



What to Find Out in Advance of Pottyng at Daycare/School

Potty skills do not always translate automatically to school/daycare. There are many extra variables added into the process in a school setting. Being armed with as much information as possible before sending your child will help ensure their success. If this can't happen in advance, there is still a lot of value in gathering this information and talking through pottyng at school with your child.

Here is a list of questions to ask your child's school. You may already know the answer to some of the questions but if not let's find out so we can prepare them for - and help them cope with - using the potty at school.

Do they prompt and how often?

Do they take several children at a time or each child individually?

Where are the toilets?

Do they have potty chairs or are they mini toilets?

Are toilets exposed to the rest of the room, is there an option for privacy?

Can the children access the potties on their own without asking?

Do kids have access to water all the time or are fluids given at set times?

Can kids go “commando” or are they required to wear a pull-up or underwear?

Preparing Your Child for School

We want to prepare your child for using the potty at school tomorrow as best we can. Here some ideas of things to say to help get them to visualize ahead of time that they can do this at school. These are some sample scripts.

Set up the daycare drop-off day before:

"Tomorrow Mommy is going to drop you off at school. You're using the potty now so you will use the potty at school too."

"That is a big pee in the potty. When you do this at school, Ms. Suzy is going to be so impressed."

"Wow. Nice job. It will be awesome to show Ms. Suzy how you pee on Monday!"

Set up the daycare drop-off day of:

For the morning of school:

This is the classic prepare-the-child speech. Say the things YOU WANT to happen. Exactly as you want them to happen.

"Today I'm going to drop you off at school. You are going to put your pee and poop in the potty all day. And keep your pants super dry. You are going to be so proud of yourself. I can't wait to hear about all the pee and poop in the potty. Hooray for you!"

Additional Tips:

*Aim to keep them in the same amount of layers at school. Meaning, if they are in the pants only/commando phase, don't send them in underwear unless they notice and specifically direct you to. Underwear too soon will likely lead to more accidents. If they do require them, use them at school but, when your child arrives home, go right back to pants only until we decide together to move on from there. Make sure pants are free of zippers, buttons and snaps and are loose. Avoid leggings and go up in size, if needed.

*Consider sending an object into school with your child that can accompany them to the bathroom. For example, a calming jar, a favorite stuffed animal, a picture of the family, or anything that makes them feel calm and secure.

*Talk about what they will do when they need to go ("Mommy helps you at home. Who will help you at school? Who will you tell when you need to potty?") Visualize the space as in, "What does the bathroom look like? How do you get there? And role play as in, "Let's pretend I'm the teacher and you need to use the potty at school." If necessary, create a picture book by snapping pictures of the walk to the school potty, the bathroom itself, and your child in that bathroom. Print them and paste them into a book you can read together each day.

*The biggest issue at school/daycare is fear of missing out. If your child is having accidents there, try to troubleshoot with their teacher on ways to alleviate that fear. For example, placing a picture of them in their spot/activity/seat when they go to the bathroom to "save" their place. Or having a "parking spot" where their toy goes until they come back.

*Another issue is not wanting to travel to the bathroom and be the only one leaving the action. Ask the teacher to assign a bathroom buddy to your child so they always have company when they go.

*Ask for the context of all accidents that take place there so we can troubleshoot further together. Where are they on the playground? What activity were they engaged in? Knowing the details will help us set your child up for more success in the future!