



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Child Care**  
Okanagan Campus

**UBC Okanagan Child Care**  
Student Housing and Community Services

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## Toilet Training Information

Here at UBC Okanagan Campus Child Care, we are committed to supporting families and their children towards toileting success. We prefer those children entering the 3-5 program be successful toileters, or well on their way to becoming one.

### - **Watching for signs of readiness**

We will communicate with families as children become more comfortable trying to use the toilet, or have successes while sitting. Communication helps staff and families understand any differences there may be between home and childcare, so we can all support the child during this transition.

### - **Signs your child might be ready for underwear**

If they are regularly using the toilet or keeping their diapers dry, or are communicating the need to use the toilet or for a diaper change, they are likely ready for underwear. For some children, this will be a very quick transition, others may start with success and end up regressing and need to try again later.

### - **Learning to use the toilet takes practice!**

Children in underwear are taken to the bathroom at our diaper change intervals, before outside to play, and once during outside time. We will never force a child to use the toilet, but will give gentle encouragement. We may offer to read your child a book, sing a song or tell stories while they practice sitting. As we learn their bathroom routines, and abilities to tune into their body and voice their needs, we give the child more autonomy over when they visit the toilet.

### - **Reward versus encouragement**

We find that reward systems can lead to pressure, and inhibits children from checking in with their bodies and learning to take pride in themselves. We focus on verbal encouragement such as: "Wow, you must be so proud of yourself!" "This is so exciting!", as well as high fives, hugs and sharing their successes with friends and teachers.

### - **Dealing with accidents**

Accidents are common while children learn to listen to their bodies. Your child may be successful peeing on the toilet, but not with producing bowel movements. We approach accidents with a gentle reminder of what words children can use when they need to go, and how they can practice for next time. We also encourage them to sit on the toilet following an accident in case they aren't finished, and so they can end the bathroom visit on a successful note. If your child is having recurring accidents or showing signs of regression, it may be an indication that they need a break. We recommend sending your child to childcare with extra underwear, clothing and even back-up diapers as your child navigates this time of learning.



### Signs of Readiness

- Shows an interest in using the toilet or wearing underwear
- Can understand and use words about using the toilet
- Can make the connection between the urge to go to the bathroom, and using the toilet
- Can keep a diaper dry for 2 or more hours
- Can get to the toilet, sit long enough to listen to their bodies, and then get off the toilet
- Can pull down diapers, disposable training pants, or underwear without help

### Additional Challenges When Toilet Training:

- Any major changes in your child's life (like moving, birth of a new sibling, changing from crib to bed, etc.)
- When your child is ill
- When your child is away from home (such as travelling)

### Further Tips:

- Set your child up for success by saying: "Tell me when you need to go to the bathroom"
- At the same time, set a bathroom routine and say: "It is time to go to the toilet" even if they say they don't need to.
- Indicate your child's support system by saying: "When you need to use the toilet you can tell ...." or "What do you say when you need to go pee or poo?"
- Always get your child to try before a transition like going outside, leaving the house etc.
- Ensure your child is dressed in clothing that helps them manage toileting routines independently.
- Ensure you remain calm when experiencing accidents. Showing your frustration or anger may put stress on your child and lead to regressions.

We recognize there are many different resources and approaches to helping your child through the toileting transition, and it can feel overwhelming knowing where to start. The above are some strategies that we have found works best in our childcare centre. We do our best to provide consistency between home and childcare, but there will be times where something that works at home is not feasible in this setting. We appreciate flexibility and understanding as we all work towards this common goal.

### Additional Resources:

[Signs of toilet training readiness: When to start, and when to wait \(parentingscience.com\)](https://parentingscience.com/signs-of-toilet-training-readiness-when-to-start-and-when-to-wait/)

[Toilet Training \(for Parents\) - Nemours KidsHealth](https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/toilet-training)

[Potty training: How to get the job done - Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/parenting/expert-answers/potty-training/faq-20087777)

[Toilet Learning \(carecourses.com\)](https://www.carecourses.com/toilet-learning)