

Toilet (Potty) Training Policy

Reason this policy is important: Learning to use the toilet is a big event in a young child's life. Because toilet training is a complex process, there are many issues caregivers and families must consider before and during the process of toilet training for it to be a successful experience for everyone.

Procedure and Practices, including responsible person(s):

When a parent and caregiver believe a child is ready for toilet training (generally between 2–4 years of age) both the parent and caregiver will fill out an information sheet. (Toilet training checklist) _____ (staff title/name) is responsible for reviewing checklist and establishing communication with the family.

1. How to tell if a child is ready? The Child:

- Follows simple directions
- Remains dry for at least 2 hours at a time during the day.
- Dry after nap time.
- Regular and predictable bowel movements. (some may have bowel movements every day and some may have go 2-3 days)
- Walks to and from the bathroom, pulls down own pants and pulls them up again.
- Seems uncomfortable with soiled or wet diapers
- Seems interested in the toilet.
- Has asked to wear grown-up underwear.

If the child has most of these skills, then they are probably ready to start toilet training. If they do not have these most of skills or have a negative reaction to toilet training, wait a few weeks or months until most of the skills are checked off. Starting too soon can actually delay the process and cause tears and frustration. Toilet training is much easier when the child is ready.

Sanitation and Safety:

- Child size toilets or modified toilet seats with step stool are recommended. Potty chairs are not recommended to be used in a child care setting because sanitary handling of the potty chairs is difficult.
- The toilet and equipment should be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with bleach solution (1/4 cup bleach to 1 gallon water) when the seat or area is visibly dirty and at least once daily.
- Wet or dirty cloths should be placed in a plastic bag that can be sealed tightly. Rinsing is discouraged because there is more of an opportunity to contaminate hands and other surfaces. Each child should have a complete set of extra cloths at child care.
- Encourage children to wipe from front to back.
- Caregivers and children should properly wash hands after toileting, helping with toileting, cleaning area and handling contaminated items.

Toilet Training Techniques:

- A calm easygoing approach works best.
- Caregivers will learn the words the child's family uses for body parts, urine and bowel movements to be consistent with what the child is doing at home. Also consult with family about strategies used at home so the process is consistent. (checklist)
- Toilet training involves many steps (discussing, undressing, going, wiping, dressing, flushing, hand washing) reinforce the child's success at each step.
- Help children recognize when they are urinating or have a bowel movement. They must be aware of what they are doing before they can do anything about it.
- Children should be shown how to use the toilet by watching other children who are trained or discussing each step and practicing each step without actually using the toilet. (Example: have child sit on toilet dressed, flushing toilet).
- Caregivers should included toilet training into the daily routine such as reading books, songs and games that reinforce the skills needed to toilet train.

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- Encourage parents to dress children in easy to remove clothing to help children be successful in undressing and dressing.
- When a child is giving the signs of having to use the toilet or tells you they have to use the toilet, take the child in and help undress them and on to the toilet. Sit by the child for a few minutes. Try not to push for immediate results. After a few minutes, help the child with the rest of the routine and give praise for the effort or any successes they had.
- Never force a child to sit on the toilet against their will or for long periods of time if they do not want to. This could set up a power struggle and negative feeling toward the toilet training.
- Never punish for accidents. Occasional accidents are normal. Clean and change the child immediately. Be positive and reassuring that they will be successful. Punishment does not make the process go faster and may delay it.
- Supervise children during toilet training.

Some children with special needs may need additional help and strategies to create a successful toilet training experience. Help will be sought from health professionals and support personal.

When the policy applies: to all children who are considered to be in the toilet training years (2-4 years generally)

Communication plan for staff and parents:

- Staff and volunteers will receive a written copy of this policy in their orientation packets before beginning work at the center.
- Staff in toddler rooms will receive additional training and parent information.
- A toilet training checklist is administered to families of children starting the toilet training process (see checklist).

References:

CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN, National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs. 3rd Edition. American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and U.S Department of Health and Human Services. 2012 <http://nrckids.org>
National Network for Child Care: Toilet training. 1995 www.nncc.org/guidance/toilet.train.html
California Child Care Health Program: Toilet Learning in Child Care 2004 www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org

Reviewed by: _____ Director/Owner
_____ Health Professional (physician, nurse)
_____ Staff member
_____ Other (parent, advisory committee)

Effective Date and Review Date:

This policy is effective _____ (date) and reviewed yearly _____ (date) or as needed.

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