

## Helpful Potty Training Information

**A potty trained child is a child who can :**

- 1) TELL the adult they have to go potty BEFORE they have to go. They must be able to say the words “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 independently.
- 5) Wash and dry hands.
- 6) Go directly back to the room without directions.
- 7) Postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or to make it back inside to use the bathroom when we are outside playing.

The first one in the list is the key. Children who are ready to train can perceive events that are going to happen before they happen. Because we cannot allow children to just go in and out of the room to freely use the potty they MUST learn they have to tell us so that we can accompany them into the room and supervise them. At home you can allow them free access to the bathroom if you choose but we are prohibited by our regulations to allow them to go unaccompanied. Because of this they need to learn that they must tell the adult they have to go BEFORE they have to go. We do not accept signs that the child has to go or nonverbal behavior. It must be the words “I have to go potty”.

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

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. But this might not be a sign; some kids are able to do this who actually become trained many months later. It can be said that potty training is five percent ability to get clothes on and off, five percent ability to use the potty, and NINETY percent being able to identify when they have to go and telling the adult BEFORE they have to go.

Another 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. I haven't seen ANY correlation to a child's awareness AFTER they have gone to their ability to recognize and act BEFORE they have to go.

### **Things to do to get kids ready to train:**

- 1) Start reading potty books and talking about going potty in the big girl or big boy potty during changing.
- 2) Have a child sit on the potty during natural transition times (before and after meals, before and after naps, and diaper changes)
- 3) Practice with them getting their pants up and down on their own and hand washing.
- 4) Watch for signs that they have to go or are going and get them off to the potty.

### **Some things we cannot do at the center:**

We do not put kids on a potty schedule where they go every half hour or hour. It's very time consuming with little to no benefit. This can cause many problems with children not being able to hold much urine and having to constantly go to the potty further along down the line. They are able to settle down at nap because once they relax and have a little bit of pee they have to get up and go. The day pretty much centers around the potty which just isn't realistic in this setting.

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 bag pee soaked underwear and return it to the parent at the end of the day but we will not do this with soiled underwear. We must dispose of that immediately into the garbage. We don't do laundry of any soaked or soaked or soiled clothes. They are bagged and returned to the parents at the end of the day.

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

There are some things you can do at home that will really help. Some of these may sound silly but they can help.

- 1) Be cheery about the potty. A happy experience each time they are on the potty will translate into quick training at home.
- 2) 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.

3) 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.

4) Bribery can be a good thing. Use stickers or small treats (like gummies, jelly beans, teddy grahams) ONLY after potty success. Have the child give the same treat to everyone around him that can have the treat. Passing 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 boys do".

5) Let the child in the bathroom with you when you are going potty. This is really important for the same sex parent. Let them see how it works and you washing up afterwards.

6) Don't let them play 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.

7) No punishment or consternation for accidents. Just talk to them about them needing to ask to go to the potty next time. We say "next time you will go potty like the BIG boys do... okay?!!"

8 ) If you see them mid way trying to poop or pee scurry them off to the potty to finish up.

9) Give your child three or four minutes to get the job done. It shouldn't take more than a few minutes. Don't let it turn into an attention seeking time where the child gets you to one to one them. It's only about going potty. If they don't go in a reasonable time tell them it's time to get off and we will try again another time.

10) Don't allow potty time to be a stall tactic to avoid doing something the child doesn't want to do, like picking up toys or taking a nap. 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.

11) 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.

12) Keep attention and interaction during potty time to a bare minimum. If your child is fooling around while on the potty, turn away from them and keep the eye contact down. Keep the atmosphere calm and focused.

- 13) Consider training a boy sitting down first and switch them to standing up when they are tall enough to reach over the seat and adept enough to aim.
- 14) Be careful of public automatic flushing toilets. The noise of the flushing will scare them. If you bring a little post it note with you when you go out you can put it over the sensor so the toilet doesn't automatically flush right when your child gets off of it.
- 15) Have fun. Stay cool. It will all work out.

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

- 1) At preschool, the smallest kids do not have free access to the bathroom; they must be supervised. At preschool, they must tell us BEFORE. Keep this in mind if you give your child free access to the bathroom. Try to train them to tell you before.
- 3) At the preschool, caregivers must divide attention among all the kids. This is another reason your child must tell us he/she has to go. They need to bring it to OUR attention. We can't focus only on them to pick up cues. We can try, but we have eyes on a group.
- 4) We put training kids on the potty every few minutes as may be done at home. If you do this at home, the child is likely not ready for underpants at preschool. There will be LOTS of accidents.
- 5) Please don't tell us your child is completely trained at home to avoid bringing diapers. We simply must keep our facility free of spilled urine and feces. You wouldn't want your child getting dirty or sick because another child has frequent accidents in the classroom.

**Sometimes kids are successful here but will not do it at home. This can happen if:**

- 1) 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.
- 2) Children are with different caregivers on the weekend who don't continue the practicing.
- 3) Parents want the training to be done at day care during the day and do diapers and pull-ups at home on the weekends.