

Toilet Training Policy

by St. Thomas Early Learning Center

Children enrolled at STELC are expected to be able to use the toilet confidently and independently. Children must be wearing underwear. Children have full access and can go to the bathroom whenever they need to. In addition, there are regular toilet reminders at most transition times.

Why do children have to be toilet trained before they begin STELC?

- There are strict standards for changing and disposing of wet and soiled diapers/pull ups and our classrooms are not equipped for this.
- When an adult is busy changing a child's soiled clothing, it removes one adult from the direct supervision and interaction with the rest of the class, taking away learning time from all students.

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

- Recognize and be able to tell a teacher in words that they need to use the toilet before they must go
- Hold their toilet need until they can get to the bathroom from a classroom or the playground or while waiting for other children to finish using the toilet
- Get on and off the toilet independently
- Pull down/up their clothes to use the toilet and independently put them back on
- Wipe themselves after using the toilet
- Flush the toilet
- Wash and dry their hands
- Wake up during nap time should they need to use the bathroom
- Be accident-free in regular underwear (not training pants, disposable diapers, or pull-ups) for a two-week daytime period.

Please be aware that a child's toilet use in a classroom setting may not be the same as it is at home. There are a lot of distractions with friends, toys, and fun activities such that a less confident toilet trained child may struggle to maintain dryness and cleanliness. We encourage families to foster the skills needed to toilet at home and in public. **Have your child practice dressing and undressing by themselves, getting on and off the toilet, and teach them how to wipe and wash hands.**

We do understand that even toilet trained children will occasionally have accidents. Accidents, by definition, are unusual incidents and should happen infrequently. If this happens, teachers will help a child change into dry clothes, mostly encouraging them to change independently. Depending on the type of accident or if a child has more than one accident in a day, a parent might be called to pick up the child. Children have accidents for a variety of reasons, but if they are independent, it's manageable.

We are aware that even a child who is fully toilet trained might have a setback when in a new environment and generally allow 2 to 3 weeks from the first full day of school for your child to learn to toilet in the classroom environment. If accidents occur during this time frame, the teacher and parent will dialogue to determine next steps. A child will not be considered toilet trained in our program if the child consistently has toileting accidents beyond this time frame.

After this 2-to-3-week time frame, the following policies are in place for those children who have accidents:

- If it can be determined when regular accidents occur (ex. just after snack or lunch), then we will ask the child to be picked up just prior to that time.
- If urine accidents are isolated to rest time and a child otherwise independent, then we will ask the child to rest in pull ups. This is the one exception to wearing underwear.
- If accidents occur frequently (daily for TTh children; 3 or more per week for MWF: TWTh or M-F children for a 2-week period) parents will be notified with the understanding that the child will have to stay at home at least one week or until they are completely toilet trained.
- If multiple accidents occur in one day, parents will be notified on that day, and if multiple accidents persist beyond day three, the child will have to stay home at least one week or until they are completely toilet trained.

This policy is not in place to shame a child or inconvenience a child's primary caregivers. Rather, there are strict and timely protocols for cleaning after accidents. Our classrooms are not set up for this. In addition, responding to accidents takes a teacher away from spending time monitoring and interacting with all students. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.