



Moving Up to the Older Toddler Room

Your child is heading into the busiest, funniest, biggest feeling year yet. Here is what changes and how our room runs.

CHILD & MOVE-UP DETAILS

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth _____
Move-Up Date _____ Classroom # _____ New Teachers _____

HOW THE MOVE HAPPENS

This is a big step, and we take it gently. Children move rooms based on development, group fit and space in the next room, not age alone, so the timing is about your child rather than a birthday. We always tell you before it happens, and when scheduling allows we bring your child over for a few short visits first so the room already feels like theirs. Expect a week or two of extra tiredness and a few more tears at drop off. That is normal, and it settles.

OUR DAILY RHYTHM

7:30 to 8:30 AM	Arrival, breakfast, quiet free play
8:30 to 9:30 AM	Outside time
9:30 to 10:00 AM	Morning circle, songs, art and sensory play
10:00 to 10:30 AM	Morning snack and clean up
10:30 to 11:30 AM	Gym time
11:30 AM to 12:00 PM	Quiet show while we potty, diaper, and wash up for lunch
12:00 PM	Lunch at the table, cups and silverware
12:30 to 3:00 PM	Nap and quiet hours · no drop offs or pick ups
3:00 PM	Afternoon snack
3:15 to 6:30 PM	Outside or gym, crafts, free play, books, wind down for pickup

QUIET HOURS

Quiet hours are 12:30 to 3:00 PM.

To protect our little ones' sleep, we do not allow drop offs or pick ups in napping rooms during these hours. If an appointment falls inside that window, talk with the office ahead of time.

Why it matters: children ages 1 to 2 need 11 to 14 hours of sleep in a 24 hour day including naps, and 3 to 5 year olds still need 10 to 13. One door opening at 1:15 PM can wake a whole room. (AASM consensus statement, 2016)

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A FEW ROOM GUIDELINES

- **Arrive before 12:30 PM or after 3:00 PM.** No drop offs or pick ups during nap.
- **Sleep.** Your child naps on their own mat now rather than in a crib, which most children find very exciting. We provide the mat and sheet. Send a small blanket and a comfort item if you would like.
- **Cups and silverware.** Bottles are finished in this room. Your child drinks from an open cup and eats with a spoon and fork. It is messier for a while, and that is the whole point.
- **Clothes, and extra of them.** Between art, meals, and potty learning, two year olds go through clothes fast. Send **three** full changes including socks, plus shoes, since we are outside or in the gym every day. Elastic waists your child can pull down alone, please. No belts, buttons, overalls, or tight jeans.
- **Label everything.** Coats, blankets, stuffies, shoes, cups, water bottles, all of it.
- **Tell us about the night before.** Rough sleep, teething molars, or anything new at home helps us give your child the day they need.

WHAT YOUR TWO YEAR OLD IS WORKING ON

Words, and lots of them. This is the year language explodes. Most children go from around fifty words and two word phrases at 24 months to hundreds of words and real sentences by age three. We narrate everything, read constantly, and give children the words for what they want. Language is also the best tool we have against biting and meltdowns, so every word your child gains makes their day easier.

Doing it themselves. *"Me do it"* is the anthem of this room. Coats, shoes, hand washing, pouring, carrying their own plate. Ages one to three are when a child works out whether they are capable, and the answer depends a lot on whether adults let them try. So we build the day so children can do real things alone, and then we let them, even when it takes four times longer.

Cups, spoons, and forks. Scooping without flipping, stabbing with a fork, drinking from an open cup, getting food from plate to mouth. We eat at the table together and let them serve themselves when we can. Expect spills. Spills are how it gets learned.

Big bodies, all day. Running, jumping with both feet, climbing, pedaling, throwing, and carrying things far too heavy for them. This is why we go outside first thing every morning and into the gym before lunch, rather than only on nice days. National standards call for toddlers to get outdoors two to three times daily and 60 to 90 minutes of active play across a full day. *Caring for Our Children, 4th ed. (American Academy of Pediatrics)*

Playing near, and starting to play with. One year olds play beside each other. This year that starts turning into playing together: handing things back and forth, copying on purpose, and the first pretend play with a friend. Real sharing and turn taking still do not arrive until around age three, so we stay close, coach with words, and keep duplicates of the favorite toys. *Parten, Social Participation Among Preschool Children, 1932.*

Pretend, art, and imagination. Feeding the baby dolls, cooking in the play kitchen, driving a block that is definitely a truck. Plus crayons, playdough, gluing, painting, and sensory bins. Our art is *process art*, so we care what your child does with the materials, not what the finished piece looks like. Expect abstract masterpieces and paint in the hair.

