

For And About You

By HARRIETT MUHAMMAD

DEAR HARRIETT: I have a five year old son who has recently developed the habit of messing in his underwear whenever he can't get his way—this is usually coupled with temper tantrums. He had been thoroughly toilet trained by three. I just can't understand why he should be acting this way now! I've heard of kids having temper tantrums, but messing in their underwear too?

He embarrasses me to no end because it can happen any place — a n y w h e r e. Spanking him doesn't seem to have any effect. Do you have any suggestions as to how I can correct this, and what is causing such a reaction?

MRS. J. K.

DEAR MRS. J. K.

I am most drawn to the psychological theory that neurotic or abnormal behavior is learned and reinforced behavior. No one can give you an exact and factual explanation as to WHY your son defecates during a temper tantrum—they can only speculate and theorize, because psychology is still an infant science. So this is what I'm doing—theorizing.

Your son is displeased, as all of us are at one time or another, but he may defecate in order to strike back at you as well as get some added attention. He knows that his actions are upsetting you by your reactions.

You have tried spanking without the desired results,

so why not try letting him stay in this condition. The next time he messes in his pants, let him experience what its like to feel uncomfortable, for several hours. If you're out, bring him home or isolate him from your company, but don't clean him up.

Don't display any hostility and tell him that you think he must like his condition since he caused it. Try this a few times without any undue ceremony and see if he controls himself after a while.

The point is this: if he is doing this and you continue to react the way he wants you to be getting upset or embarrassed, he may LEARN to continue this type of behavior to the point wherein it becomes quite

abnormal. Just be sure that you are giving him adequate attention and care so that he won't find such behavior beneficial, and this stage should pass.

DEAR HARRIETT: I have been wanting to purchase a really fine set of drapes for my home, so a few months ago, I did just that — they totaled six hundred dollars and are really beautiful—fabric wise. What is quite upsetting is the lousy work done by the company!

The drapes were about three inches too long and uneven. When I saw this I protested and the company said they would send someone out to fix them right.

They waited quite some time and when they did come, they merely turned up the hem and loosely stitched it into place. Then I went on the war path. I had placed sixty dollars on them as a down payment but I refused to pay anymore because I was very dissatisfied with the way I have been treated. Just what can I do

to right this wrong without paying for someone else to repair these drapes to my satisfaction? **MRS. S. R.**

DEAR MRS. S. R.

Do just what you've started to do — don't pay until they satisfy you. Eventually they will probably make another attempt to repair the damage and then let them do it on your premises again and watch their work—just don't take it for granted that they are doing the job to suit you.

If they should talk about taking the issue to court, you have all the evidence with you — the badly fixed drapes. Whenever you pay out a large sum of money for an item, you, like all customers, are entitled to good craftsmanship and quality material — this is what you pay for.

Don't be bullied by threats to accept something from a company which has not lived up to all of the major specifications that were promised you.

If they don't do anything, then you have a set of six hundred dollar drapes at a real bargain.

Something on your mind? Write and tell me about it.

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