

Toilet Training Tips

Children are not required to be fully toilet trained to attend Somerville Public Schools; however, families are expected to actively support their child's progress toward this important developmental milestone. Learning to use the toilet fosters independence and builds a child's confidence and sense of achievement. The following tips will help support your child in achieving this goal.

Assess readiness:

- Does the child show they need to use the bathroom with words or behaviors (for example: make sounds or faces, hold crotch with hand, squat in a corner or hide when they need to poop or squirm/jump/dance around when they need to pee)
- Does the child show interest in the toilet? (for example: watches others on the toilet, talks about "pee" or "poop," asks questions)
- Can the child follow simple directions?
- Does the child stay dry for 2 hours or more?

At home

- Let all household members know your child is toilet training. Make sure everyone is committed to the project. Consider devoting a weekend or long weekend to toilet training to help accelerate the process.
- Dress your child in clothes that are easy to pull up and down, i.e., elastic waist pants, not pants with buttons, zippers, snaps, buckles, or belts.
- Bring the child to the bathroom every hour to sit on the toilet for a couple of minutes. This is especially important first thing in the morning, before and after eating, and before leaving the house.
- Reward the child for every step: letting you know they need to pee or poop, sitting on the toilet, removing clothes, flushing the toilet, etc.
- When your child pees or poops in the toilet, let them know how proud you are! Celebrate every success!
- Coach your child, but do not step in and do things they can do for themselves. School staff will coach children but will not "wipe" them unless the child has a documented medical need or IEP plan that includes toileting.
- Accidents happen! Reassure your child that this is okay, and do not get angry or frustrated. Stay calm and help your child get back on track.

At school

- Consistency is key! Toileting training works best if the same routine is practiced at home and at school. This helps children understand what is expected of them.
- Let your teacher know your child is toilet training and ask if they can ensure your child uses the bathroom every one to two hours.
- Send your child to school in clothes that are easy to pull up and down: elastic waist pants, not pants with buttons, zippers, snaps, buckles, or belts.
- Send extra clothes every day
- Provide wipes and pull-ups if this is what you use at home. Staff do not "wipe" children, so you will need to come to school if your children cannot clean themselves if their pants are soiled.

Remember:

- Toilet training is a different journey for every child. That's OK!
- Praise any and all steps...whatever a child can do is one step closer!!
- Accidents happen, but it's a chance to problem solve. Work as a team together with a non-judgmental approach
- Stay calm. You are your child's most important teacher and supporter.

Adapted from Melrose Public Schools. "Tips for Toileting Success." *Toileting*,
<https://www.melroseschools.com/o/fs/page/toileting/>, accessed 22 September 2023.