

# Cleaner Toilet Training

COUPLE'S CHAIR FEATURES CHILD-PROOF LATCH, SECURE WASTE BOWL BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN

**T**OILET TRAINING a squirmy, antsy toddler is rarely easy. And inquisitive little minds often want to check on their deposits, hoping they can reap praise from proud parents or caregivers. It's often messy until the child has perfected the science.

Here's a great new toilet-training device that helps prevent those messes.

In 2017 I was judging products and counseling inventors at a trade show, where I met Stacy and Colt Hall. I felt it was a little too early in their product development to write about their invention, Potty Safe; I like to conduct my interviews once a product is on the market. Well, two-plus years later, it is!

**Edith G. Tolchin (EGT): Why is Potty Safe different from or better than standard children's potty seats?**

**Stacy Hall (SH):** Potty Safe is the first and only potty-training chair to feature a patented child-proof latch. Our waste bowl securely affixes to the base so that children cannot remove it and make a mess.

Our innovative latch still allows parents to effortlessly remove the waste bowl for easy cleaning. Potty Safe's latch eliminates spills and the spread of germs. The product also features a built-in splash guard and rubber feet to prevent sliding.

**EGT: What led to this invention?**

**SH:** Potty Safe was born while potty training our daughter. She loved to be a big helper and help dump the potty herself.

She also loved to remove the waste bowl and carry it around to show off her accomplishments. This led to some pretty nasty spills all over her and the floor. When we couldn't find a "child-proof" potty chair where she couldn't remove the waste bowl, we took matters into our own hands and made our own!

**EGT: Can you share your process in obtaining a patent?**

**SH:** We originally tried to do a patent search ourselves to see if somebody had already patented it. When we were not able to find anything similar, we hired a patent lawyer to do the search just to be sure we hadn't missed anything.

After obtaining the same results, we had them file our provisional patent (application). We wanted to go ahead and file for the utility patent, but our lawyer said it wasn't possible to get one.

Potty Safe's waste bowl securely affixes to the base so that children cannot remove it. The latch (opposite page right), which eliminates spills and the spread of germs, allows parents to remove the waste bowl for easy cleaning.



**“We didn’t know anything about getting a product from an idea to market, but by the power of prayer, research and Google, we have navigated plenty of uncharted waters.”** —STACY HALL



Colt and Stacy Hall came up with the idea for Potty Safe while toilet training their daughter Emma, shown behind her brother Ty.

During the year of our provisional patent application, we ended up finding a new patent lawyer by mutual acquaintances while at an inventors show, INPEX, in Pittsburgh. With our new lawyer, we had drawings made up and filed a non-provisional patent in September 2017.

Our first patent application was rejected because of a few things. Once we fixed those and countered against the examiner’s claims, we resubmitted our revised application. In January 2019 our utility patent was awarded.

**EGT: How many prototypes did you make before you had the perfect one, or the one closest to how it is manufactured?**

**SH:** We ended up having four prototypes in total. Two of the four were handmade. For the other two, we had CAD designs made and tested (two) 3D-printed prototypes before having our molds manufactured.

**EGT: Have you done any crowdfunding?**

**SH:** We have not done any crowdfunding. We have financed our entire operation from our personal funds and loans.

**EGT: Do you have just one style for now? Is it available in colors?**

**SH:** While we have more ideas in mind, we currently only have one style of the Potty Safe. It is currently available in light gray, pink and yellow.

**EGT: Are you manufacturing in the USA, or overseas?**

**SH:** Potty Safe is manufactured in the USA. It was important to us to keep the jobs in the USA, if at all possible. Through connections we made at trade shows, we found a great manufacturer in Iowa.

**EGT: What kind of production safety testing or certification is required for Potty Safe? Does it require CPSIA**

**(Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act) testing?**

**SH:** Potty Safe is a juvenile product and does require CPSIA testing. Potty Safe has been tested and passed for all required testing.

**EGT: What obstacles, if any, have you found during product development?**

**SH:** We have encountered plenty of obstacles launching Potty Safe. We didn’t know anything about getting a product from an idea to market, but by the power of prayer, research and Google, we have navigated plenty of uncharted waters.

