



Toilet Training Guidelines



The Toddler Component supports the parents in Toilet Training their child. We are there to guide and support this process, but the responsibility is still the parents. For successful Toilet Training, the most important aspect is consistency between the school and home. We therefore ask that when a child becomes ready to be trained, in order to support the parents, there must be a full commitment on behalf of the parents to uphold communication with the Guides and consistency in the training.

Please keep in mind that a child's interest and readiness for Training is like a window and if you train your child in that window, the Toilet Training process can be very easy. Make sure you don't miss that window, as training becomes more difficult when that window closes.

Another important point to mention is that once you have decided to Toilet Train your child, we ask that you use only thick cloth underwear (even if it means changing their clothes more often). **We do not allow Disposable "Pull-Ups"** as they are confusing for a child and only prolong the training period. "Pull-Ups" are no different than a diaper and do not allow the child the chance to feel the discomfort of being wet; therefore the child has less incentive to be trained. Please be respectful of this rule as it is in place for the benefit of your child's process.

Below you will find other recommendations and guidelines that will help move this process along.

Toilet Training Defined:

We would like to start by clearly defining what it means to be "toilet trained". To be toilet trained does not just mean that the child recognizes when he has to go to the bathroom. It also includes the child's independent functioning within many skills, such as pulling his/her pants down/up on their own, managing their clothing, wiping themselves, flushing the toilet, and washing their hands.

Language in Training:

The Language one chooses to use is an important part of Toilet Training. This is a good opportunity to teach your child the correct anatomical vocabulary for their body parts as well as general vocabulary that will enrich their communication skills. We recommend using the word "toilet" instead of "potty" and referring to their "private parts" as "penis" and "vagina", as these are the correct anatomical terms.

General Guidelines:

- Establish a routine of sitting your child down on the toilet every 30 minutes.
- Keep a record of what time your children went to the bathroom, and whether it was urination or a bowel movement (even if it was an accident). In this way, after a few days, you will see a pattern/routine and will know how long

your child can hold it (for example, they usually go pee every 45 mins). With time and practice, you will see this timeframe lengthen.

- Give them lots of fluids to drink throughout the day (except for 1 hour before bed).
- Sit them down on the toilet right after eating.
- In some special cases where the child has difficulty staying seated, you can have a special book available to keep your child entertained as they sit on the toilet. However, if your child happily sits without this aid, it is better not to make them dependent of it.
- Both urination and bowel movements should be trained simultaneously (contrary to belief, bowel movements are easier to train than urination, since it requires the use of a large muscle. Urination uses a fine muscle, which requires more discrimination and control. However, this is only true when the sphincter muscle is mature).

A Note for Boys:

- You must also decide whether you want your child to urinate standing up or sitting down. You can choose either one, as long as you are consistent and inform the Guides of your choice. Either choice is fine. Just keep in mind that if you choose to have your child urinate in a standing position, they must also learn to aim into the toilet bowl. If they have poor aim we recommend they clean up after themselves as this will give them the incentive of aiming more precisely. If you chose to have your child urinate sitting down, we recommend you show them how to push their penis down so they can make it into the bowl.

Reinforcement:

Contrary to traditional suggestions, we recommend that you refrain from using rewards as a form of reinforcement (NO prizes/gifts, food, candy, stickers, etc.).

The child's reward is the simple fact that they are clean, dry, and comfortable. Many children also enjoy flushing the toilet as their reward.

Accidents:

Accidents do happen. So here are some recommendations for how to deal with them:

- Do not punish a child for having an accident.
- Make sure you are careful in the wording you chose to use when responding to an accident. For example, do not say, "It's OK". Rather, encourage them to use the toilet instead: "Don't worry, accidents happen. But we should try to make it to the toilet next time."
- If your child does have an accident, they should be involved in cleaning up after themselves (ex. changing their own clothes; wiping themselves, etc.) This responsibility is an incentive for them to make it to the toilet next time.

Night Time:

Even if your child has control of their bladder during the day, accidents are common during your child's sleep, so some recommendations are:

- Try to avoid liquids 1 hour before bedtime (making sure to have them well hydrated during the day).
- Make sure they go to the bathroom before they go to sleep
- Use a waterproof mattress cover to protect their mattress. You can also place a towel between their sheets and the mattress to help absorb any accidents they may have.
- You can make the bed using 2 layers of waterproof covers and sheets: (Layer 1) waterproof cover and sheet and (Layer 2) waterproof cover and sheet. In this way, if there is an accident in the middle of the night, you only need to remove the first layer (and you do not need to re-make the bed).

Underwear:

We suggest the use of thick, cotton training underwear (i.e.; [Gerber brand](#) has a much more absorbent material than other brands). The thicker cotton helps to absorb more liquids in case of an accident. We recommend that you stick to solid or little print pattern, until the child is trained. This may eliminate children having accidents just so that they can change into their favorite "character underwear". This may also eliminate unnecessary temper tantrums.

Be aware that there are [waterproof car seat covers](#) on the market, that can also help keep your car seat clean. You may also use the [Gerber plastic underwear cover](#) to put on top of their cotton underwear for long car rides. Additionally, we suggest having a [portable toilet](#) in your car, in case your child needs to go, and there are no bathrooms nearby.

Conclusion:

Toilet Training is a natural part of growing up, so treat it as such. Try not to become anxious about it, as this anxiety can be transmitted to your child. Try to focus on their success, rather than their accidents. And remember, all children will eventually reach this milestone, so be respectful of each child's pace and process.

And remember, we are always here to help and support you in this. We are in this together so feel free to communicate any concerns or questions that come up along the way. Thanks again for your commitment and good luck!