

## **Definition of a Toilet-trained Child--Montessori School in Kleinburg**

**Revised Nov. 27, 2019**

MSK Toddler students will at some point be involved in the toilet-training process while attending school. Our Toddler Staff are here to help the child and parent(s) in this process.

A student at MSK must be fully toilet-trained before they can be accepted into the MSK Casa Program. Consistent use of pull-ups and diapers is not permitted in Casa. A child who has multiple urine and/or bowel movement accidents per day is not considered to be fully toilet-trained and cannot participate in the Casa Program. A promise to toilet-train the child over the summer months is not sufficient. The Toddler child must be toilet-trained and ready for the Casa Learning Environment by the end of the school year (aka. end of June), for their transition to the Casa Program in September.

Should your child who has transitioned to the CASA Program NOT BE FULLY TOILET-TRAINED upon their projected start date to the CASA Program, one or more of the following procedures will be implemented by MSK as per Administration:

1. Parents will be telephoned, informed of the urine or BM accident and parents must pick up child to be washed up and changed into clean clothes; OR
2. The child's program time will be reduced to PART-Time or HALF-Day status until said child is fully toilet-trained; OR
3. MSK will recommend that the child go back to the Toddler program (if space and ratios permit) until toilet-training is fully mastered; OR
4. Defer Program until child is fully toilet-trained.

### **DEFINITION:**

A potty trained child is a child who can do the following:

- 1) Be able to TELL the adult they have to go potty BEFORE they have to go. They must be able to say the words "I have to go potty" BEFORE they have to go.
- 2) Be able to pull down their underwear and pants and get them back up without assistance.
- 3) Be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet.
- 4) Be able to get off the potty or toilet by themselves.
- 5) Be able to wash and dry their hands.
- 7) Be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if we are outside and away from the classroom (eg. outdoors for recess)

The first one is the number one key to successful training. Children who are ready to train have the ability to perceive events that are going to happen before they happen. Because we cannot

allow children to just go in and out of the room to freely use the potty they MUST learn they have to tell us so that we can accompany them into the room and supervise them. At home you can allow them free access to the bathroom if you choose but we are prohibited by our regulations to allow them to go unaccompanied. Because of this they need to learn that they must tell the adult they have to go BEFORE they have to go. We do not accept signs that the child has to go or nonverbal behavior. It must be communicated with words eg. "I have to go to the bathroom"

### **Is your child ready to begin training?**

Sometimes parents feel that if their child is able to actually pee on a potty at home when the parent places them on the potty that this is the sign they are ready to train. From our experience as Early Childhood Educators this is not necessarily a sign. Many children who are able to do this, are actually not properly trained until more than a year later. Potty training is five percent ability to get their clothes on and off, five percent ability to go pee or have a bowel movement in the potty and NINETY percent being able to identify when they have to go and telling the adult BEFORE they have to go.

Another misconception is that if a child tells you that they have peed or had a bowel movement in their diaper that it's a sign that they are ready to train. There usually isn't ANY correlation to a child's awareness AFTER they have gone to their ability to recognize and act BEFORE they have to go.

### **Some things we do at school to get our students ready to potty train:**

- 1) We start reading potty books and talking about going potty
- 2) We have them sit on the potty during natural transition times (before and after meals, before and after naps, and diaper changes)
- 3) We practice with them getting their pants up and down on their own and hand washing.
- 4) We will supervise them and watch for signs that they have to go or are going and take them to the toilet.
- 5) We keep close communication with the parents about any indicators suggesting the child is ready.

### **Some things we don't do:**

- We do not put kids on a potty schedule where they go every half hour or hour. It's very time consuming with little to no benefit. From experience we have seen this cause many problems with children not being able to hold much urine and having to constantly go to the potty further along down the line. Their school day would pretty much be centered around the potty which just isn't realistic in this setting.
- We don't limit food or drinks to only be given at certain times. We maintain the same food and snack schedule during training.

- We don't clean out BM soiled underwear. We will bag pee soaked underwear and return it to the parent at the end of the day but we will not do this with soiled underwear. We must dispose of that immediately into the garbage. We don't do laundry of any soaked or soiled clothes. They are bagged, put into the child's backpack and returned to the parents at the end of the day.

