightweight, resilient and disposable material. Non-woven materials, certain types of tissue paper, and certain types of lightweight plastics or PVC would be usable to form the device 10. Along those same lines, if the attachment device 30 is an adhesive strip, preferably it would have the property that it would only attach once and, once removed, would have lost most of its adhesive strength, so that it would not be usable a second time; thus, practically speaking, limiting the device 10 to being a single use device.

[0025] In an alternative embodiment, as shown in FIGS. 7-9, device 100 is constructed of a single layer 120 which fits over the top of a toilet seat 11. In this embodiment the device is sized to completely cover the toilet seat 11 from the top and fit securely over the outer edge of the seat 11, as seen best in FIGS. 7 and 8. In a preferred embodiment, the outer edge 130 of the device 100 is attached to a band of elastic. Other methods of securing the device 100 such as a drawstring placed inside a hem around the outer edge 130 may be used to secure the device 100 to the toilet seat 11. Layer 120 has a hole 410 through which a child’s waste can pass.

[0026] The material of which the training device 100 is fabricated is preferably a flexible, lightweight, resilient and disposable material. Non-woven materials, certain types of tissue paper, and certain types of lightweight plastics or PVC would be usable to form the device 100.

[0027] While the apparatus described herein is effectively adapted to fulfill the aforesaid objects, it is to be understood that the invention is not intended to be limited to the specific preferred embodiments of potty training device set forth above. Rather, it is to be taken as including all reasonable equivalents to the subject matter of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A toilet seat cover for use in potty training, said toilet seat cover comprising:
   a top layer having a first hole;
   a bottom layer having a second hole aligned with said first hole of top layer, the perimeter of said bottom layer and perimeter of said top layer coupled together on three sides and including an open side to fit over a toilet seat; a securement device for securing the toilet seat cover to a toilet; and
   the toilet seat cover being constructed of a material that is easy to fold for storage and designed for single use.

2. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein the securement device is an adhesive strip.

3. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein the first hole and second hole are of equal diameter.

4. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein the first hole is of smaller diameter than the second hole.

5. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein the top layer extends beyond the bottom layer at the open side.

6. The toilet seat cover of claim 1 wherein said material is paper, non-woven fabric, or PVC.

7. A toilet seat cover for use in potty training, said toilet seat cover sized to fit on top of a toilet seat and comprising:
   a hole of a sufficient size to permit a child to use the toilet without falling through;
   a perimeter having a securement device for securing the toilet seat cover to a toilet seat; and
   the toilet seat cover being constructed of a material of sufficient strength to bear the weight of a child, said material easy to fold for storage and designed for single use.

8. The toilet seat cover of claim 7 wherein the securement device is an elastic band.

9. The toilet seat cover of claim 7 wherein the securement device is a drawstring.

10. The toilet seat cover of claim 7 wherein said material is paper, non-woven fabric, or PVC.

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