## Mother demands center state at her daughter's expense

DEAR ABBY: I own my own home. My mother lives with me. I cannot understand why she makes up the most fantastic, whopping lies. Mother tells people that I live with her and she pays all the bills. Abby, I pay the bills, and I'm left with pocket change at the end of the month because her spending sprees keep me financially strapped.

She also has to be the center of attention. She'll go to any length to keep the spotlight on herself, even if it means making me look like a complete idiot.

If I do anything that earns acknowledgment or recognition, Mother tells these people that she instructed me, or suggested the work, or had a lot to do with the project.

Is her behavior a form of jealousy, rivalry or downright meanness? Is the attention so important to her that she must embarrass me or make me look like I'm living off her when the reverse has been true for the last 20 years? What makes my mother have to do this to me?

- PUZZLED IN NEW MEXICO **DEAR PUZZLED: People lie** for various reasons. Some lie because they are ashamed to tell the truth; others lie to make themselves seem more important. Your mother may do it because she's competitive with you, but it's more likely she's a compulsive liar. A therapist might help you pinpoint her rationale, but I canhave my sympathy.

DEARABBY: I am in my late 20s and the man I date is in his late 30s. He has children by his first wife, from whom he has been divorced nearly six years. Although we have dated casually for a couple of years, our conversations recently have turned to serious topics — like possibly marrying and having children.

I will be meeting his kids soon and would appreciate any suggestions you can offer in relating to them. I'm college-educated, independent, stable, and have a successful career. But his is a situation I have never confronted before. He has mentioned the possibility of introducing me to his children before, but this is the first time I have agreed. This is my first experience with children. He has two sons, 14 and 15, and a daughter who will be 13 in February. Help!

- PANICKED IN PITTS-BURGH

**DEAR PANICKED: Calm** down and discuss your qualms with your boyfriend. Ask what kinds of things his children are interested in, then do a little reading up so you can ask intelligent questions. I have found that when people show a sincere interest in the interests of others, it makes them more attractive to be around. Remember, it's OK not to know everything. In fact, his children may feel they have more to contribute if you don't. And above all, relax and be yourself. (That's the person they're going to have to get to know, anyway.) This isn't an Academy Award performance — so play it cool, don't try too hard, and I'm sure you'll be a hit. Good luck!



they say, "out of the mouths of babes" come the most truthful responses.

When my daughter was quite young, I also took her to the zoo. My daughter was very intelligent, but on that occasion she surprised even me. It was mating season, and we were viewing the peacocks. A young mother and her little boy were standing near us when the boy asked his mom why the peacocks were saying, "Now! Now!" (That's what it sounded like!) The mother blushed and gave her son some lame reason. My daughter chimed in, "The birds with the pretty feathers are the boys, and they want to make babies. They want to do it NOW!"

can't believe it, but I'm still getting mail about the column. It seems that not only do kids "say the darndest things" - so do their parents. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: At a county fair last year, my husband and I were at the rabbit exhibit, and I overheard a mother explain to her child that what the bunnies were doing (read not without knowing her. You amorous pastime) was called "getting married." While technically incorrect, I thought that mother had a firm grip on family values. (I also hoped she'd explain things more clearly at the proper time and place.) I think it was a wonderful way to start the teaching and learning process of the birds and the bees. That mother seemed to be on track, and I was proud to have witnessed it. I still smile when I remember the encounter.

— MOTHER IN BUNKER

DEARABBY: Can you stand one more story about the zoo? When my granddaughter Gabi was 2 1/2, my daughter took her to the zoo. She was pointing out the animals, and when they got to the cows, my daughter said, "Gabi, look at the one over there, the one with the horns.

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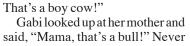
462-0270



your "truth at the zoo" column. As

– MOM IN TAMPA DEAR MOM: What a hoot! I

HILL



said, "Mama, that's a bull!" Never **Van Buren** underestimate children. They may

> – PROUD GRANDMA, DEAR ABBY: I served as a zoo

docent for 15 years, giving tours and taking zoo animals into class-

tough question, we were taught to and get back to you with the answer."

correctly.

One day, we actually heard a do-

rooms for lectures. When asked a cent tell a class that an ostrich will hot on her heels, but stopped dead "hide" by putting his/her head in the in his tracks, uttering the immortal say, "Idon't know, but I will find out sand. (Not true!) After that, we had words, "Where did she go?" a standing joke: A male ostrich was chasing a female ostrich, but she We would always take a name, was doing a great job of staying just MELBOURNE, FLA. phone number or address, and be out of his reach. She abruptly turned ten by Abigail Van Buren. Write sure that the question was answered a corner and stuck her head in the Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com sand.

The male turned the same corner, Calif. 90069.

- JOAN IN RIVERTON

UTAH

Editor's note: Dear Abby is writor P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles,

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DEARABBY: I got a big kick out of all the adults who responded to St. at 10:00a.m. Friday April 14th. (Published in the Colby Free Press on March 29, April 5 and 12, 2006)

## **ANNOUNCEMENT & CANCELATION** The 2-Day Auction for the Ross & Marianna Beach Foundation, Inc. scheduled for Monday April 10th & Tuesday April 11th, 2006 has been CANCELED due to the Ranch Purchaser buying both livestock and machinery. For More information, contact: Farmland Auction & Realty Co., Inc.

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