

Time to lay down the law with prejudiced in-laws

Dear Abby:

I am a 29-year-old married man with a fine, bright, 8-year-old son. My wife and I have a wonderful marriage, and for the most part I have fantastic in-laws. The one negative aspect of my in-laws is the way they refer to certain ethnic groups. They are very close-minded, prejudiced people who use offensive words to describe someone's race, colour or religion.

I can live with it, but I don't want our son to hear talk like that from people he is supposed to respect.

Is there a tactful way to ask my in-laws to please refrain from making ethnic slurs around our child? Or should I let them say what they wish and continue to dispute what they've said after they leave?

OPEN FOR SUGGESTIONS

Dear Open:

Ask your "fantastic" in-laws to please keep their ethnic slurs to themselves in the presence of your son because you are trying to teach the boy to judge people by their character — not by their colour or religion. Also ask your wife to join you in keeping her parents in line.

Dear Abby:

We have a problem that requires a quick solution. A wedding is coming up in our family soon, and there is a certain relative who takes her 6 year-old daughter everywhere. Wendy (not her real name) has attended every



Dear Abby

with ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

wedding, shower, anniversary party, etc. in the family. Wendy is very cute and loves to show off.

Her mother encourages her, so consequently Wendy is always the center of attention.

Since Wendy's mother never tells her to sit down and be quiet, other family members eventually do when they have had it up to here.

Also, when pictures are taken at these family celebrations, Wendy runs to be in every picture, while her mother just sits there beaming.

Should we politely ask Wendy's mother to please leave Wendy at home with a sitter?

This has been going on for years, and we are

SICK OF IT

Dear SICK:

Since you have tolerated Wendy's annoying behaviour "for years," it's a little late to suggest that now she be left at home with a sitter.

You would be doing both Wendy and her

mother a favour if you explained to this myopic mom that by encouraging Wendy to be the "center of attention," she will soon believe that she is the center of the universe. And self-centered children are usually unpopular with their peers and barely tolerated by adults.

Dear Abby:

I am a kindergarten teacher and would like to offer a little advice to parents.

Several of my little ones are bed wetters, and the odor can get very strong at times.

I suppose some parents do not notice it because they've grown accustomed to it, but I

wish you'd remind parents to give their children a bath every morning before they're sent off to school. (Even a sponge bath would help the bed wetters.)

I hope to see this letter in the paper. Thank you.

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

Dear Teacher:

Shame on those insensitive parents who would send a child to school smelling bad. (Can you imagine the humiliation those odoriferous children must endure from their peers?) Here's your letter, teacher. I hope parents who need reminding get wind of it.

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