



Potty Training Readiness and Child Care

Thinking of beginning potty training your toddler? It would be great to not have to deal with diapers anymore, believe me, I know. They are messy and expensive. But we want to make sure that your child is developmentally ready for potty training. Some children show signs of readiness as early as 18 months, some may take up to 36 months. In our experience, 26 to 30 months is typically when we see our toddlers most ready to begin potty training at their child care center.

My most important piece of advice is consistency. If you, the parents, wish to begin training at home, please discuss with your child's caregiver. If we, the caregivers, see readiness at school, we will discuss with you the best time to start. The consistency between home and school is key to your child's success. Without this consistency, we can cause confusion in the child and delay their progress.

There are a few different signs to look for when determining potty training readiness. Here is a list of a few (including but not limited to) that we find helpful:

Physical Signs:

- Coordinated enough to walk, and even run, steadily
- Has regular, well-formed bowel movements
- Can remain dry for long periods of time, two hours or more, or at naptime, which shows bladder muscles are developed enough to hold urine.
- Urinates a fair amount at one time

Behavioral Signs:

- Dislikes the feeling of being wet or soiled, asks to be changed
- Shows interest in other people's bathroom habits, like watching parents or other children in the bathroom, wants to wear underwear instead of diapers
- Gives a physical or verbal indication they are going to the bathroom like hiding, squatting, grunting, or telling you they are going
- Can sit quietly in one position for 3-5 minutes
- Demonstrates a desire for independence.

- Can walk to and sit on the potty
- Can pull pants down and back up again
- Takes pride in accomplishments
- Isn't resistant to using the toilet, desire to cooperate

Cognitive Signs:

- Understands the physical signals that mean they need to use the potty
- Communicates need to go to the bathroom before going
- Ability to hold it until they get to the toilet
- Has words for urine and stool
- Can follow simple two- step directions
- Understands value of putting things where they belong- helps understanding that urine and stool belong in the potty

Switching to underwear...

When you notice that your child is staying dry for most of the day, and is indicating the need to use the bathroom on their own, it may be time to make the switch to underwear. Accidents are going to happen, and we are prepared for that at school. We just ask for a few changes of clothing, with socks and shoes.

When potty training, it is important to remember that all children develop at their own pace. Please use your child's motivation and development to guide your decision to begin potty training.

Please know that punishment and criticism are detrimental to a potty training child, and will only make the process take longer. Patience, encouragement, and lots of praise will help your child's success in potty training. We never want to cause any anxiety surrounding potty training. We want this to be a positive, exciting time in your child's life full of celebration, friends cheering, no more diapers!

Jackie Fuller
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Sources

<https://mcpress.mayoclinic.org/parenting/toilet-training-recognizing-readiness/>
https://www.babycenter.com/toddler/potty-training/potty-training-readiness-checklist_4384