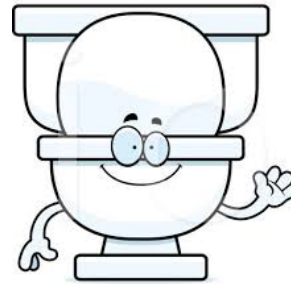


## POTTY TRAINING

*In preparation for when you feel your little one is ready, we would like to share with you some ideas and experiences to help the process. We have some basic policies when the time comes to begin training. I've put in bold the most important points. This may sound formal but all of these details will really help make potty training go easily for everyone.*

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Just like Kindergarten readiness...potty training readiness is a mindset not a skillset. There is a cognitive aspect of potty training that involves the ability to exercise foresight.

### **Is your child ready to begin training?**

If you cannot answer these questions with a yes your little love just needs a little more time.

- Does she have an accident daily? (by definition accidents are unusual incidents and should only happen infrequently.
- Does he go to the bathroom without my asking?
- Does she have her bowel movement in the toilet?

Sometimes parents feel that if their child is able to actually pee on a potty at home when the parent places them on the potty that this is the sign they are ready to train. This is not necessarily a sign.

### **Potty training readiness is:**

- 5% ability to get their clothes on and off
- 5% ability to go pee or poop in the potty
- 90% being able to identify when they have to go & telling the adult before they have to go.

One misconception is that if a child tells you that they have peed or pooped in their diaper that it's a sign that they are ready to train. There is no correlation to a child's awareness after they have gone to their ability to recognize and act before they have to go.

If your child is letting mom/dad/grandma etc... know that he/she has to go to the potty before he has already gone in his diaper/underwear & before its an "emergency" -- that is a sign that he/she is ready to embrace the full scope of becoming potty trained. From there you'll want to encourage your child to tell the additional caregivers in his/her life when/he or she needs to use the restroom.



**Let's define a completely potty trained child. A completely potty trained child is one who is able to:**

1. TELL the adult they have to go potty BEFORE they have to go. For example using words such as, "I have to go potty" BEFORE they have to go.
2. pull down their underwear and pants and get them back up without assistance.
3. wipe themselves after using the toilet.
4. get off the potty by themselves.
5. wash and dry hands.
6. postpone going if they must wait for someone who is using the bathroom

**The first one is the number one key to our Staff being able to successfully assist with potty training.**

Once number 1 is achieved staff will support and work with your child on becoming successful with items 2-6 resulting in a completely potty trained child by all definitions. 😊

At home many children have free access to the bathroom but in a center/preschool environment we are prohibited from allowing them to go unaccompanied by our own policies as well as state regulations. Because we cannot allow children to just go in and out of the classroom to freely use the potty they must learn they need to tell us so that we can accompany them into the restroom for supervision & to support them if any assistance is needed. This can take a little longer for children who have free access to the restroom at home vs. those who are still receiving support. You can help the transition and potty training by giving your child reminders to let any of the caregivers know if they need to go.

Children who are ready to potty train have the ability to perceive events that are going to happen before they happen. This is the cognitive aspect of being potty trained: the ability to tell an adult they have to go before they have to go right now / have already gone / are in the process of going.

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**Some things we do to get kids ready to train:**

- read potty books and talking about going potty in the big potty.
- for children whom are still in diapers and rather than place them on a potty "schedule" it's more effecting that we have them sit on the potty once a day during natural transition times such as before nap time, building familiarity, but also letting the child choose, some children are not interested and that's okay we respect that and will give them time.
- practice with them getting their pants up and down on their own and hand washing.
- supervise them and watch for signs that they have to go or are going and walk them to the restroom.
- keep close communication with the parents about any indicators suggesting the child is ready; which is primarily how the child is doing with letting us caregivers know when he/she needs to go before he/she actually goes in their diaper or underwear.



### **Some things we don't do:**

- We do not put kids on a potty schedule where they go every half hour or hour.
  - *There is little to no benefit. This can cause problems with children not being able to hold much urine and having to constantly go to the potty further along down the line. They can become unable to settle down at nap because once they relax and have a little bit of shi-shi they have to get up and go. They can't do walks because they can't make it very long without having to come back to potty.*
- We don't limit food or drinks to only be given at certain times. We maintain the same food and snack schedule during training.
- We don't clean out poopy underwear. We will rinse and bag underwear that's had urine on it and return it to the parent at the end of the day but we are unable to do this with soiled underwear. We must dispose of that immediately into the garbage. We are also unable to do laundry of any soiled clothes. They are bagged, put outside, and returned to parents at the end of the day. The reason we have this policy is because over the years we are assisting many kids with potty training. We have to set up policies that maintain infection control standards for the child care and protect the environment.

