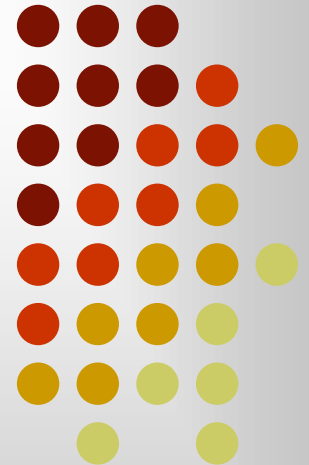


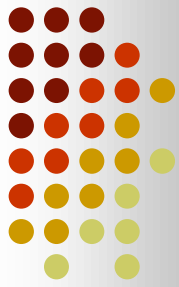
# Toilet Training Your Child

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University of St. Thomas Child  
Development Center

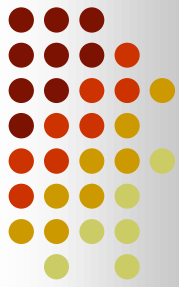


# Toilet Training Your Child



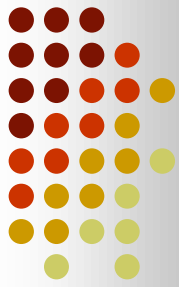
**Toilet training can seem like a mysterious and daunting task for children and parents, but in reality, it is just another self-help skill. As with most self-help skills, mastery requires regular practice and positive reinforcement at every step toward the goal.**

# Toilet Training Your Child



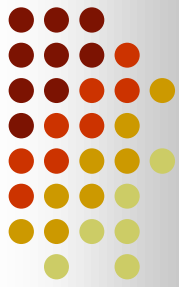
**We consider a child to be toilet trained when s/he is able to have fewer than three toileting accidents of any kind within a one week period.**

# Toilet Training Your Child



**Due to program schedules, staffing patterns and room arrangements, we must require that all children be toilet trained at the time they enter our preschool classrooms (Lightning Bolts and Road Runners).**

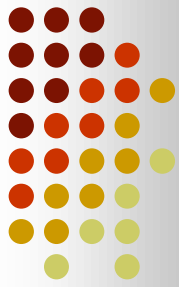
# Keys to Success



**Each child's toilet training experience is different, but there are keys to successful toilet training that are common to all children. These keys are:**

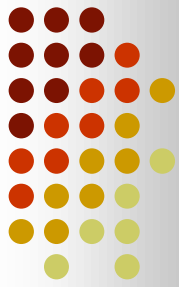
# Child's Readiness

Some of the most common signs of readiness are:



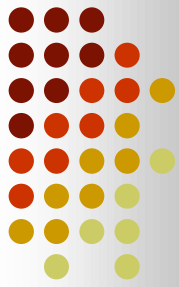
- **Your child is uncomfortable in wet or soiled diapers and wants them changed.**
- **Your child has developed a predictable elimination schedule and often stays dry for two to three hours at a time.**
- **Your child is able to get on and off the toilet with minimal or no assistance**
- **Your child is able to put two or more words together to make complete sentences and/or can tell you when their diaper needs to be changed.**
- **Your child is increasingly able to take off and put on his/her own clothes.**

# Child's Readiness



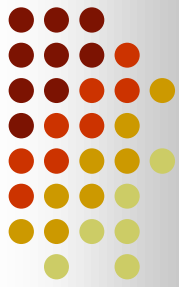
**We believe it is time to start toilet training when a child consistently shows two or more of these signs of readiness. For most children this happens sometime between two and three years of age.**

# Child's Readiness



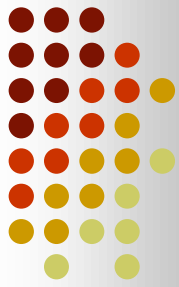
**We discourage parents from beginning the process before 20 months of age when your child's nervous system and bladder and bowel muscles may still be immature.**

# Consistency



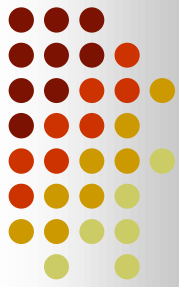
**You'll find that your consistent approach and response to toilet training will make it a much easier and more pleasant experience for your child and your family. While most children get the basics down in the first 2 or 3 weeks, please know that it may take a good 6 to 8 weeks before you can consider your child to be fully and dependably toilet trained during the daytime hours.**