Rules, and testing them. Two year olds understand the rule and break it anyway, on purpose, while watching your face. That is not defiance, it is research. We keep the routine the same every day, say what *to* do rather than what not to do, and offer small real choices, which is the fastest way to end a standoff.

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THIS IS THE ROOM WHERE IT USUALLY HAPPENS

Most children learn to use the potty during their time in this room. The full details are in our *Potty Training at Stoney Court* family sheet and the *Potty Training at Home* workbook, and your child's teacher can hand you both. Here is the short version so nothing is a surprise.

Readiness is not a birthday. Most children show the signs somewhere between two and a half and three and a half. Staying dry two hours or more, telling you before it happens, pulling their own pants up and down, disliking being wet, and wanting to wear real underwear. We watch these signs all day long, and we are always happy to tell you what we see.

POTTY TRAINING STARTS AT HOME

Potty training starts at home, not at daycare.

Before your child begins in underwear here, we need at least three to five days in a row at home, in real underwear, with strong and steady progress. A long weekend is the minimum, a full week is better. Strong progress means that by the end of that stretch your child is telling you before they need to go, making it most times, and down to no more than one or two accidents a day and improving.

We are not able to start a child in underwear here on the strength of a plan or a single good day. A busy classroom with eight children is a much harder place to learn a brand new skill than your own bathroom, so a child who is only just holding it together at home will not hold it together here. If your child is still having accident after accident on day five, they are telling you they are not ready yet. That is useful information, not a failure.

HOW POTTY TIME RUNS IN OUR ROOM

- **The whole class goes together**, at every natural transition, roughly every 60 to 90 minutes, plus any time a child asks. Going as a group is what keeps every child in the room, in ratio, and safe with one teacher and up to eight children. We are not able to run a separate timer or an individual schedule for one child, so please build your home routine around this same rhythm.
- **We tell, we do not ask.** Our teachers say *"It is time to go potty,"* never *"do you need to go."* Children say no to a question far more often than they say no to a routine. We remind them their toy will be waiting when they get back.
- **We never hold a child on the potty** or keep them sitting past a minute or two, and we never shame, scold, or punish over an accident.
- **Accidents get the same calm words every time.** *"Let us get you clean and dry."* Then we move on. We celebrate the telling, not just the result.
- **Same words at home and here.** We say *pee* and *poop* in every classroom, every day. Tell us your child's words too so we always understand them.

WHAT RESEARCH TELLS US

Earlier is not faster. Children who start intensive potty training earlier take longer to finish than children who start when they are ready, and the months in between are hard on everyone. (Blum, Taubman & Nemeth, Pediatrics, 2003)

What typical looks like. Girls reach daytime dryness at a median of about 32 months and boys at about 35 months, with a wide normal range on either side. Later than a friend's child is still completely normal. (Schum et al., Pediatrics, 2002)

One practical note. Your child stays at the toddler rate until they are both three or older and truly potty independent, so there is never a reason to rush this or to tell us it is going better than it is. Accidents never count against your child. See the tuition sheet for the details.

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BIG EMOTIONS ARE THE HEADLINE OF THIS YEAR

Two year olds feel everything at full volume, and they have almost none of the equipment needed to manage it. The part of the brain that handles impulse control and calming down is years from finished, while wanting, noticing, and caring have all arrived early. That gap is the whole explanation for the meltdown over the wrong colored cup.

It is normal, and it is common. In a large community study, roughly 84 percent of preschool aged children had a tantrum in the past month. What is *not* typical is tantrums nearly every day, tantrums that go on past about 25 minutes at a time, or a child who cannot come back down with help. Those are worth a conversation, and we will start it with you kindly.

Wakschlag et al., Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 2012, on where normal temper loss ends and concern begins.

