



Dear Parents:

Welcome to Discovery School's Two ½ and Three-Year-Old classes! We are looking forward to a year of growth and learning, and to partnering with you to assure your child has the BEST preschool experience.

In order to promote independence, support their developing skills, and maintain a sanitary and positive classroom environment, it is **our expectation that children be potty trained by three years of age**. This expectation is based on strict Licensing and Health Department sanitation standards for changing and disposing of wet or soiled diapers. Just as importantly, changing a child takes away from instructional time, as well as removing an adult from the direct supervision of, and interaction with, the rest of the children.

Potty training can be an exciting and challenging time in both your and your child's life. At Discovery School, we define "potty trained" as having the ability to lower his/her underpants (as well as deal with other clothing), be able to use the toilet, wipe themselves, flush, re-dress and wash hands. We realize that accidents will happen, but accidents, by definition, are unusual incidents that happen infrequently. **Wearing pull ups and requiring a great deal of assistance with toileting is not considered potty trained.**

Potty training is a big step for kids and parents. The secret to success? Timing, patience, and consistency. School is such an exciting and distracting place; we suggest that families start potty training before school begins. Learning to separate at school is a big adjustment for some, and trying to introduce a new skill at the same time can be stressful. Summertime, with easy up and down clothes, is the easiest time. Start being a big kid now!

Potty training is easiest when families and Teachers work together as a team. Make sure your child's Teachers know when you've started so they can follow through at School with frequent reminders and lots of high 5's and positive reinforcement. Teachers will encourage the children to sit on the potty, whether or not they go, and everyone celebrates even the tiniest success!

We have attached some helpful hints that other Parents have found useful, and our Discovery School Toileting Policy.

Please contact the Office if you have any questions.

Toileting Tips

Children gain bladder and bowel control at varying ages and stages of development, and, as in all developmental milestones, to be successful there must be a convergence of physical, intellectual, psychological, verbal, social/emotional and motor readiness. Appropriate support and encouragement from adults is crucial.

Typical Timetable of Development that Supports Toilet Training

18 – 24 months increasing control over their bowel and bladder; able to recognize they are urinating or having a bowel movement (they might go into another room, hide under a table, stop whatever they're doing)

24 – 36 months increased urge toward self-mastery; able to manage simple clothing; increased ability to understand verbal explanations; takes great pleasure in increasing competence ("I do it!"); awareness and imitation of adult behavior; increased desire to please and to win praise

36+ months gradual maturation of digestive system leads to more predictable toileting habits and a decrease in accidents; improved ability to break focus and go to the toilet and to resist distraction while getting there; peer pressure encourages compliance; enjoys feeling successful and "grown up"

Toilet training is a big step for kids and parents. Being at School is exciting and distracting, so we suggest that families start toilet training before School begins. Summertime, with easy up and down clothes, is the perfect opportunity! Learning to separate at School can be a big adjustment and trying to introduce a new skill at the same time can be stressful for children and adults. The secret to success? Timing, patience, and consistency.

It can be helpful to think of toilet training as a process in which you and your child have your own "jobs" to do.

In order to be successful in toilet training a child must have achieved these developmental milestones:

- Awareness of the need to go and the basic understanding of cause and effect
- A desire for self-mastery, to "be big"
- Able to stay dry for up to two hours
- Ability to communicate their need to go
- Fine motor skills to pull clothing up and down/ on and off
- Attention span to remain seated on the toilet long enough to eliminate successfully (3 to 5 minutes)
- Social awareness – the observation of, and desire to be like others; social identity with peers or same-sex adult

In order to nurture a positive toilet training experience, Parents should:

- Commit to devoting the time and energy to be consistent on a daily basis
- Be consistent – keep their bathroom routine as consistent as possible with the same sequence of actions – remove clothes; sit on potty; wipe; pull up clothes; flush; wash hands.
- Be positive – praise small successes; some children respond well to small rewards (a treat, sticker, checkmark on the calendar, calling a loved one to share the news, a big high-five). For some, getting to flush the toilet is a big reward; for others, flushing is too loud or a little scary. Try using specific words

of praise and encouragement (“You listened to your body and knew you needed to go.” “You went in the potty like big kids do!” “You’re getting big!”).

- Children are most successful in toilet training when the focus is on them being grown up and able to do it for themselves, not because that’s what an adult wants.
- Provide what they need to be successful like a portable seat, potty chair, or a stool at the toilet. They feel more stable and will have better success (i.e. leverage) when their legs aren’t dangling. Reading books, playing music, or limited time with a device can help them stay seated.
- **An accident is an opportunity to do better next time.** If they have an accident, provide predictable, non-punitive consequences (help clean up, re-dress themselves) and encouragement such as “It’s ok. Accidents can happen.” “Don’t worry, you’ll keep working on it.”
- Stay involved and observe – monitor their bathroom behavior so that you can quickly identify and resolve any new problem that may arise
- Pull ups don’t give children the sensory feedback of being wet or soiled. Try transitioning to thicker, “real” underwear so the child is aware when they’re wet or soiled. Most children dislike the feeling, which is a motivation to go on the potty.
- Celebrate that they’re a BIG KID now by shopping for “real” underwear. They love choosing their own Paw Patrol or Princess underwear, and most of them can’t wait to show them off to their teachers and friends, too!
- Try to ENJOY this big step – toilet training is a necessary chore, but it can also be fun at times. Don’t take your child’s hesitations, passing fears, or resistance too seriously. Try to find joy and humor in the charming memorable moments along the way! You may find yourself getting to know your child in a new way – appreciating their special qualities, gaining a better understanding of how they adapt to change, incorporating their interests, and respecting your child as a unique, interesting, and growing up little person.