One obstacle that stands out was with our first 3D-printed prototype. We noticed that we needed to make some changes to the splash guard and the release tabs. Prototypes are not cheap to get printed, so it was disappointing to print another one. However, we wanted to make sure Potty Safe was perfect for parents before going into production.

We also needed to make sure the cuts for the rubber feet were just right so that they would fit properly. Once you are making a product, you are so anxious to get it to market. It really takes a lot of patience to get it just right before you go into production.

**EGT: Do you have any plans to increase your product line?**

**SH:** We have some exciting things in mind. However, right now we are focusing on launching Potty Safe.

**EGT: Where is Potty Safe sold?**

**SH:** Potty Safe is currently sold at our website, and at Walmart.





Potty Safe is currently available in light gray, pink and yellow.

Cassville, Missouri, and Buttercup Baby in Pasadena, California. Our locations are growing every day!

**EGT:** Has Potty Safe won any awards?

**SH:** Potty Safe has been awarded a utility patent, trademark, and has also received the 2019 Family Choice Award, 2019 Creative Child Product of the Year, and 2019 Baby Maternity Top Choice Award. Potty Safe has also been

named a "Must Have Product" by Baby Maternity Retailer magazine for multiple months. It was also featured on "The Mother Side" segment on ABC7 in Washington, D.C.

**EGT:** Any advice for novice inventors?

**SH:** Our advice to novice inventors is to ask questions! You won't learn anything if you never ask. We have gotten so far in this process by completing lots

of research and reaching out to people to ask questions to learn all that we can. Also, share information you learn with others.

It is scary to start a business. One of our favorite mottos is "I would rather try and fail, rather than fail to try." We didn't want to look back on life and wonder "what if" we wouldn't have tried.

We also have people reach out all the time wondering about how we have gotten a patent, or wonder more about the process of launching a product. We are always happy to share any advice we can with people. ☺

Details: [pottysafe.com](http://pottysafe.com)

Books by **Edie Tolchin** ([egt@edietolchin.com](mailto:egt@edietolchin.com)) include "Fanny on Fire" ([fannyonfire.com](http://fannyonfire.com)) and "Secrets of Successful Inventing." She has written for *Inventors Digest* since 2000. Edie has owned EGT Global Trading since 1997, assisting inventors with product safety issues and China manufacturing.



## 2 Critical Steps to getting your NEW PRODUCT "out there"

### 1 GET IT MADE

Contact Edie Tolchin – "The Sourcing Lady" (SM) for sourcing, China manufacturing, product safety issues, packaging assistance, quality control, production testing, final shipment inspections, freight arrangements, import services and delivery to your door!

[www.EGTglobaltrading.com](http://www.EGTglobaltrading.com)

[EGT@egtglobaltrading.com](mailto:EGT@egtglobaltrading.com)

P.O. Box 5660 - Hillsborough, NJ 08844

845-321-2362

### 2 GET A WEBSITE!

Contact Ken Robinson – While your order is being manufactured, you need to start working on your WEB PRESENCE! Get people talking about your product on Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+), get good search engine placement (SEO)!

[www.widgetsontheweb.com](http://www.widgetsontheweb.com)

[kenrbnsn@widgetsontheweb.com](mailto:kenrbnsn@widgetsontheweb.com)

614 Van Liew Court - Hillsborough, NJ 08844

908-963-2447

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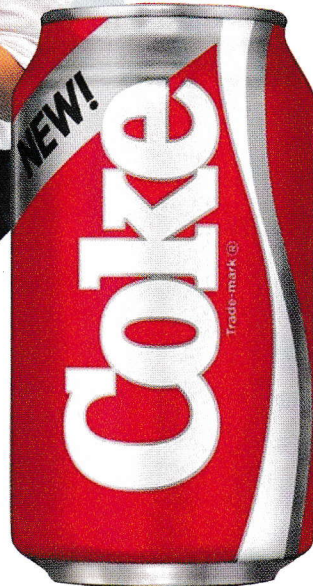
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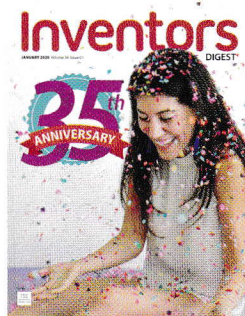
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Leila Kashani, CEO of wellness brand Alleyoop; photo by Cacá Santoro

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