



TOILETING INDEPENDENCE

for Toddlers

PHILOSOPHY

A major component of our Toddler curriculum is toilet learning as related to independence and experiential learning. It is a skill that needs to be practiced and perfected over time. Toilet learning at TMA begins with readiness signs and is not learned through a traditional reward system. The reward for children is the satisfaction of independently performing this skill without the help and guidance of an adult.

We work with parents to decide when it is best to begin the process which is usually between 18 months and 2 years of age. Additionally, we will not require any child to use the toilet before they choose to do so by themselves. Our role is to facilitate the process by which a child gains toileting independence. A child is toilet-competent when he or she takes charge of toileting without an adult.

SIGNS OF READINESS

- Child can stay dry for longer periods of time or overnight
- Child knows the feelings and signals that he/she needs to use the bathroom
- Child can efficiently dress and undress themselves in loose clothing
- Child is interested in other family members using the toilet
- Child is uncomfortable in a soiled diaper

TIPS FOR THE HOME

- Expect accidents to happen
- Avoid power struggles
- Implement routines
- Use correct language for body parts
- Use statements such as, "It is time to..." rather than asking the child
- Use positive statements such as, "You did it!"
- Change underwear/diapers in the restroom
- Keep a basket of extra underwear easily accessible for your child
- Involve your child in the process (changing, cleaning, etc.)

THINGS TO AVOID

- Never force your child
- Avoid verbal and physical rewards
- Refrain from anger when accidents happen
- Tight clothing that the child cannot remove independently
- Inconsistency - do not go back and forth to diapers
- **DO NOT GIVE UP! STAY WITH IT!**