



TOILET LEARNING



IS YOUR CHILD READY?

- » Expresses interest in coming into the bathroom with you to find out what goes on there and perhaps even sits on the toilet himself or herself
- » Understands what the toilet is for and what it means to have a wet or dirty diaper. Showing a preference for being clean and dry, fussing when he or she is wet, pulling off a dirty diaper or asking to be changed
- » Knows the words for urination and having a bowel movement (whatever your family chooses)
- » Can stay dry for at least 2 hours at a time and/or wakes up from naptime and/or overnight dry
- » Has regular bowel movements with soft, formed stools
- » Can and will follow simple directions, such as those for washing hands
- » Can help pull pants up and down
- » Seems to recognize at least a few seconds ahead of time that he or she is about to go, and can tell you before it happens (perhaps squatting, hiding, leaving the room or getting "the look" before having a bowel movement)
- » Is in a willing, receptive mood, and isn't going through any major transitions (like adjusting to a new school or sibling)
- » Demonstrates a desire for independence (eg wants to be a big boy or girl and do things for himself or herself, or shows a preference for using the toilet like mommy and daddy do)

If your child meets most of these criteria, he or she is ready to try. If not, wait a month or two and re-evaluate. Please talk to your child's teachers to see if they agree that your child is ready to start. Teachers will also let you know if they feel that your child is ready and suggest that you might want to start the process.

It is important to be CONSISTENT when starting potty training. It is really hard and confusing for your child to be in underwear one hour/day and then back to pull ups or diapers the next for the parent's convenience. Please plan a period of a few days when you can concentrate on toilet learning and focus on your child consistently.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR STRATEGY:

- » Rewards with lots of praise for trying – stickers are good. We can use a sticker chart system here in the classroom too – please talk to the teachers.
- » Try on the clock method – remind your child every 30 minutes to try and use the potty. Set a timer to remind yourself.
- » Give a 2 minute warning beforehand that you will be taking them to try
- » Make it stress free – find a time when you will be based at home for the majority of the time and can focus on potty learning 100%
- » Read books, sing potty songs and/or find favorite a video/TV show with characters to help the child learn
- » Make a special trip to a store to buy "big boy underpants" or "big girl underwear"
- » Be aware of your child's schedule
- » Expect accidents!

We suggest that potty learning should begin at home over a weekend or holiday. Please let the teachers know that you are starting and bring your child to school in underwear once they have had success at home using a potty. Our toilets are small child-friendly size. We cannot accommodate individual potties for hygienic reasons. Sometimes students are in underwear for the morning, but are put into pull-ups for naptime. If you are using pull-ups, please use the pull-ups with tabs. Send PLENTY of change of clothes including socks and shoes.

Potty learning can be daunting and hard work for parents. However, your child will learn to use the toilet (when they are ready). Remember that we change diapers in the three-year old room too recognizing that some children need extra time to master this skill, especially at school. Please ensure that your child is emotionally, verbally and physically ready to potty learn. If you try and it does not work, do not worry. Take a break and try again in a month or two.

Please remember to talk to your child's teachers. They have valuable experience and can reassure and help you during this process. Open communication about potty learning accomplishments and how you are proceeding are important pieces of information to be shared.

Suggested books: A Potty for Me! by Karen Katz | No More Diapers for Ducky! by Bernette Ford | Potty by Leslie Patricelli