



Spanked Kids' Bottom As Punishment, And Now Mom Feel Parenting Guilt

By Kelly Nault

Parenting Question

"I always swore that a spanked kids' bottom as punishment is something I wouldn't ever do. Yet this morning, I did! My daughter just wouldn't do anything ... brush her teeth, eat her breakfast, put on her shoes ... nothing. I was so frustrated that I just spanked her bottom, then felt terribly guilty when she wouldn't stop crying. How I got her to school I don't know. Funny thing is that I heard you on the radio talking about your book *When You're About to Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You* on the way home and what you said made a lot of sense. I am like the Super Mom you spoke about and do way too much for her. My question is this: if over the long term a spanked kids' bottom as punishment doesn't work (like you say), then **what can I do when she's acting up and driving me nuts?**"

—Frustrated mom who doesn't want to spank anymore and feel guilty

Positive Parenting Tip from Kelly Nault:
Clinical Counselor and Author of
When You're About to Go Off the Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You

Dear Frustrated Mom:

When your child is pushing ALL your buttons, it can be hard NOT to be triggered and do what perhaps, your parents did to you: spank your daughter to punish her. But times have changed. Spanking only creates disharmony and disrespect in the end. Why does a spanked kids' bottom as punishment no longer work well? Because today, we live in an age in which children know their rights and no longer see many models of subservience. Parenting today in a society that upholds equality requires an entirely new approach—an approach that motivates kids to want to be well behaved.

Here are three basic strategies that I suggest to help prevent you from using the "spanked kids' bottom as punishment" technique.

1. **Put yourself first, for the sake of your child!** Parents who go off the deep end and are pushed to use ineffective punishments, such as spanking, are often stressed out themselves. We've all heard it before, "When momma ain't happy, ain't nobody happy!" One of the best things you can do for your daughter is to start putting yourself first, so you have more self to give! Self-care should not be a luxury; it needs to become a necessity.

2. Transform misbehavior into a learning opportunity! Children misbehave when they are discouraged, when they feel bad. Punishment only makes kids feel worse: that's why this solution often leads to worse misbehavior. Does this mean letting them get away with murder? Not at all! What it does mean is looking for ways that your children can learn from their misbehaviors and mistakes. If a child makes a mess in the bathroom, it is an opportunity to clean up the bathroom. If a child forgets their homework, it may mean a lower grade. If a child has a temper tantrum and is not fun to be around, it may mean that it's time for the audience to leave.

3. Perform a “Daring do over”! This strategy is a favorite and comes from chapter nine of my book *When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You*. You are human and, like your child, you are going to make mistakes. So be gentle with yourself. Instead of wishing you had done better when you mess up, *just do better!* Ask your child to give you a “take-two” option in which they help you reenact the same scenario, but this time you will choose different. Performing a “daring do over” does three things:

- It dissolves guilt
- It teaches your child that mistakes are OK, and
- It models for your child how they can fix their own mistakes in the future.

These three basic strategies can help keep you centered so you won't go off the parenting “deep end” and resort to spanking. In my book *When You're about To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You*, you will find over 200 practical strategies you can start using right away to motivate your daughter to choose to be well-behaved.

Pam Allen from Memphis, Tennessee just wrote to tell me my parenting book “Is not a book to read, but a book to live.” It takes time to learn the parenting techniques that truly inspire our children to unleash their very best. But aren't our kids worth that time and effort, especially when the time we put in can result in capable, happy and responsible kids? I believe so too!

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.

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