# Consistency



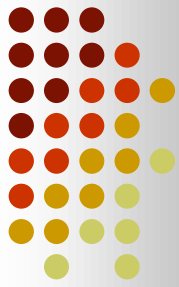
**Many children take another 4 to 8 months or longer before they can stay dry through the night. Given this timeline, we encourage you to wait and start the process when your family can give it the focus it deserves. Don't begin toilet training when there are other major events happening in your lives (going on vacation, welcoming a new baby, parent starting a new job, etc.).**

# Consistency



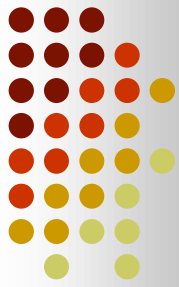
**Once you do begin toilet training, keep moving forward. At every opportunity, let your child know that you are confident s/he can master this skill. Resist the temptation to put your child in a regular or training diaper because it is easier, faster and sometimes cleaner than toilet training.**

# Consistency



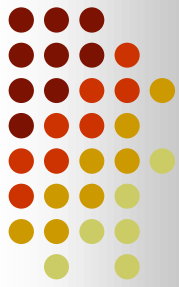
**And if the going gets tough, don't give up – just make adjustments. Throughout your parenting experience you'll encounter many tough situations. To reverse course or give up altogether may set a precedent with your child that can cause problems for years to come.**

# Make It Routine



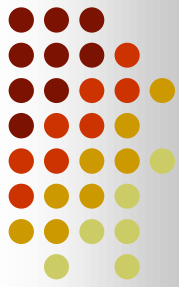
**There is great comfort in routine, especially for young children. Before you begin toilet training, try to come up with a schedule for going to the bathroom and a simple, relaxed routine while in the bathroom.**

# Make it Routine



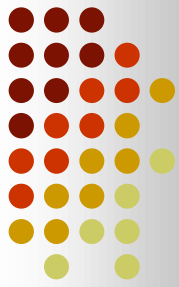
**Don't make a big deal out of trying to go potty. Instead, save the hoopla for when they have their first few successes. That is the time to shower them with praise and attention.**

# Make it Routine



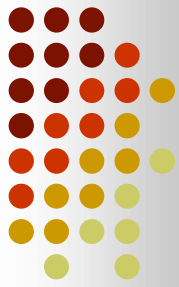
**We would discourage you from using material goods (stickers, books, toys) to reward toileting successes. This is another precedent that can be hard to maintain over the years.**

# Make it Routine



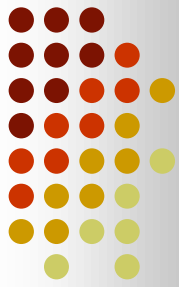
**On the other hand, many families find it helpful to have special books, toys or activities that are reserved only for the bathroom and really encourage children to spend time there in the first place.**

# **Be Patient and Maintain a Sense of Humor.**



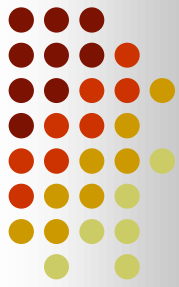
**As you venture into toilet training, know that it will take time, it will be messy and you should expect the unexpected. If your child is like most, this is the first time s/he will be asked to control a bodily function that they've never had to think about before. Your child will look to you and your reactions as s/he figures out the physical, emotional and social implications of toileting.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



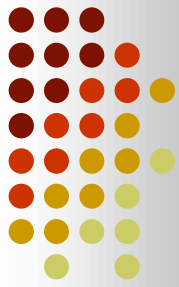
- **Meet with your child's primary caregiver.**
- **Make sure your child is consistently showing signs of readiness at home and at school.**
- **Come up with a plan that is consistent between home and school.**
- **Set a date to start.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



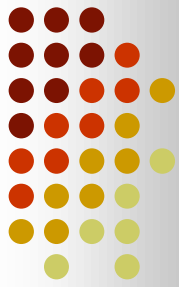
**About 2 weeks before you plan to begin, start talking with your child about toilet training. Talk about how your body feels when you need to go. Encourage your child to tell you when s/he needs to go. Be sure to always give a very positive and encouraging message.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



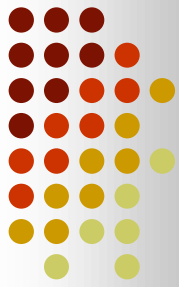
**Take your child to the store to have him/her pick out underwear. Buy lots and lots of underwear (20-24 pair).**

