

"America's Next Top Model" All-Stars winner Lisa D'Amato (right) and Emily Doherty created the Dare-U-Go bib.

Bib Idea for Little Ones

MODEL CO-CREATES COMPARTMENTALIZED FEEDING SYSTEM FOR TODDLERS

BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN

THE MARKET for babies' and kids' inventions is huge—much larger than the few choices I had 30 years ago when my children were little. And because I've been manufacturing kids' products for about as long, I know that safety has come a long way in product development.

Here's a wonderfully convenient new product created by Lisa D'Amato and Emily Doherty, designed to be an all-in-one bib and portable, compartmentalized feeding system for tots. It's easy to store and clean, and comes with one of those sporks (a combination spoon and fork) that fits well in those chubby little hands.

Edith G. Tolchin (EGT): How did the Dare-U-Go bib come about, and how does it work?

Lisa D'Amato (LD): Emily and I were at the mall with my 2-year-old son, Daxel. I told Daxel that if he behaved while we shopped he would be rewarded with some french fries and ketchup. He ended up being a good boy, so Emily and I got him some.

I put a food-catching plastic bib on him. I put the french fries in the bib's pocket on one side, and in the other side I put ketchup. My son didn't like his food touching. ... Emily saw what I did and said what I did was genius!

I said thanks and told her I did it all the time. I continued with telling her I just wished it was wider and had dividers so the food didn't touch. She looked at me and said, "Then let's make it."

From that moment on, we were on a mission to make it. On our way home, we Googled to see if it existed, and it didn't. That was over three years ago.

We are now in our second year in business, still pretty fresh on the market. Dare-U-Go!, LLC. (DUG) is a food-grade silicone bib that connects to a divider bowl that seals air-tight to be used as a food storage unit.

It is all one piece, a 5-in-1 solution to help parents feed their kids on the go or at home. It has a slit in the back, which serves to hold the spork that is included.

Kids love it for their independence and they get their favorite snack or meals on the-go during their out-of-the-house adventures. Parents love it because they can now attack their to-do list with ease and convenience and feed their kids at their convenience, no matter where they are. It is also eco-friendly and helps save money, water and power!

EGT: Of what is the Dare-U-Go made?

LD: It is made of food-grade silicone and a microwave- and dishwasher-safe polypropylene tray. The spork is made of reusable plastic (do not microwave; hand wash only).

EGT: How is the product packaged?

LD: We have two packaging options. One is a blister pack. The DUG is enclosed in plastic against a cardboard back so customers can see it fully open.

The other is a small, colorful box that has two windows that expose the spork in the back and the top of the silicone bib, with the embossed logo in the silicone. This box has the DUG closed up, serving as a food storage unit position.

We also decided on four unisex-friendly colors: yellow, gray, purple and turquoise.

EGT: Because it is a children's product, what type of Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act testing and certification have you done?

LD: We have had to have third-party testing done for the dyes in the packaging for the colors, the packaging itself, the materials for the actual product and the dyes for the silicone as well. Dare-U-Go! is TPE-free (thermoplastic elastomers), PVC-free (polyvinyl chloride), and BPA-free (Bisphenol-A).

EGT: Please share your “Shark Tank” experience! And have you done any crowdfunding before?

LD: We did a Kickstarter in 2017, to get product visibility and to help with production costs. We pledged for \$35,000; we were fully funded at \$37,511. We ended up being funded from Quickbooks, and they even gave us a new MacBook Pro and a gift card of \$500 to aid in any other start-up costs.

When we went on “Shark Tank,” we had only been on the market for three months. We filmed it in June 2018. Because Emily is Canadian, she couldn’t go on the show with me, as a visa would have been too costly. I went on by myself and my two young boys. My son Daxel—the Dare-U-Go! rock star—did a great lifestyle example while using it and passing them out to the Sharks.

After being drilled for almost two hours, I walked away with a deal with Barbara Corcoran. When I walked off set and felt like I had been hit by a ton of bricks, I gave Emily and my boys a huge hug in our trailer, told them the great news, and the rest is history!

EGT: Where are you manufacturing? If overseas, please share any obstacles you’ve found.

LD: Our product is manufactured in China. When working with an overseas manufacturer, I think the biggest hurdle is communication. When having to describe certain details specifically, it is definitely a challenge. Prototypes and CAD models are not only so incredibly detailed but also incredibly costly.

EGT: Where are you selling—website, or retail?