**Some helpful hints to help you at home:**

There are some easy daily things you can do at home that will really help your child's progression.

- 1) Be positive about toilet-training. A happy experience each time they are on the potty will translate into quick training at home.
- 2) If there are two adults in the house have each adult "ask" the other adult if he/she can go to the potty at least four or five times a day. Your child seeing and hearing you "ask" if you can go will get the idea in their head that they need to do that too.
- 3) Praise the child on success for every step of the process but do not overdo it. You don't want them trying to do the potty thing fifty times a day to get your attention or get rewarded. A "way to go" or a "thumbs up" and big smile will let them know you are proud.
- 4) Use incentives. Use stickers or small treats (like gummies, jelly beans, teddy grahams) ONLY after potty success.
- 5) Let the child in the bathroom with you when you are going potty. This is really important for the same sex parent. Let them see how it works and you washing up afterwards.
- 6) Don't let them play with toilet paper.
- 7) If you see them mid way trying to pass a BM or pee scurry them off to the potty to finish up.
- 8) Give your child three or four minutes to get the job done. It shouldn't take more than a few minutes. Don't let it turn into an attention seeking time. It's only about going potty. If they don't go in a reasonable time tell them it's time to get off and we will try again another time.
- 9) Don't allow potty time to be a stall tactic to avoid doing something the child doesn't want to do. This could be at tidy-up time or at nap time. Some kids will claim they have to go potty to avoid having to go to bed. If you see a pattern of avoidance have the child do the potty a little bit before you want them to do whatever they are avoiding so it doesn't interfere.
- 10) Train boys sitting down first. Then switch them to standing up when they are tall enough to reach over the seat and are adept enough to aim.

**Children may not perform their Potty-training at school the same way they do at home:**

- 1) At home, children are not trained to tell the parents they have to go BEFORE they have to go but rather are allowed free access, unsupervised to the bathroom in their home. Again, here AT SCHOOL they must tell us BEFORE. They can't leave the classroom without an adult and go into the bathroom without supervision.
- 2) There are many more distractions AT SCHOOL with a larger group of children, toys, and bustling activities.
- 3) They need one to one attention throughout the day in order to keep up with the toileting. At school we have multi-level aged children who have various needs and supervision requirements. We can't focus on one particular child at all times; **we must divide our attention with all our students**. This is another reason your child must tell us he/she has to go. They need to bring it to OUR attention. We can't focus only on them to pick up cues, sign language, or specific behaviors to tell us it is time.
- 4) At home, parents are putting the child on the potty in small time increments. We don't do this here at school.

**There are also sometimes students who are successful at school but will not do it at home. This can happen if:**

- 1) The child is on the go a lot in the evenings and weekends making it difficult for the parent to do toileting practice at home.
- 2) Children are with different caregivers on the weekend who don't continue the practicing.
- 3) Parents want the training to be done at day care during the day and do diapers and pull-ups at home on the weekends.

**Use of Underwear Policy**

Children must be accident free for a period of 2 full weeks at school before we allow underwear use. You may choose to have your child wear the thick thermal underwear if this is your preference.

This is an absolute non-negotiable policy. Having potty-trained many children over the years our staff have found that once a child is successful for two full weeks HERE at school, it is rare if for them to have accidents thereafter.

The reason for this policy: MSK must maintain infection control standards as outlined by the CCEYA and protect the carpet, furniture, and inventory of our classrooms. As a licensed child care setting, we have to have higher standards of cleaning and sanitation than in a typical family home to avoid having to do frequent carpet and furniture cleaning and replacements.

Often when students have accidents it isn't discovered immediately and they end up wetting down their leg and soaking their socks. As our attention is divided amongst all the children in our care, this could go unnoticed for a short while. Once the child sits down or walks around in the

classroom, we quickly have an entire classroom with urine soaked footsteps and big soaked spots from the child sitting. It only takes a few minutes of free playing to cover the room completely. The toddlers play and work directly on those surfaces, which is unsanitary.

Once an accident is discovered, we have to have the entire room cleaned. Once urine gets into the carpet, it is nearly impossible to clean it down to the pad with regular carpet cleaners. Having the carpet done professionally is very expensive and hard on the carpet.

When children soil their underwear it is a very big mess to clean up. Often the BM will soak through their clothes and cause the same problems the pee accidents cause. It can require professional cleaning and it takes up more staff time to deal with the clean up.