# STEP-BY-STEP



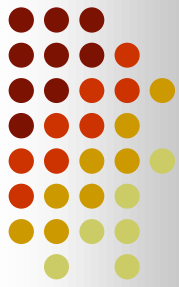
**Make sure your child has a lot of extra clothes that s/he can easily put on and take off by themselves. Try to avoid snaps, buckles, tights, overalls, onesies, etc.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



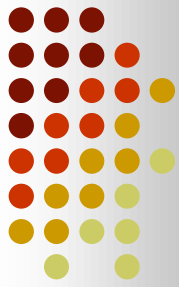
**Keep your child's school cubby stocked with 4 or 5 extra sets of clothes each day. A set includes shirt, pants, underwear, socks and shoes.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



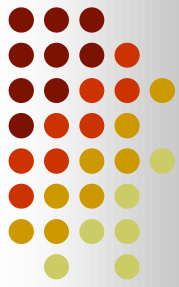
**We strongly discourage the use of training diapers. Despite what you may see advertised, a training diaper feels like any other diaper to your child, and as long as s/he is wearing a diaper, s/he is less likely to use the toilet.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



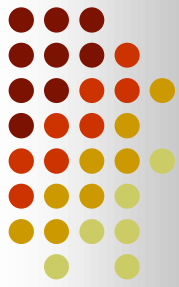
**When you first begin training, take your child to the bathroom every 20-40 minutes. You may want to try reading a book, playing with special toys or singing songs to encourage your child to sit longer.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



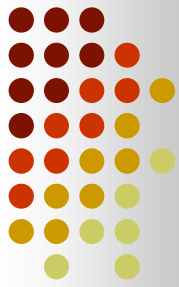
**Also, we would advise that little boys start by learning to sit on the toilet and point their penis down when urinating. This will save you a lot of clean-up.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



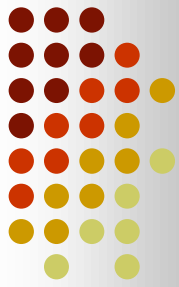
**When your child is done on the toilet, have him/her wipe their own bottom as much as possible, flush the toilet and wash hands. You want to encourage your child to be as independent with this process as possible.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



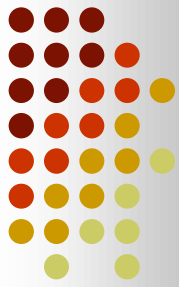
**For night time toilet training, we suggest you wait until your child's muscles and nervous system have matured to the point that their diaper is only slightly damp or even dry most mornings when they wake up (remember, this may not happen for many months after you've completed daytime toilet training).**

# STEP-BY-STEP



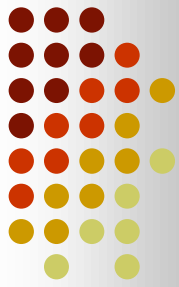
**When your child's diaper is mostly dry in the morning, pick a date and tell your child that you are going to stop using diapers at night. Limit or eliminate their liquid intake for one to two hours before bedtime and have them go to the bathroom right before bed.**

# STEP-BY-STEP



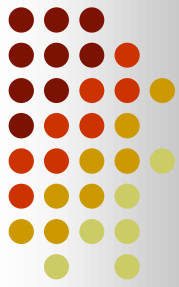
**If your child wets the bed more than 2 or 3 times in the first few weeks, you may want to teach him/her to get up during the night to go to the bathroom.**

# Resources



**There are many wonderful resources available to parents and children who are toilet training. If you have questions, or would like to learn more about toilet training or about your child's development in general, please be sure to talk with staff at the Center. Or look for any of the following books for children:**

# BOOKS/RESOURCES



- Your New Potty by Joanne Cole
- Going to the Potty by Fred Rogers
- Uh Oh! Gotta Go! by Bob McGrath
- Sam's Potty by Barbo Lindgren
- The Princess and the Potty by Wendy Cheyette Lewison
- P.J. and Puppy by Cathryn Falwell
- When You've Got to Go! by Mitchell Kriegman
- The Potty Book for Boys/Girls by Alyssa Satin Capucill
- Potty Time by Guido van Genechten
- All By Myself by Anna Grossnickle Hines
- Max's Potty by Harriet Ziefert
- Once Upon a Potty by Alona Frankel
- Everyone Poops by Taro Gomi
- Flush the Potty by Ken Wilson-Max
- A Potty for Me!: A Lift-the-Flap Instruction Manual by Karen Katz