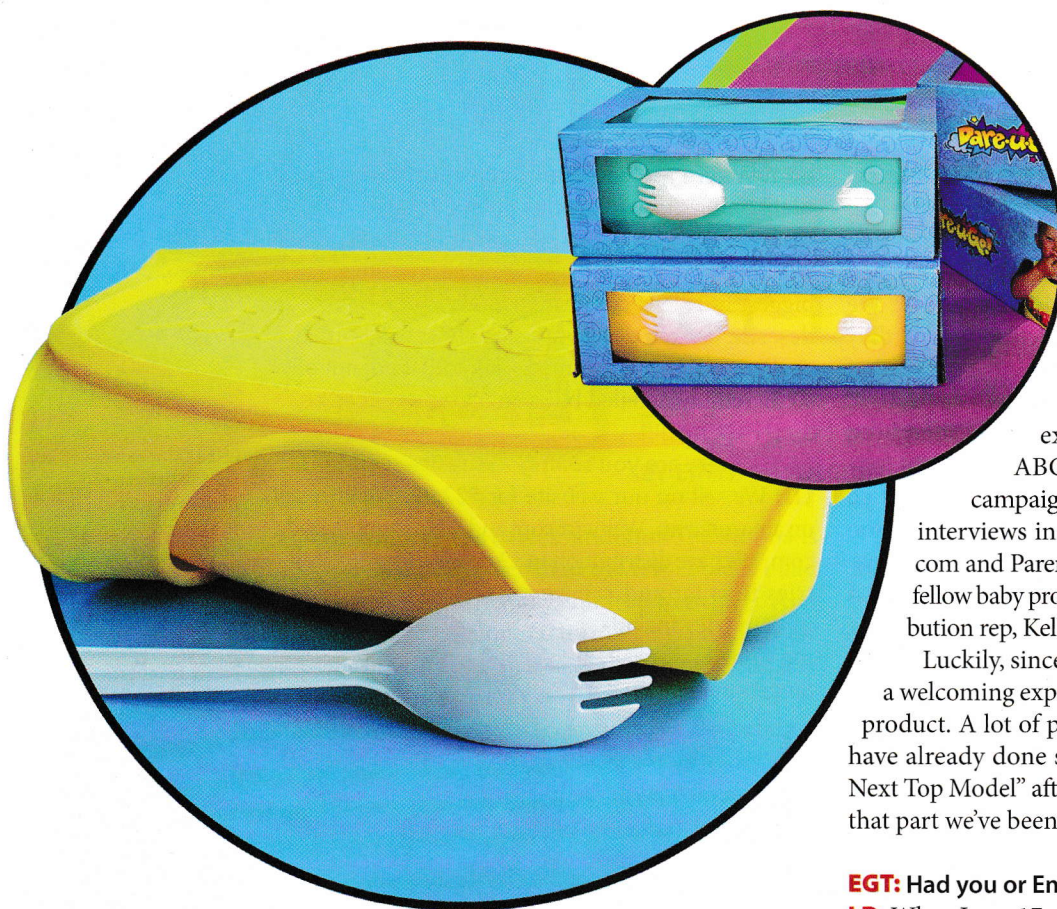
LD: We sell on our website for \$22.99. We also sell on amazon.com, Walmart.com and UNcommongoods.com. We have distribution in 12 countries thus far and can be found in countries including Canada, Kuwait, Singapore, Panama,

Lisa D’Amato’s son, Daxel, demonstrates the bib.



SEALS AIR TIGHT!





The Dare-U-Go bib is portable, easy to store and clean, and comes with sporks.

Parents “can now attack their to-do list with ease and convenience and feed their kids at their convenience, no matter where they are.” —LISA D’AMATO

UK, Taiwan, Germany, France, Australia, Philippines, South Korea and Lebanon.

EGT: Please share your patent experience.

LD: Patents are so incredibly complicated to understand, but necessary and so expensive. We have a design patent granted and hanging in our office with pride. We have a utility patent pending and international patent pending also.

Patents will rip your entire business from you, soaking up all your capital if you let it. Starting a small business with an invention might possibly be the most expensive investment we have ever experienced.

EGT: How are you handling PR?

LD: Tracey Rosen with Productivity PR has been our agent. She has been in the adolescent product market for over 13 yrs in Los Angeles.

If it wasn't for her, we wouldn't have known about our first year exhibiting our product at the ABC Expo during our Kickstarter campaign. She got us some great media interviews in the beginning, like with Sugar.com and Parents.co. She also connected us to a fellow baby product inventor and now our distribution rep, Kelly Ivie.

Luckily, since I am a TV personality, it's been a welcoming experience doing interviews for our product. A lot of publications and media websites have already done stories about me on “America's Next Top Model” after winning the All-Stars, so with that part we've been cut a little slack in this journey.

EGT: Had you or Emily invented anything before?

LD: When I was 17 or 18 years old, I invented an idea for a toothbrush for on-the-go travelers where the floss and toothpaste are an all-in-one. It was meant to be used for three months exactly, which is the time you are supposed to change your toothbrush.

EGT: Are you planning to add any new products to your line?

LD: We are in our final round of a prototype that I have been doing on the back end in tandem, while creating and bringing the DUG to market with Emily.

EGT: Can you provide any guidance for novice inventors?

LD: Sure! Have them email us. Let's talk! ☺

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Books by **Eddie Tolchin** (egt@edietolchin.com) include “Fanny on Fire” (fannyonfire.com) and “Secrets of Successful Inventing.” She has written for *Inventors Digest* since 2000. Eddie has owned EGT Global Trading since 1997, assisting inventors with product safety issues and China manufacturing.



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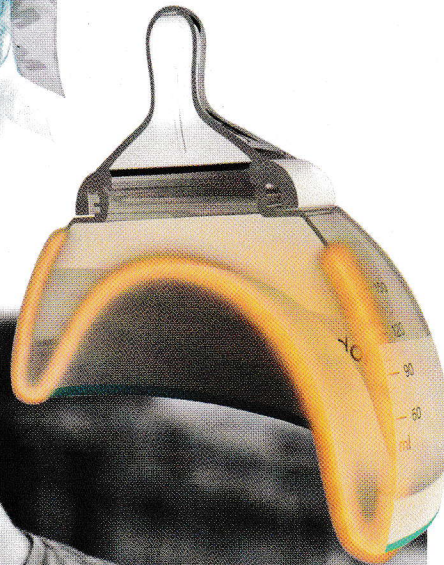
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