



## Toilet Training for Toddlers and Preschoolers

Dear Families,

Toilet training is a major learning experience that occurs while children are in child care. M.T.J.B. staff are in a unique position to assist with children's toilet training skills.

The age of readiness varies from child to child however, most children are ready to begin toilet training between twenty months and thirty-six months of age. Some children learn to use the toilet quite quickly while others may take a little longer before they completely master this developmental task.

The initiation of toilet training should always be based on a child's developmental level rather than their age. A child's attention span and self regulation also need to be taken into consideration when determining a child's readiness for toilet training.

Some of the signs of readiness include: staying dry for long periods of time, showing an interest in the toilet, looking for privacy while using diaper, trying to pull clothing up/down and the child can communicate the need to or the fact that they "peed/pooped".

At daycare, your Toddler/Preschoolers see other children visiting the bathroom as part of our daily routine. This can create a powerful incentive and example. Shared experience with peers can benefit the child by helping boost the child's interest and desire to learn this skill. That being said, we encourage peer observation/participation of toilet training practices while remaining sensitive at all times to the privacy needs of the children.

We recommend starting out in easy ups/pull ups as this will help the children with the early skills of pulling clothing up/down. Once the child begins to show signs of success the move to cotton underwear should happen. When children wear underwear, they have more of a "wet" sensation which will help cue the potty/toilet. When in the beginning stages of wearing underwear, please send in multiple changes of clothing, including shirts, pants, underwear, socks and even shoes to be best prepared during the toilet training process. Any soiled clothing, will be rinsed as best as possible and sent home in a plastic bag.

Children learn better and develop skills faster when they feel safe, secure and protected in each and every way. Our toilet training strategies are built to assist with each child's developing self-esteem and independence.

Please see the other side of our letter for some tips similar to our practices that you can try at home to help your child progress with their toileting skills.

# M.T.J.B. Toilet Training Tips for Home

## **Getting started:**

Toilet training is best started when a child is not experiencing any other change (i.e. moving, new siblings etc.) You can employ an older sibling, cousin or friend to demonstrate the joy of using the toilet. And when you get a defiant *no* to your bathroom offers, try to conceal any frustration and simply keep offering. When he/she does finally give it a shot, show him you're happy and excited, even if he doesn't pee or poop.

## **Accidents will happen:**

Children have "accidents" during the toilet training process. Understand that this is simply just an accident; it is a natural part of the training process. It is best to do a quick clean up, put the child in fresh clothes and simply move on. At the same time, when accidents are ongoing, try to figure out if they are triggered by something. Sometimes a big change such as a new baby, a renovation or even being on vacation can cause a series of setbacks.

## **Prizes and praise:**

Establish a reward system that motivates your child and is realistic for you to sustain. Try stickers, but also consider making your reaction the big motivator. Sometimes the biggest reward is an adult saying, "Great job/way to go!" with a big smile and a hug." This gives the children a great sense of pride in their accomplishment.

## **Timing is everything:**

It is not recommended to put children on a potty schedule where they go every half hour or hour. This can cause anxiety and actually slow the potty learning process. When possible, make your potty schedule at home similar to the one your child follows at daycare. Try as daycare does; let your child know in advance that "it's almost potty time" and "then we can play some more".

## **What to wear:**

Sometimes splurging on animated (Cars/Princess) undies can also be a real motivator for some children. Rubber pants for toilet training, worn over top of cotton underwear are helpful. Not only will the child still feel "wet", the rubber pants will help contain the accident aiding in clean up.

While you might want to use diapers at night, underwear is best for serious training once there is some success happening.

Children should be dressed in easy-to-remove clothing and should be easy to manage to encourage self-help skills. For example, belts, overalls, buttons, snaps, leggings, body suits and puffy dresses should be avoided.

As parents and providers, we will work as partners to help the children with their toilet training. Please keep us informed of your successes and challenges at home.

*M.T.J.B.*