

By Harriett Muhammad

DEAR HARRIETT: My problem concerns my immediate family. I have a daughter, 15, and a son, 10. I have been married for the past 16 years and all during this period, my husband always has worked from sun up to sun down. Therefore, I have had the complete responsibility of raising our children. I'm at a point now in that I don't know what to do or where to turn for help.

An incident happened just a few weeks ago. My daughter went to summer school because she had failed one subject. The first progress report she brought home was an "E" in the subject. Her father told her that if she brought home another "E" just what he would do and how he would do it.

I believe discipline is good if it is not too severe. Sometimes, he would beat her with a doubled razor strap with her in as few clothes as possible without being naked.

My husband is a good person, but his understanding is very small. He is for you 100 per cent if you're completely good, but if you "step out of line," as he says, or if the children don't do well in school, then he has no use for you. There is no in-between.

SO WHEN my daughter brought home a second "E," I lied to him about her mark because I was afraid he might injure her. She is upset and both of us are nervous wrecks. Ever since my children have been in school, they have had trouble with their work. I have helped and punished them.

They are very good children, so their poor school progress is not because they lack discipline. I truly believe my daughter just cannot grasp these things and needs professional help.

How wrong am I in doing what I did? Is there a place I can go in order to get help for my children — someplace that isn't too expensive? I would have to pay for service out of my limited personal allowance.—Mrs. C. C. Detroit, Michigan.

DEAR MRS. C.C.: Your daughter's low grade cannot be hidden from your husband indefinitely. But before you relay this information, there is something you can do to help both your husband and your children.

If you suspected your daughter's ability to grasp new ideas was a little below average, you should have

talked with her school counsellors long ago. You can't expect them to recognize all cases of slow learning, especially since they are responsible for so many hundreds of children. They often have to devote their attention to the more severe cases.

This is your daughter and no one can have more concern for her well being than you. By discussing the situation with her counsellors now, they will give this matter their attention and be able to find out in what areas your daughter is weakest.

COUNSELLORS have testing devices for such purposes. They also would be able to recommend tutors at reasonable rates (sometimes other students act as tutors for merit points).

When you have found out what the problem is and have a program outlined to help correct the situation, then discuss the grade situation with your husband (if possible in the presence of the counsellor) and try to give him a better understanding of the entire situation. He may never have taken the time to really discuss the situation thoroughly from different sides.

Also, try to impress on him the fact that your daughter is too old now for severe beatings, as she may have her productive organs injured. He will have to use other punitive measures in order to maintain discipline.

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

Harriett Muhammad
4847 Woodlawn Ave.
Chicago, Ill. 60615

I have received several comments on the poem **HE WHO KNOWS**, giving the credit for the original version to different sources. Thanks for the information, and I still hope you enjoyed

the verse, regardless of its source.

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SCHOOL
WITH
S&H GREEN
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STAMP-FILLED BOOKS**