



Toilet Training in the NC Pre-K Classroom

Toilet training is a skill set that every child must experience and master. There is no specific age or stage in your child's life this skill must be mastered. Like all things learned, every child is unique and learns at different rates, and from different methods.

Most children in the NC Pre-K Program have mastered the skill of toilet training. For those children who enter the NC Pre-K Program and have not mastered the skill of toilet training, the NC Pre-K Program staff would like to assist your family with this learning process. The following information will support Rowan County NC Pre-K Program's "**Team Approach**" to Toilet Training. Toilet Training is a joint effort between parent and child with support and assistance from the teacher. It is important when starting to toilet train your child that you remain consistent, and communicate with the classroom teacher to ensure success for your child.

When Preschoolers Are Not Interested in Toilet Training

Contact your child's health care provider with your questions or concerns about toilet training. Occasionally, children have physical issues that make toilet training more difficult, so a check-up is always a good idea. You may also want to share your concerns or questions with your child's teacher who can provide additional resources and support.

Toileting Tips for the "Team Approach" to Toilet Training

Parents

It is the parent's **responsibility** to create a supportive learning environment when toilet training your preschooler. As the parent this means you are responsible for:

- Recognizing that your child is in control of his or her body.
- Let your child be part of the decision when choosing training pants or underwear. Disposable underwear will affect the toilet training process because it feels exactly the same as a diaper. Since diapers prevent a child from feeling wetness when they have an accident, the child will have little motivation to toilet train.
- Teach your child words for body parts, urine, and bowel movements.
- Offer your child the tools she needs to be successful at toileting (such as a small toilet, toilet seat, stool, etc.).
- Expect and handle toileting accidents without anger
- Avoid punishment as well as too much praise around toilet use. (This can make children feel bad when they aren't successful).

Teachers

It is the teacher's **responsibility** to create a supportive learning classroom environment when assisting a child with toilet training. It is the teacher's responsibility to:

- Understand there is no "right" age for a child to be toilet trained. Every child has a unique experience some toilet train very early, and some are just not ready.
- Check in with parents often. Ask at the start of the year what stage of toilet training their child is in and how they handle toilet training at home.
- Be patient and express this to the parents. Parents feel incredible pressure to have their toddlers and preschoolers toilet trained and that stress trickles down to the child. Help relieve that stress by being patient and positive. Your students will have their own timeline. Rushing a child who is not ready is not helpful.
- Have picture books about toilet training in your classroom for children to read with you, look through alone, and to share with parents.
- Understand that accidents will occur and don't make a big fuss about them. Be positive. When you hand the parent the wet clothes in a bag, make sure you are stressing that it's no big deal, the child is watching and listening to this exchange.
- Have extra clothes on hand. If a child has just transitioned to underwear make sure you have multiple changes of clothes.
- Ask children often if they would like to use the toilet but never pressure them. Most preschoolers will go to the bathroom about every 2 hours.
- Never force a child onto a toilet, ever!! Even if you know, the child in the corner is using the bathroom, do not force them into the bathroom. Instead encourage them to walk to the bathroom, help them clean up and wash hands. While cleaning up, have a conversation with the child about coming to the toilet the next time even if they are not ready to sit on the toilet. No judgment, just encouragement and support to get to the next stage.
- Allow children to go to the bathroom with a toilet trained friend (and a teacher of course) to see how this toileting thing works. Social awareness, the observation of and desire to be like others-gradually expands throughout the toddler and preschool years, adding yet another motivator for the child to become fully toilet trained.

One Final Thought

Toilet Training can be a difficult task for all parties involved. Consistency, communication, and patience are essential to the success and mastery of the toileting skill. As parents and educators it is important that we provide a developmentally appropriate experience for a child working to acquire a new skill.

Finding a toilet training method that works for your family is the key. No matter how you do it, remember this is a learning process, toileting takes time, patience and consistency, with many accidents along the way. Being patient is one of the best ways you can support your child as he/she learns.