

Toilet Learning in the Toddler Community

The toilet learning process happens during a sensitive period for toddlers. When we begin preparing children whom we feel are ready to begin the toilet learning process we collaborate and discuss the next steps with parents to work together as a team. Some of the factors that play apart in deciding if your child is emotionally, physically and developmentally ready for toilet learning are:

- Eagerness to toileting practices
- Independence within the toileting process
- Pulling pants up and down
- Frequent dry diapers
- Enthusiasm and happiness within the process

When your child begins to show interests in this process, the teacher will speak to you directly. In the beginning stages we always suggest that you begin adding morning and night time toileting to your daily routine. In the morning when your child wakes up allow him to sit on the toilet, then at night during the bedtime or bath time routine allow him to sit on the toilet.

Once your child transitions to underwear/training pants we eliminate pull-ups completely in the classroom. We ask that you do the same at home. Essentially, your child is training his bladder and bowels, pull-ups are counterproductive to this natural process. We observe your child's toileting patterns and follow a toileting schedule to help avoid accidents. Please be mindful that accidents are normal. So, we ask that you send your child to school with several changes of clothes that are easy for him to pull up and down on his own, this supports independence and ensures success in the toileting process.

We look forward to partnering with you on this journey of toilet learning!

Let's do this!

Keep in mind that toilet training takes practice, enthusiasm and consistency.

Cotton underwear at all times is best – even during sleep and travel.

Day and night training are best completed at ONE time. Day training in isolation will lead to more accidents, possible power struggles, and confusion for your toddler.

Tips:

- Remember that your child is learning a new skill. Mastery will vary for every child. Mastery depends more on your parental consistency and attitude than on your child's abilities.
- We are retraining the bladder to empty out completely and empty out at one time.
- Pay attention to your child's "evacuation" habits and nonverbal cues. Children will show us in many different ways that the bladder is full (fidget, grab, cannot sit comfortably).
- Have fun with your child picking out the underwear.
- In the beginning, do not expect your child to tell you when he has to go – this will come later, much later.
- Watch fluid intake. This is a good time to wean from any bottle habits, especially before bed at night.
- It's a good idea to slow the family social life down a bit (just for a couple of weeks). Let your child practice this new skill in a calm, familiar environment.
- Keep in mind that ALL caregivers of your child need to be "on the same page".

Process:

- Parents and caregivers initiate the process by encouraging a sitting routine (about once/hour).
- Dress your child minimally, and dress them for independent success.
- Parents and caregivers support the training by assisting when and where necessary.
- Observe your child's evacuation habits – document if necessary.
- Always sit your child on the toilet after an accident. Most children will stop themselves when they have an accident, so there is still more to empty into the toilet.

What you need to get started at home:

1. A child friendly toileting environment → Small potty, insert for adult toilet with stool, or travel toilet (for public use)
2. Access → Ensure that your toddler can get to the toilet on their own and make clean clothes accessible for changing in case of accidents.
3. A bed → Cribs hinder the child from going to the toilet independently. Simplify the bedding; strip the bed down to the bare minimum. (Hospital grade wet pads are the best.)

Clothing:

- Bottoms with elastic waist bands pull up and down with ease.
- Rubber shoes are easily cleaned after accidents.
- Several changes of underwear

Exposure:

- Modeling by parents and siblings
- Sitting on the toilet at common sense intervals (bath time, meal time, travel times) *Never force a child to sit on the toilet
- Encourage independent dressing practices

You got this! Let's go!