

Parents upset when sitter kills pet snake

DEARABBY: I am a 15-year-old girl who baby-sits for extra money. I baby-sat for a new family last week. After I put the kids to bed, I found a snake in the house. I was scared for the kids, so I grabbed a kitchen knife and chopped off the snake's head.

When the parents returned, I found out it was their pet snake that had escaped from its cage, and they



abigail van buren

• dear abby

were really angry. I feel terrible about it. Although I apologized, they won't talk to me when they see me in the neighborhood.

Should I write them a letter of apology or buy them a new snake? I don't know what the proper etiquette is when you kill someone's pet. — RATTLED IN TEXAS

DEAR RATTLED: You reacted to what you perceived as a danger.

What is unfortunate is that the couple for whom you were baby-sitting were so careless they not only failed to tell you they had an exotic pet in the house, but also compounded it by leaving without making sure the creature was securely in its cage where it belonged. You do not "owe" the family a replacement. They owe you an apology.

DEAR ABBY: I was sexually harassed at the age of 7. I wasn't raped; I was just touched and used by my brother's friend.

I am now 13 and I'm very fond of one boy in particular. But ever since I was 7, I can't open up to guys.

When I try, I get scared because I remember what happened to me.

I never told my parents what happened, because I never felt like I needed to. But now I'm getting older and I realize how wrong it was — of him, I mean. I was so young I didn't understand what was happening.

I want some help, but I don't know where to go, so I've turned to you. Please help me, Abby. — SCARRED 4 LIFE

DEAR YOUNG LADY: Please clip this letter, give it to your mother and tell her you wrote it. You were not harassed; you were MOLESTED. It is important that you

talk about what happened with a professional, possibly one who specializes in post-traumatic stress, who can help you work it through. The sooner you start, the sooner you can begin to build healthy relationships with peers. I wish you the best of luck.

P.S. I regret that you didn't report the molestation to your parents when it occurred. Had you done so, you could have received help then, and guaranteed that the boy could not abuse another child.

DEAR ABBY: Do you think it is appropriate for a brother (age 21) and a sister (age 17) to share the same bed? The siblings each have

a large, comfortable bed of their own, but frequently wind up sharing.

This is very troubling to a dear friend of mine, who is their stepparent. It seems the biological parent is hesitant to discourage the behavior, and only reluctantly admits it might be inappropriate. — JUST ASKING IN HOUSTON

DEAR JUST: I am mystified at the attitude of the biological parent, who appears to be ignoring a possibly incestuous relationship. Of course it's not appropriate.

The "children" should have been sleeping apart since well before puberty.

