



## Parenting Potty Training Tips For Stubborn Children That Work

By Kelly Nault

“Plop. Plop. Fizz. Fizz. Oh, what a relief it is.”

—Old Potty Training Song

Many moms are *not* experiencing relief when their stubborn child resists potty training all together. With the laundry piling up and the cost of pull-ups eating away at the weekly budget, it's no wonder many parents feel like they're ready to flush those unsuccessful potty training techniques down the toilet! I receive at least one email a week from a mom in the parenting “deep end” asking for suggestions in this area.

### Parenting Potty Training Tips for Stubborn Children

Here are my top seven tips for potty training stubborn children:

1. **Know that Your Child WILL be Potty Trained** – Potty training is one of the most important skills preschoolers will learn. They *do* learn it—it's just that some children are slower than others. Everyone eventually learns how to go to the bathroom on their own. Have faith! It's just a matter of time.
2. **Stay Away from Cute, External Rewards** – The more you make potty training into a game, the more your child will see it as a game. Chances are they might turn into a competitive battle where you lose. Cute ideas (like sticker charts for when children “go”, floating Cheerios into the bowl and having boys aim for it, putting food coloring into the bowl and having your child get excited about watching the color change) only confuses the issue—especially when the gimmicks lose their appeal. The rewards of potty training should be internal: your child should feel good about herself for learning something new. By all means, encourage you child when he remembers with a simple, “Great job!”. This is all that is needed for success.
3. **Stick with Your Decision to Forgo Diapers and Pull-ups** – My belief is that pull-ups that soak up the uncomfortable wet feeling actually prolong potty training. One of the children in my life became so comfortable with pull-ups that he was wearing them well into the school years for night accidents. Accidents (many of them) will happen. When kids aren't given the opportunity to continually experience the natural discomfort that comes from wet clothes, they have no reason to learn to make potty training a priority. Consider putting a protective waterproof sheet around their mattress, but stay away from soaker pads and pull-ups once you have made the shift (and the sooner, the better).

4. **Make Potty Training Comfortable** – A big person toilet for a small bum can be a scary thing. Use training potties, potty seats, or have your child face the toilet when sitting on the throne so they can sit comfortably.
  
5. **Let Go of Constant Reminders and Prodding** – The more you make it a big deal, the more your child will fight you. If you are taking all the responsibility for your child to remember to go, there will be no incentive or reason for them to remember. When it comes to potty training, the best reminder comes from your child's own bladder—not you! And when your child forgets or doesn't listen to their bladder, the pee running down their leg is their next reminder.
  
6. **Have Your Child Help Clean Up When Accidents Happen** – Accidents happen and are a part of the natural process of potty training. *Don't make a big deal out of accidents.* Instead deal with the accident by happily cleaning it up together. Have your child help you find dry clothes and deal with washing up.
  
7. **Give Your Child More Responsibilities Around the House** – The more confidence your child feels, the more they will embrace learning any new skill (including potty training). Look for tasks that your preschooler can be responsible for and thank her for what she does. Involving your child in the upkeep of your home is one of the best things you can do for him (see chapter eight of my book *When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You* to learn more about how chores can boost your child's self-esteem).

Potty training is one of the many skills your child needs to perfect. When you support your child in listening to the natural cues of their own body, you will empower him or her with life-long skills. And if you choose to use the above seven potty training tips for a stubborn child, you'll find that potty training becomes a process—rather than a power struggle—with a happy ending.

Kelly Nault, MA corporate spokesperson and award winning parenting author of *When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You* inspires moms to put themselves first—for the sake of their children. She shares time-tested tools that motivate children to want to be well behaved, responsible and happy! Sign up for her free online parenting course at [www.UltimateParenting.com](http://www.UltimateParenting.com).

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