### **Naptime training:**

- Sometimes kids nap train right away when they are awake time potty trained.
- Most children are not able to do this and it is many months and sometimes years before they are nap trained.
- It is the parents responsibility to inform the day care if their child needs a nap time diaper.
- If a child has a nap time shi-shi accident they will be required to wear a nap time diaper until the child has slept through nap without a shi-shi accident.

### **What to wear during potty training?**

- Children should wear easy on and off pants during training. We prefer sweat pant like bottoms until they are physically capable of doing snaps and buttons.
- Please don't send them in anything that requires us to remove the top to get to the bottom.
- Diapers and pull-ups are okay for potty training.
- If you have had good success at home we can do the training with the underwear and a pull-up over the underwear during the training.
- If the child has regular accidents in the underwear we will switch them back to regular diapers and try again at another time.
- We use regular diapers at nap time.



**Please don't expect the same performance here as at home:**

We've seen both ends of the spectrum with children's ability to be "trained" here and not at home and vice versa.

We've had kids who have been successful at home and are unable to do it here for a number of reasons; here are some examples:

- Kids are not trained at home to tell the parents they have to go before they have to go but rather are allowed free access unsupervised to the bathroom in their home. Again, here they must tell us before. They can't leave the playroom without an adult and go into the restroom without supervision.
- There are many more distractions here with a larger group of kids, toys, and bustling activities.
- They need one to one attention throughout the day in order to keep up with the toileting. Here we have children at multiple stages of development who have various needs and supervision requirements. This is another reason a potty trained child must use words to tell the adult(s) that he/she has to go - and once they do tell an adult they will be walked to the restroom & assisted & not made to wait.
- Parents are putting the child on the potty in small time increments.

We have also had kids who are successful here but will not do it at home. This can happen if:

- The child is on the go a lot in the evenings and weekends making it difficult for the parent to do toileting practice at home.
- The child attends here full time and is with different caregivers on the weekend who don't continue the practicing.
- Parents want the training to be done at day care during the day and do diapers and pull-ups at home on the weekends.

We have had a number of children who train a full year at home before they train here or train here a full year before they train at home. It is best when it is done at the same time but don't be worried if the child is successful only with you or vice versa to start.



## **Some helpful hints to help you at home:**

There are some easy daily things you can do at home that will really help your child's progression. Some of these may sound silly but they just may work for you.

- Be cheery about the potty. A happy experience each time they are on the potty will translate into quick training at home.
- If there are two adults in the house have each adult "ask" the other adult if he/she can go to the potty at least four or five times a day. Your child seeing and hearing you "ask" if you can go will get the idea in their head that they need to do that too.
- Praise the child on success for every step of the process but do not overdo it. You don't want them trying to do the potty thing fifty times a day to get your attention or get rewarded. A "way to go" or a "thumbs up" and big smile will let them know you are proud. We use the phrase "you go potty like the BIG boys/girls do!!!! They love the idea of being BIG.
- Bribery can be a good thing. Use stickers or small treats only after potty success. Have the child give the same treat to everyone around him that can have the treat. Passing out a treat for his success will make the child happier than getting the treat himself. Every person receiving the prize says "Good job little buddy... you go potty like the big kids do".
- Let the child in the bathroom with you when you are going potty. Let them see how it works and you washing up afterwards.
- Don't let them play with the toilet paper. If they are infatuated with toilet paper give them a couple of generic cheapo rolls to play around with in the house to get it out of their system.
- No punishment or consternation for accidents. Just remind them about asking for help to go potty next time.
- If you see them mid way trying to poop or pee scurry them off to the potty to finish up.
- Give your child three or four minutes to get the job done. It shouldn't take more than a few minutes. If they don't go in a reasonable time tell them it's time to get off and we will try again another time.
- Don't allow potty time to be a stall tactic to avoid doing something the child doesn't want to do. For example some kids will claim they have to go potty to avoid having to go to bed. If you see a pattern of avoidance have the child do the potty a little bit before you want them to do whatever they are avoiding so it doesn't interfere.
- I don't encourage any toys or books during the training time. It really can backfire on you. Potty time will quickly turn into one to one attention and play time for the child. After a child has been trained for a few months you can add a book for them to look at if they are having a hard time going poop.
- Keep attention and interaction during potty time to a bare minimum. If your child is generally doinking around during the time he/she is sitting on the potty then turn away from them and keep the eye contact down. Keep the atmosphere calm and focused.
- Training boys sitting down first can be easier. And then switch them to standing up when they are tall enough to reach over the seat and adept enough to aim.
- Have fun. Stay cool. It will all work out.

