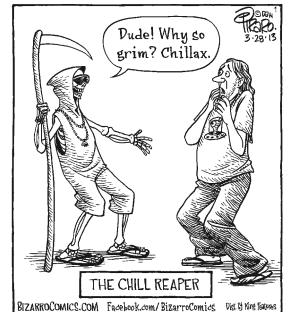
"I REALLY need a hug and a cookie.'

BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN









FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ









DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS







BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE







GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS







BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER





HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER





THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSOM







Parents Should Lay Down Law On Importance Of Bike Helmets

DEAR ABBY

■ Dear Abby is written by

known as Jeanne Phillips,

and was founded by her

mother, Pauline Phillips.

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P.O. Box 69440, Los An-

Write Dear Abby at

geles, CA 90069.

Abigail Van Buren, also

Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: As a law enforcement officer, I would like to comment on your reply to "Overprotective Mom" (Dec. 26). I agree with your solution to have the boy who wouldn't wear his bike helmet because

it was "uncool" visit a facility that treats people with traumatic brain injuries. However, you missed a golden opportunity to remind parents that they are the parents, and because they are responsible for their child's safety, THEY are in

What has happened to plain old "parenting"? Time and again, I see children make their own rules because the parents have shrugged off the responsibility of parenting. You should have told them to tell their child that if he won't wear a helmet, his bike will be taken away until he does. — BILL IN BARTLESVILLE, OKLA.

DEAR BILL: You and many readers are right. I DID overlook the issue of parenting in my reply. Mea culpa! Read

DEAR ABBY: Have "Overprotective Mom" ask her son if he thinks firefighters, fighter pilots, police officers and football players are "uncool." They all wear helmets! — JAMES IN HASTINGS,

DEAR ABBY: Not wearing a bike helmet to be "cool" is knuckling under to peer pressure. Those parents should use this opportunity to explain

peer pressure and its consequences to their son.

He needs to understand that he must make decisions for himself, and his "friends" should accept him for who he is. He needs to learn to stand his ground and be who he wants to be despite what others think of him. He also needs to learn to make decisions that affect his life based on facts, and not follow the crowd. True friends will most often make the same sound decisions that he makes, or accept his decision without pressuring him.

One other comment: Require the kid to wear a

"tough love" and although it is tough, it is also rewarding. More parents need to have sound, wellthought-out rules and stick to them. — PARENT

FIRST, FRIEND SECOND DEAR ABBY: Patients cannot be used as exhibits, even with the best of intentions. It would be unethical and also illegal under HIPAA laws. A better option would be to contact the injury prevention office at a local children's hospital and ask for tips. If your readers don't live near one, there are websites filled with helpful information. — LAURIE IN DALLAS

DEAR ABBY: It's true that there is no state code law in Texas regarding bicycle helmets, but many municipalities, including Dallas, have ordinances that require riders to wear them. That mother should check her city code. -CONCERNED IN TEXAS

DEAR ABBY: "Overprotective" should let her son choose a "cool" helmet and be sure it's fitted correctly. Going to a bike shop may be the best

Serious bikers are cool and will be supportive. The boy should select the style and color he wants and decorate it with hot stickers or whatever he

wishes. If that doesn't work, then take the bike away. It's the kind of cause-and-effect discipline that really works. — BARBARA IN RUMFORD, MAINE

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

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ACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bigar's Stars is based on the degree of your sun at birth. The sign name is simply a label astrologers put on a set of degrees for convenience. For best results, readers should refer to the dates following each sign.

A baby born today has a Sun in Aries and a Moon in Libra if born before 5:54 p.m. (PDT). Afterward, the Moon will be in Scorpio.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 2013:

This year you easily could be linked to the unexpected. You'll enter a room, and something surprising will occur. Learn to balance your newfound independence with your sensitivity toward others. This act will take work If you are single, you could go through a sequence of different sweeties. Your love life will be exciting, and the right person will fit perfectly with your lively personality. If you are attached, the two of you are on a seesaw of emotions. Make communication a priority in order to change the balance between you. SCORPIO always has a different perspective.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19)

★★★★ Listen to what is being offered, and know that you do not have to agree. A partner or an associate has strong ideas. You might be surprised by your impulsiveness and willingness to veer in a new direction. Tonight: Don't allow anyone to slow you down -- you are a roll.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★ Do your best to take care of errands and other responsibilities. You easily could be overwhelmed, so opt for a change of pace, whether it be napping, shopping or pursuing some other pastime. Fill your day with different activities. Tonight: Think "early weekend."

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★★ You simply can't rein in your imagination, no matter how hard you try. You might decide not to discuss your flights of fancy. A relationship with a new friend delights you to no end. A meeting takes an interesting turn. Tonight: Continue as you have.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★ If you can isolate yourself, you will get more done. You like a cozy environment, so consider adding a plant or painting to your office; it will add to your productivity. Schedule a brainstorming session toward the end of the day. Tonight: Let it all hang out.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ Respond to all of your messages, calls and

meetings. Be willing to go along with someone's off-the-wall idea or suggestion. It could sound crazy, but it just might work. Sometimes, the element of surprise works in your favor. Tonight: Mosey on home.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★ Take into account the cost of what needs to be done. It is better to take a solid look at the budget for a project before going forward. Be more direct with a loved one. An associate or a friend could surprise you with his or her suggestion. Tonight: Meet friends for munchies.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★ Use today to the max for any situation or project that you feel is important. Others will surprise you with their responses. Caring evolves when you can get past initial reactions and understand where others are coming from. Your personality melts barriers. Tonight: Your treat.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★ Play it low-key. More facts and information will emerge if you observe. listen and perhaps make a subtle comment here and there. You could be surprised at what you might have missed. Consider how to avoid this information gap in the future. Tonight: Be confident.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ Use the daylight hours to maximize your interests. You might be involved with an important project or a key interaction. Others are receptive to you right now. Present your ideas in a positive manner. The unexpected marks your love life. Tonight: Make it early.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ Take a stand, but don't be upset if someone has a strong reaction. Just for now, let go of traditional thinking as you approach a problematic situation. Be innovative, and you'll get better results. A family member could be creating an uproar. Tonight: Be where crowds are.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ Detach, and you will understand more. You succeed because you are willing to look beyond the obvious. How you see a personal matter could change. No matter what you do and why you do it, the end results will be the same. Be a straight shooter. Tonight: Till the wee

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

* ★ ★ ★ An unexpected event or comment might influence your self-image, and could work against fluid communication. You simply are trying to digest too much, too fast. If you need to step away from a conversation or meeting, do. Tonight: Let the good times rock and roll.

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MAKE JUSTIN

PUKE DAY," AND

I'M COUNTING

ON YOU.

BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT











MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