The What If’s

- If you start seeing power struggles developing over potty training, significant regression in skills they had previously mastered, or serious physical issues like withholding urine or constipation, it might be time to take a step back, stop talking about potty training, and try again in a week or two.
- if your preschooler is not interested in, or having great difficulty being potty trained, reach out to your health care provider. Occasionally children have physical issues that make potty training more difficult, so a checkup is a good idea. Children with special needs may take longer to learn to use the toilet, so you may also want to consult with your child’s development specialist. They can help you figure out what the challenges might be and identify strategies and supports that might be more successful.

Mastering this life-long skill will increase your child’s self-confidence, independence, and self-esteem. Leaving the days of diapers and pullups behind can be freeing (and cheaper) for you, too! What a wonderful process to be a part of! Start being a big kid now!!

Discovery School

Toileting Policy

It is expected that children three years and older be able to toilet independently, and that 2 and 2 ½ year olds be potty trained by their third birthday. This expectation is based on Licensing and Health Department sanitation standards for changing and disposing of wet or soiled diapers or pullups, as well as the increased sanitation requirements during COVID-19. Just as importantly, changing a child takes away from instructional time, as well as removing an adult from being able to interact with the rest of the children.

Since children gain bladder and bowel control at varying ages and stages of development, some 2 ½ year olds may not be fully toilet trained before the start of the school year, but we encourage families to start the process during the summer. “Getting ready for School” is great motivation to tackle this milestone now!

To foster a positive attitude, promote independence, and support their developing skills while maintaining a safe and positive classroom environment, the following guidelines have been set:

- Toilet trained is defined as the ability to use the toilet without a great deal of assistance. Wearing pull ups or requiring a great deal of adult help is not considered toilet trained.
- In order to be enrolled in the 2 ½ Year Old program a child should be in the process of potty training, In the Three Year or older programs, a child must be fully toilet trained, or able to take care of an accident with adult assistance by the start of school.
- Teachers cannot leave the classroom and take a child to the diaper changing area to handle a toileting accident, so all toileting will be managed within the classroom.
- Teachers will guide, or “talk children through”, pulling their clothes down, sitting on the toilet, cleaning themselves, redressing, flushing the toilet, and washing hands. This is usually done by being in close proximity and assisting from the door – not necessarily by being in the restroom with the child. If a child is having difficulty, Teachers will assist them by breaking the task into more manageable steps.
- Children are expected wipe themselves. A Teacher will assist only if a child is having difficulty. Parents are encouraged to be patient and understanding while their child masters their “technique”.
- Since the children are gaining independence and mastering their self-help skills, the Teacher will focus on encouraging them to try their best. In the beginning, “their best” may not be quite perfect, so we ask your patience and understanding as we work to build the children’s proficiency and self-confidence. (again, if a child is very soiled, the Teacher will step in to assist, and will follow Universal Precaution Guidelines)
- If a child has an accident, they will be guided through changing, sitting on the toilet, redressing, flushing and hand washing; soiled or wet clothes will be sent home in a plastic bag.
- If toileting accidents or other related issues become disruptive or unsanitary Teachers, Parents and the Director will meet to determine strategies to address the situation

To encourage toileting success, Discovery School's policy is:

- Children should be dressed in loose fitting, easily managed clothing – (elastic pants instead of snaps and zippers; socks instead of tights; two-piece outfits instead of overalls)
- Children are encouraged to go to the bathroom upon arrival in the morning
- Children are free to go to the restroom at any time
- Throughout the day Teachers will remind children to use the restroom and will be aware of telltale signs of needing to go to the bathroom – “the Potty dance”, flatulence, reluctance to sit, or restlessness.
- Teachers will encourage toileting after snack, before transitioning to a resource or outside play, prior to going home or to Lunch and Extended Day.
- If a child says “No” when asked to go to the restroom, the Teacher may respond “Ok, but I’m going to remind you in 5 minutes, and then you need to sit on the potty and try.” or “Let’s go try. Your toy (friend, activity) will be waiting for you when you finish.” In the first scenario, within 5 minutes, the Teacher will come back, and say “It’s been 5 minutes, it’s time to go and sit on the potty.” Children will be encouraged to sit on the toilet for a short time (1-5 minutes), but will not be forced to stay on the toilet if they are ready to get up.
- Teachers will be near the restroom to guide children through each step in the toileting process and to be able to monitor if a child needs their assistance
- To monitor and assist the children, the bathroom door will be left open at all times.
- If a child has an accident, the Teacher will guide the child as much as necessary to change, clean, redress and wash hands independently. Wet or soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag, tightly closed, and sent home.
- Teachers will praise successes, encourage trying your best, and congratulate a child for “being a big kid”. There will be no recrimination, criticism, or punishment for an accident.
- Children’s toileting (frequency, appearance, and/or amount) will only be recorded and reported to parents in special circumstances
- The Director will be notified if a classroom area needs to be sanitized due to an accident
- When assisting a child with toileting Universal Precautions for bodily fluids will be followed:
Wear latex gloves when handling these fluids. Latex gloves can be found in First Aid kits in each room, on the playground and in the First Aid cabinet. When cleaning spills of bodily fluids, use bleach solution.