HOW WE HANDLE A MELTDOWN

- 1 **We stay calm and we stay close.** A child in a full tantrum cannot hear reasoning, take instructions, or answer questions. Talking more makes it longer, not shorter.
- 2 **We keep everyone safe** and move the child to a quieter spot in the room if the noise is feeding it.
- 3 **We name the feeling out loud.** *"You are so mad. You wanted the red cup."* Naming it is how a child eventually learns to do it themselves.
- 4 **We wait.** Anger comes first and burns fast, sadness comes after. When the crying softens, that is when a hug and words start working, and that is when we go in.
- 5 **We teach on the other side, briefly.** One sentence about what to do next time, then back to playing. We do not lecture, shame, or make a child apologize on command.
- 6 **We prevent what we can.** Warnings before transitions, small real choices, food and sleep protected, and no long waiting. Hungry and tired are behind most of it.

BITING CAN STILL HAPPEN

Biting usually starts around 12 months, peaks in the second year, and is mostly gone by about age three as words take over the job. So it is less common in this room than in the young toddler room, but it has not disappeared, and we would rather say so plainly than have it surprise you. It is a developmental stage, not a sign of a mean child or of anything wrong at home.

Why it still happens at two: two year old molars coming in, excitement that boils over, feeling crowded, being tired or hungry, wanting a turn very badly, and still not having the words fast enough for a very big feeling.

If your child bites, or is bitten. We go to the hurt child first with a cuddle, washing, and ice. We speak briefly and calmly to the child who bit, give them the words for what they wanted, and redirect. We look for the pattern, time of day, the space, the friend involved, and then change the room or the schedule to prevent the next one. Both families get an incident report the same day. We never share the names of the children involved with either family, we never bite back or allow a child to be bitten back, and we never shame. If it repeats, we sit down with you and build a plan together.

Tremblay et al., Pediatrics, 2004, on the normal rise and fall of physical aggression · Dionne et al., Developmental Psychology, 2003, on why building language works better than punishment.

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DROP OFFS COME IN PHASES

Some weeks your child will run into the room without a backward glance. Other weeks they will hold onto your leg like it is the last thing on earth. Both are normal, and the swing between them usually has nothing to do with the room or anything you did.

What helps most is a goodbye that never changes. The same words, in the same spot, at about the same time, and then off you go. Short, warm, and confident. If you can, try not to leave, come back, and then take your child home because they are crying. That impulse comes straight from love, but when crying works some days and not others, a little one learns that enough crying *might* get them home. Most children settle within a few minutes, and we are always happy to send a photo once they do.

Spagnola & Fiese, Infants & Young Children, 2007 · Ferster & Skinner, Schedules of Reinforcement, 1957

ABOUT SCREEN TIME

We use one short, gentle show for up to 30 minutes a day, in the half hour before lunch, while we work through potty time and hand washing. It is the only screen time in our day.

WHAT TO PACK

- ☐ Three full changes of clothes, including socks
- ☐ Simple pull down pants, no belts or buttons
- ☐ Underwear, once potty learning has started at home
- ☐ Shoes, since we go outside every day
- ☐ A small blanket for nap, labeled
- ☐ One comfort item for nap, such as a stuffy
- ☐ Weather ready coat, hat, and boots
- ☐ Everything labeled with your child's name

We provide: nap mats and sheets, diapers and wipes, cups and silverware, sunblock, and all meals and snacks. If you would rather we use your own sunblock, diaper cream, or diapers, send them labeled and we will use those instead.

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A FEW THINGS FAMILIES ASK

What if my child will not sleep on a mat? Almost every child settles within a week or two. We keep the room dim, play the same quiet music, and rub backs. A child who genuinely stops sleeping still rests quietly with books, because the whole room needs it.

Do I have to potty train before my child can move up? No. Children come into this room in diapers all the time. This is simply the room where it usually happens, whenever your child is ready.

What if my child is more tired, clingy, or emotional at home? That is the most common thing families notice in the first two weeks, and it passes. A bigger room and a whole lot of holding it together all day means it often comes out at home. Earlier bedtimes help.

How will I know how the day went? The same daily updates you are used to, with photos, meals, naps, potty and diapering, and activities.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE MOVE

Questions about the move? Talk with your child's teacher any time, or give the office a call at **208-650-7529**. You can also reach us at office@stoneycourtplaycare.com. Come see the room whenever you like. We are so glad your little one is growing up with us.