

## Toilet Learning Policy

Our policy is current as at January 2022 and will be reviewed as required. Our policy is based on the following specialist sources:

- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria (Article *Continence issues in children* by Anne Ferrie 2007)
- Australian Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
- The provision of toilet learning documents will give parents a clear understanding of the process.

Children may develop control of their bladder and bowel by two to three years of age. Links between the spine and the brain are not fully established until about two years of age, so toilet learning is physiologically impossible till then. A small minority of children may show early signs of readiness by 18 months. There is no set time to begin toilet learning and it may take months to achieve consistent and positive results. It is important to remember that all children will reach development milestones at their own pace.

Signs of interest in toileting may include:

- understanding of their nappy being soiled or wet
- having some control and holding on until they get to the toilet
- being able to pull their pants up and down
- having a dry nappy for longer indicates that the child has some control over his or her bladder
- indicating when he/she is producing a wet or soiled nappy or has just produced one
- showing an interest in the toilet/bathroom
- being able to tell that a nappy change is required
- taking an interest in others using the toilet.

Not all these signs need to be present when the child is ready. To ensure a positive experience and outcome in using the toilet, a child needs to be able to tell when his/her bladder or bowel is full.

### Our toilet learning experiences

Our educators will discuss with you when the best time is to begin toilet learning. The educators understand that toilet learning is a very important step in a child's life and they will work in close partnership with families to ensure a positive result. Educators in your child's room will record any observations of the child showing interest in the toilet learning process. They will then discuss with parents to obtain their views.

At any time, parents may discuss the toilet learning process with educators in their child's room. Educators will agree with parents the most effective method of communication based on each individual family situation. Parents are encouraged to share strategies that have worked for them at home. We do ask that parents be understanding of the situational context and that certain practices used at home may not be suitable for a child care setting.

Consistency is also important in the process of toilet learning. The language used during the learning should be the same in the home as at our Centre and the same daily schedule should be followed in both environments. It is very important that a similar routine and strategies are used. A combined effort will assist the child with their progress. This routine should be developed in consultation with each family and educator. It is also important for children who are toilet learning to have assistance from adults to use the toilet. Where possible the same educator will monitor and assist your child with toilet learning. Communication with parents will take place with an educator at the end of the day, or via a text message or email during the day.

It can be confusing for children to use a toilet one day and wear a nappy the next day. It is vital that once your child begins toilet learning, they continue to wear underpants and are encouraged to use the toilet. On occasions, it may be necessary to put a child back in nappies if they are having many mishaps during the day. The child may not be ready to begin the toilet learning process and may benefit putting it off for another month or so.

Mentone Park Childcare and Preschool encourages families to put their child in underpants rather than 'pull-up' nappies. We believe that by keeping a child dry, 'pull-up' nappies don't give a child an opportunity to experience feeling wet or soiled. We would discourage use of these at home as well to achieve progress in toilet learning. A nappy may be used at sleep time/night time.

Our hygiene procedures related to toilet learning are that:

- Educators are to wash and dry their hands, then put gloves on to assist with toileting.
- Children are encouraged to remove underpants and clothing.
- We will assist your child to sit on the toilet.
- We encourage your child to clean from front to back with toilet paper.
- We will assist your child off the toilet and encourage them to flush the toilet and wash their hands.
- Your child will be encouraged to put on underpants and clothing.
- Educators will peel off gloves, turn inside out and place in bin.
- Educators are to use gloves to place any soiled clothing into a plastic bag. The plastic bag is named then tied on to the child's bag
- With the permission of parents, badly soiled underpants will be discarded.
- For all of the above procedures, our educators will always be on hand to provide assistance when required.

## Suitable Clothing

It is essential that your child is dressed in clothing suitable for toilet learning (i.e.: Clothing, which is easy for the child to remove). These include underpants, shorts, long pants, track suit pants, skirts and dresses. **Overalls, jeans and stockings are not suitable clothing for toileting as they are difficult for the child to remove.**

During toilet learning, children may have mishaps because they have not developed enough control to wait to get to the toilet. Our Centre asks that families provide at least four changes of clothing for children who are toilet learning including underpants, shorts, pants, shirts, socks and shoes. Please ensure all items of clothing are clearly labelled with your child's name.

## Supportive Practices

There are a range of practical strategies to support children's positive toileting experiences:

- Children should be prompted to go to the toilet at regular intervals. This begins the process of toilet learning.
- Children should be prompted to go to the toilet before leaving home and before leaving our Centre.
- Room programs will include activities and strategies such as reading books, singing songs and role modelling in order to extend children's interest in the process.
- A log book on toileting will be kept on children who are toilet training. Parents may look at this book at pick up time.
- If a child is wearing a nappy for sleep-time, the nappy will be removed as soon as the child wakes up and the child will be encouraged to go to the toilet upon waking.
- Allowing children to take their time, avoiding pressuring them
- Responding to children's cues and allowing them to be active participants in the process

- Where possible, using the correct terms for going to the toilet – ask families what words they use at home, as consistent language between home and care will help children to understand and learn more easily
- Being sensitive to individual needs and styles, and tailoring individual toileting procedures to each child.
- Taking full advantage of every opportunity for a focused, positive interaction with children during toileting, however brief these may be.
- Always being positive about toilet learning so that your encouragement is reinforced in your language and actions being respectful and sensitive to children’s dignity and rights to privacy

(Reg 155 Education and Care Services National Regulations)