



Supporting School Readiness in a Montessori Toddler Program

Our toddler environment is carefully prepared to support independence, confidence, concentration, and a love of learning. While every child develops at their own pace, there are a few key skills that help children feel successful and comfortable as they transition into the classroom.

The following readiness goals are not meant to be a checklist for perfection. Rather, they are areas where families can gently support their child's growing independence and confidence before and during their time in our toddler program.

1. Walking Independently

Children in our toddler classroom move throughout the environment on their own, carrying their work, helping care for the classroom, and walking to the playground, bathroom, and lunch tables.

Your child benefits from:

- Walking steadily without being carried
- Navigating short, then longer, distances confidently
- Climbing small steps with support

Ways to practice at home:

- Encourage walking instead of carrying whenever possible.
- Allow extra time for your child to move at their own pace.
- Practice walking into stores, restaurants, and other destinations together.
- Invite your child to carry small items such as their water bottle, shoes, or backpack.

2. Transitioning to One Nap

Our daily schedule includes one nap/rest period in the early afternoon (approximately 12:30–2:30 PM).

Your child benefits from:

- Transitioning from two naps to one
- Feeling comfortable resting during this time
- Learning to fall asleep with increasing independence



Ways to practice at home:

- Gradually adjust your child's nap schedule as needed.
- Create a consistent, calming pre-nap routine.
- Prioritize adequate nighttime sleep.
- Transition from a crib to a floor bed or toddler bed when developmentally appropriate.
- Slowly reduce rocking or patting to sleep by moving to a gentle hand on the back, then simply sitting nearby.

Although our teachers lovingly comfort children, developing the ability to rest without constant one-on-one support helps children feel more secure and successful in the classroom.

3. Eating and Drinking Independently

Meals are an important part of community life in a Montessori classroom. Children develop independence while caring for themselves and participating in shared routines.

Your child benefits from:

- Drinking from an open cup
- Using a spoon and fork independently
- Sitting at the table during meals and snacks

Ways to practice at home:

- Offer water or milk in an open cup each day.
- Encourage self-feeding, even when it is messy.
- Eat meals together whenever possible to model table manners and conversation.
- Invite your child to help wash produce, stir, spread, cut soft foods with a child-safe knife, plate food, set the table, and clean up afterward.
- Make everyday items accessible by placing dishes, snacks, clothing, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, and other personal items at your child's level whenever possible.

4. Following Simple Directions & Daily Routines

Toddlers thrive when life is predictable and expectations are consistent.

Your child benefits from:

- Understanding simple directions such as "Come here," "Please sit down," or "All done."
- Participating in daily routines with increasing independence

Ways to practice at home:

- Use short, simple language.



- Create predictable daily routines.
- Give your child time to process directions before repeating yourself. (Try silently counting to eight before speaking again.)
- Allow opportunities to complete simple tasks independently before stepping in to help.

5. Consistent Boundaries & Expectations

Toddlers feel safest when adults provide kind, clear, and consistent limits. Boundaries help children develop self-control, confidence, respect for others, and the ability to function successfully in a classroom community.

Your child benefits from:

- Knowing what is expected before entering a situation
- Hearing calm, consistent limits
- Following through with adult directions
- Learning that all feelings are welcome, but not all behaviors are acceptable

Ways to practice at home:

- Set expectations before activities. (“We will use walking feet in the grocery store.”)
- Offer choices within appropriate limits. (“Would you like the red shoes or the blue shoes?”)
- Follow through calmly after setting a boundary.
- Avoid negotiating after a decision has been made.
- Allow your child to experience natural or logical consequences whenever it is safe to do so.
- Stay calm during tantrums while maintaining the boundary.
- Be consistent from day to day. Children learn through repetition and predictability.
- Praise effort, cooperation, kindness, and perseverance rather than rewarding expected behaviors.

Helpful Examples

Instead of repeating the same direction several times, give one clear direction, allow time for your child to respond, and then gently help them follow through.

Instead of changing your answer because your child cries, acknowledge the feeling while maintaining the boundary:

“I know you’re disappointed. It’s okay to feel upset. The answer is still no.”

Instead of giving consequences that are difficult to enforce, choose realistic consequences that you can calmly follow through with every time.

Remember that toddlers are still learning emotional regulation. They are not trying to give us a hard time—they are having a hard time. Our calm consistency teaches children how to regulate their emotions and trust that adults will lovingly guide them.



6. Beginning Social Awareness

Our classroom is a small community where children learn to care for themselves, others, and their environment.

Your child benefits from:

- Becoming aware of others
- Using gentle hands and safe bodies
- Waiting for a turn with support
- Beginning to use words such as:
 - “No thank you.”
 - “My turn.”
 - “My work.”
 - “Help, please.”

Ways to practice at home:

- Model respectful interactions.
- Gently guide behavior using simple language such as “Gentle hands” or “We sit while we eat.”
- Arrange opportunities for your child to spend time with other children.

7. Comfort with Separation

Transitions can be emotional, and that is perfectly normal.

Your child benefits from:

- Short separations from caregivers
- Learning that trusted adults always return
- Predictable goodbye routines

Ways to practice at home:

- Practice short separations with trusted family members or caregivers.
- Keep goodbyes calm, loving, and confident.
- Develop a consistent drop-off routine and avoid lingering.

8. Exploration & Independence

Montessori toddlers are naturally curious learners who thrive when given opportunities to explore independently.



Your child benefits from:

- Exploring toys and activities independently
- Spending short periods deeply engaged in play
- Caring for and putting away belongings

Ways to practice at home:

- Display a small selection of toys on low shelves.
- Rotate toys rather than keeping everything available.
- Give your child uninterrupted time to explore.
- Create consistent places for toys, books, shoes, and clothing so your child can begin putting items away independently.
- Invite your child to participate in everyday household tasks such as watering plants, wiping tables, folding washcloths, feeding pets, and sweeping.

A Gentle Reminder

Every child develops at their own pace. These readiness skills are goals—not expectations for perfection. Our teachers meet each child where they are and support them through the transition with patience, consistency, encouragement, and respect.

Thank you for partnering with us as we support your child's growing independence. Together, we can create a strong foundation for a joyful, successful Montessori experience.

If you have questions about your child's readiness or would like ideas for supporting any of these areas at home, we are always happy to help.

Warmly,

Broomfield Montessori Preschool