SATURDAY EVENING										E-Sp Eagle Cable S-s&S Telephone		SEP. 11, 2004			
E	S		6 pm	6:30	7 pm	7:30	8 pm	8:30	9 pm	9:30	10 pm	10:30			
36	53	A&E	American Justice: Conspiracy to Kill		Cold Case Files A man kills 49 prostitutes. (Live)		City Confidential "Green Bay: Terror in Titletown"		The First 48 A man is shot twelve times. (E)		American Justice: Conspiracy to Kill				
4	6	ABC	College Football Colorado State at USC. (Live)						News (E)		(:05) Sein-feld (E) Ent. To-night				
26	48	ANPL	World's Biggest and Baddest Bugs Killer bees. (E)		Amazing Animal Videos Horse and bird rescues.		World's Biggest and Baddest Bugs Killer bees. (E)								
63	54	BRAVO	Celebrity Poker Showdown Celebrities compete for charity. (E)		Celebrity Poker Showdown Celebrities compete for charity. (E)		Celebrity Poker Showdown Celebrities compete for charity. (E)				Celebrity Poker Showdown (E)				
7	11	CBS	U.S. Open Tennis Women's Final. From the USTA National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadows, N.Y.		Big Brother 5 (N) (E)		News (E)		Drew Carey		Drew Carey Drew Carey				
24	50	DISC	Rally Round the House		Double Agents "Regal Beagle" (E)		American Chopper "Firebike"		American Chopper Race-car-themed bike.		American Chopper "Firebike 2"				
33	44	DISN	Kim Possible (E) The Proud Family (E)		Braceface (E) Lizzie McGuire (E)		Phil of the Future (E) That's So Raven (E)		Brandy & Mr. Whis (E) Kim Possible (E)		Lilo & Stitch (E) Dave the Barbarian (E)				
49	81	EITV	Burt Reynolds: The El True Hollywood Story (E)		Saturday Night Live (E)		Dr. 90210 (E)		Howard S. (E)		Howard S. (E)				
22	56	ESPN	Football (:45) College Football Texas at Arkansas. (Live) (E)		(:45) College Gameday Final (E)										
54	57	ESPN2	Hockey		College Football Mississippi at Alabama. (Live) (E)						Baseball Tonight (E)				
32	46	FAM	"Pop Rocks!" (2004, Comedy) Gary Cole. (E)		Who's? Who's? (E)		Who's? Who's? (E)		WonderYr WonderYr (E)		WonderYr WonderYr (E)				
59	-	FIT TV	Star for a Day (E)		I Want... Workout (E)		In Shape Workout (E)		Star for a Day (E)		The Healthier You (E)				
35	31	FMC	(:01) *** "The Long, Hot Summer" (1958)		(:01) Hour of Stars (E)		(:01) *** "Barton Fink" (1991) John Turturro. (E)								
53	68	FOOD	Emeril Live "Finger Lickin' Chicken"		National Chicken Cook-Off		King of Iron Chefs "Grand Finale: Part 3"		Unwrapped Top 5 (N)		Emeril Live "Finger Lickin' Chicken"				
13	7	FOX	Cops "Las Vegas" (E)		America's Most Wanted (E)		She Spies "Stranded" Plane crash. (E)		Mad TV Bill O'Reilly. (E)		Blind Date (N) (E) Blind Date (N) (E)				
40	38	FX	Fear Factor (E)		*** "Bedazzled" (2000) Brendan Fraser. (E)		*** "The Royal Tenenbaums" (2001) (E)								
30	55	FXSP	Ultimate 18 (N)		Beyond the Glory (E)		Poker Superstars		Boxing		Rocky Mt. Football				
5	14	HBO	"Johnny English" (E) *** "Minority Report" (2002) Tom Cruise. Psychics predict that a cop will soon commit a murder. (E) PG-13 (E)				*** "X2: X-Men United" (2003) Patrick Stewart. A right-wing militant pursues the mutants. (E)								
62	67	HGTV	Mission Decorating		Designer Designers' Design (E)		Design Home		Smart Mission		Decorating				
58	52	HIST	Band of Brothers (E)		(:11) Band of Brothers Winters leads a dangerous mission on a Dutch dike. (E)		(:18) We Stand Alone Together (E)		Band of Brothers (E)						
25	35	IND	(5:00) College Football Houston at Oklahoma. (Live)				*** "Analyze This" (1999) Robert De Niro. An angst-ridden mobster seeks a psychiatrist's help. (E)		College Football						
18	63	LIFE	"Custody of the Heart"		"Vows of Deception" (1996) Cheryl Ladd. (E)		* "The Secretary" (1995) Mel Harris. (E)								
23	77	MTV	Osbourne Osbourne		Osbourne Osbourne		Music Videos (E)								
3	9	NBC	Entertainment Tonight (E)		The Apprentice (E)				Crossing Jordan "Dead or Alive" (E)		News (E) Saturday Night Live				
8	8	NBC	The Apprentice (E)				Crossing Jordan "Dead or Alive" (E)		News		Saturday Night Live Skits featuring Jon Lovitz. (N) (E)				
34	43	NICK	Grown Up		Romeo! (E)		All That (E) Amanda		Fatherhood		Cosby				
2	2	PBS	Daniel O'Donnell: Songs of Faith International singer Daniel O'Donnell performs. (E)		Loretta Lynn in Concert		Austin City Limits (E)		Soundstage Steve Win-wood performs. (E)						
38	83	SCIFI	(3:00) *** "Merlin" (E) *** "The Phantom" (1996) Billy Zane. (E)		*** "Darkman III: Die Darkman Die" (1996) (E)										
61	41	SPK	*** "Missing in Action" (1984) Chuck Norris. (E)		WWE Velocity (N) (E)		Wildest Police Videos		Wildest Police Videos						
39	51	TLC	Body Work		Trading Spaces: Family		While You Were Out "Savannah: John Bruce"		Clean Sweep House full of collectibles. (E)		Trading Spaces "New York City: Harlem"				
28	37	TNT	(5:30) NASCAR Racing Nextel Cup Series -- Chevy		Rock and Roll 400. (E)		NASCAR Nextel Cup		"Shawshank R."						
51	86	TRAV	Kings of the Road (E)		Great Outdoors (E)		Ends of the Earth (N)		Kings of the Road (E)		Great Outdoors (E)				
21	82	TVLND	Munsters		GreenAcre		Griffith		Leave		Sanford All-Family				
60	89	UNIV	Sabado Gigante				Impacto		Noticiero		Otro Rollo				
20	34	USA	Law/Ord SVU		Law/Ord SVU		Law/Ord SVU		Law Order CI		Monk (E)				
12	3	WB	(5:00) *** "Santa Fe" (1997) Gary Cole. (E)		*** "Breaking Up" (1997, Comedy) Russell Crowe, Salma Hayek. (E)		News (E)		(:45) Sports Replay		Football Colorado "Johnny Skidmarks"				
99	36	WGN	Columbo "Any Old Port in a Storm"				MLB Baseball Chicago White Sox at Anaheim Angels. (Live) (E)								