

bath bombs

As dads, we have lots of tricks to get kids to comply with our demands. And someday, our strategies may even work.

by JONATHAN SMALL



1. We fake countdown.

"You have 5 seconds to get in that bath—1, 2, 3, 4, 4½, 4¾, 4⅘ths..."

2. We bribe.

"I know you still want to play, but if you get in the bath, I promise to let you put your clean little fingers all over my iPad later."

3. We reason.

"Children take baths when they're filthy and smell like farm animals. You are filthy and smell like a farm animal. Therefore, you must take a bath."

4. We make empty threats.

"If you don't get into that bathtub right this instant, I will never

make your hair stick up like a silly unicorn again."

5. We compare.

"Your brother took a bath and he didn't complain for a single second. Why can't you be more like him?"

6. We take the path of least resistance.

"Let me just sniff you real quick. Fine, I'm going to let you skip the bath tonight. But you're going to take one tomorrow, right?"

7. We show them who's boss.

"You want to know why you need to take a bath? Because I said so, that's why. This is my house, these are my rules, and you will obey."

8. We go on auto-replay.

"Get in the bath! I don't want to have to tell you again. I said I don't want to have to tell you again! Get in..."

9. We give false choices.

"Are you going to get in the bath or not? Wait. What do you mean 'not'?"

And when all else fails...

10. We throw in the towel.

"Honey, can you come to the bathroom, please? The kids are being impossible."