**Naptime-training: A child must be** out of diapers and/or pull-up for nap time before they begin in the Casa classroom

### **What to Wear During Training:**

Children should wear easy on and off pants during training. We prefer sweat pant like bottoms until they are physically capable of doing snaps and buttons. Please don't send them in anything that requires us to remove the top to get to the bottom. We don't allow one-piece clothing or jumpers or shirts with snaps at the crotch area. Belts and suspenders should also be avoided. Diapers and pull-ups are permitted for training. We do not do cloth diapers or underwear with plastic pants. If you have had great success at home we can do the training with the underwear and a pull-up over the underwear during the training. If the child has regular accidents in the underwear we will switch them back to regular diapers and try again at another time.

Finally, our staff have found that a number of children are easily potty trained during long vacations and holiday breaks. The parents have the time to do the intense work and supervision. Parents can allow the child to be in underwear for many consecutive days. If they are successful at home, then we can proceed accordingly at school upon their return.

### **What to do about wiping/cleaning themselves after a Bowel Movement**

Potty training is an expected undertaking when you're the mom of a toddler. But you might not have given much thought to how to teach your child another toilet task — how to wipe her own bum. By the time a child transitions from our Toddler Program to our Casa Program, it is expected that he/she should be able to wipe/clean themselves after a bowel movement. Here are some suggestions to help your child learn to wipe independently.

#### **1. Explain Why We Wipe**

Besides understanding that you — and your toddler's teachers — won't always be there to wipe his bum, there are other reasons your child needs to know how to take care of his own business. Explain in terms your child will understand. Ex. "Bottoms that are not clean are not fun, and when your bottom is not clean you may get "an itchy bum."

But more importantly, your child should know that if he makes a mess while wiping and doesn't

wash his hands well afterward, he/she could get sick.

## **2. Demonstrate Correct Technique**

To get your toddler on the right track to helping him/herself, explain what needs to be done, including measuring the right amount of toilet paper, wiping from front to back to avoid infections, flushing, and washing hands.

As a parent you can use yourself as a model to show your child what to do. You can also try teaching your toddler on a teddy bear or doll.

## **3. Talk About How to Use Toilet Paper**

Wiping well, of course, requires using the right amount of toilet paper.

At first you may want to measure off the correct amount of TP for your child. A good way to measure the right amount of toilet paper is to use a length measuring from your toddler's fingers to their elbows. And show your child how to fold it. Perhaps when he/she is not even using the toilet, you can take a roll of TP and sit with your child and teach them how to do this.

Then, just as you demonstrated on the doll or teddy, insist he/she try it on themselves. Tell him/her to do this over and over until there is no more “BM” on the toilet paper. Have your child wipe, check the paper, and if it's not clean, to wipe again. If it's done three times and still isn't clean, flush the toilet (so it does not plug), then start again. Then, follow up with a wipe to make sure he/she got it all.

Make sure that he/she is really getting between his/her bottom cheeks because if he doesn't, there won't be any “BM” on the TP and he or she will think he/she did a good job when he/she really didn't even get it.

## **4. A Word About Wipes**

Until your toddler gets the hang of toilet paper, we recommend flushable wet wipes. It is a lot easier with wipes because they are moist so it helps them to completely wipe themselves.

Use flushable wipes to give your son or daughter extra encouragement. Take your child to the supermarket and make him/her choose some wet wipes they like. After that, tell him/her to make sure he/she cleans him/herself every time, using the wipes that they chose.

## **5. Offer Incentives and Praise**

If you believe, that good behavior needs encouragement, then by all means offer a reward for good wiping behavior.

Ex. You can put stickers on a chart each time your child wipes, and when he/she gets ten stickers you can give him/her something special. If the child can see his/her progress, he/she is more likely to wipe and flush.

Also, leave your child's wipes by the toilet so he/she can easily reach them. Makes sure there's

always a stool near the sink so he/she can reach the towel, soap and sanitizer. And remind your child that he/she is “such a big kid now” and that you are proud of him/her.

Providing these words of encouragement might sound like a small thing, but they really can get your child to the point where he can take care of him/herself faster.

It sincerely is a big relief to a parent once your child is able to independently care for their own needs when using the washroom.