



# Toddler Handbook

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OMS Montessori – a non-profit organization

*OMS Vision is a peaceful, global community where individuals are joyfully engaged in contributing to the well being of all life.*

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## **The Toddler Program (18-36 months)**

“The education of even a small child, therefore, does not aim at preparing him for school, but for life.”  
-Maria Montessori

The Toddler community is a warm and caring environment. It fulfills the needs of the child to explore and learn about their world away from home.

The Toddler community is divided in 4 different areas:

Practical Life

Language

Food

Psychosensory motor

+ Sleeping

### **Practical life:**

Purposeful real-life activities which include the care of the self and care of the environment. These activities develop their independence and self-confidence.

### **Language:**

Spoken language and hands on materials that enrich vocabulary. This includes language activities that encourage the expression of non-verbal language such as art and music.

### **Food:**

Sharing a meal is a significant and a meaningful part of the day in the Toddler community.

The time working in food preparation offers many opportunities for work with purpose, language expression, and grace and courtesy. In addition to food preparation, the community meal offers opportunities to set the table, enjoy each other’s company over food, clean up, and dish washing. It is an essential part of learning to live in a community, to learn about different cultures, and to foster social skills and community-minded values.

### **Psychosensory motor:**

Activities that develop concentration, eye-hand coordination, and fine motor skills.

### **Independence, Choices**

“To assist a child, we must provide him with an environment which will enable him to develop freely.”  
-Maria Montessori

The Toddler community is size, height, and weight proportionate for the young child. The community is proportionate and accessible for the child which fosters independence.

### **Choices**

Once the activity has been presented to the child, the child may choose daily which activities they would like to work on. We see the importance of allowing the toddlers to make choices regularly.

## Freedom of Movement

The Toddler community values the freedom of movement. The children may choose to work at a table and chair or on a mat on the floor. At one moment, you may see children working at a table, on the floor, mopping, and setting the table. Toddlers need to engage in movement. We have indoor and outdoor activities that encourage the development of coordination, equilibrium, and strength.

## Self-Care, Undressing/Dressing

Toddlers are moving from a developmental stage of dependence to independence. To foster this development of independence, the Toddler community emphasizes self-care, undressing/dressing, toileting, and eating.

In the Toddler community, the children will learn to care for themselves. This includes, cleaning their noses, wiping their faces, putting their belongings away, etc. Part of this is learning to undress and dress independently.

Below are some suggestions for clothing we recommend which encourage the toddlers to undress and dress independently.

## Clothing for Independence

### Shirts



Stretchy shirts are ideal for independence. It helps the child to pull them off and to stretch as needed to place their arms and heads through.

- A large(r) neck hole is ideal to get their heads through easily.
- Larger/looser arm holes are ideal to get their arms through easily.



\*\*Please NO BUTTON DOWNS. Toddlers cannot do the buttons independently.

\*\*Please NO LONG SHIRTS that go past the hips. These types of shirts hinder their independence for toileting.

\*\*Please NO DRESSES. Toddlers cannot undress and dress them independently.

## Pants/Shorts



Stretchy pants are ideal for independence.

- Elastic waistbands are easier for toddlers to grab onto to undress and dress.
- Loose fitting in the legs.



**\*\*Please NO OVERALLS.** Toddlers cannot undress and dress them independently.

**\*\*Please NO LEGGINGS or TIGHTS.** They are too tight, and toddlers have a hard time undressing and dressing them independently.

## Indoor Shoes



Flexible shoes are ideal for toddlers. They need to be comfortable but also easy for them to put on/take off.

Hints: **Loppta, Ciciban, See Kai Run**

## Outdoor Shoes



### Toileting

In the Toddler community, we respect each child's individual needs, development and view toilet learning as a natural process. The children participate in the daily toileting routines. We observe and encourage them to undress and dress as much as possible to promote independence. We observe for toilet learning readiness.

### Toilet learning readiness

The child will show one, some, or all of the following:

- Interest/curiosity in the bathroom (toilet, handwashing, undressing/dressing)
- Shows some ability to undress/dress
- Awareness and/or desire to stay dry

### Sleeping

In the Toddler community, the children nap in a calm atmosphere with the blinds down, instrumental music, on a low cot, and with their blanket. We provide the children a place for rest as it is an important part of their day. Nap is offered daily for 2 hours.

### Process over Product: Art, Crafts & Holiday Gifts

In the Toddler community, process is valued rather than product. Toddlers have the desire to repeat activities over and over again to gain mastery.

Toddlers live in the moment and are learning about their concrete world. We foster this process by providing real life experiences. The toddlers need to solidify their understanding of concrete information before they may move onto abstract concepts. In our commitment to the Montessori method, we view art as a process. In the Toddler community, the children will use different mediums of art to engage in a meaningful process rather than creating a product. We foster independence and creativity by allowing freedom to make choices. The toddlers will choose if they want to engage in art activities, which one, and how often.

In the Toddler community, the children will be given the space to repeat and to work towards solidification of knowledge. Crafts and handmade holiday gifts will be part of the next level in the Casa class.

## **Daily Schedule**

Morning Drop off

Montessori Work Cycle

Snack

Outdoor Recess

Lunch

Nap

Snack

Outdoor Recess

After School Care

\*Toileting routine is integrated throughout the day.