

ASK YOLONDA

Brawling Relatives Spoil July Brides Day

DEAR YOLONDA: I have a brother who is gay. But that's his problem, not mine. My family knows it, but they won't accept it. The only peace we have known came when he moved out of

town, five years ago.

I'm getting married in July, and I decided that I want him to attend the wedding. After much debate, family members agreed to welcome him at the wedding, and

back into the family.

Everything was fine until my brother called with his news. It seems as though he wants to bring his live-in lover to the wedding. I tried to discourage it, but he in-

sists, and he also insists that the other family members know about it in advance, so that they won't treat his friend rudely. Well, when family members heard about his plans, they started dropping out of

the wedding.

My sister is one of the ones engineering the boycott, and in her case it's really bad-- her son is my ring bearer. My brother has been stubborn, too. If his friend

can't come, he says, neither can he.

How can I resolve this and continue with my plans? My family is spoiling the day that I have looked forward to all of my life.

Laverne C., Ind.

DEAR LAVERNE: In cases like this, I go with the above-the-fray approach. Go on with your plans. Tell everyone that they will get an invitation. If they choose not to attend, it's their loss (but do have an alternate ring bearer on stand-by, just in case).

Teenager Lacks

Goals, Zest For Life

DEAR YOLONDA: My sister and I attend the same school. I am 16, she is 17. For some reason, she is going through a weird stage. She has given up on herself, and her future. She already has a two year-old son, and now she's pregnant with another child. She used to be smart in school, now she won't even go to school.

My mother has given up on her. She hardly talks to her.

I say that my sister needs help, and if only someone would take the time to help her she could be somebody important one day. She can type pretty fast, and she would make a good secretary.

Please tell me how to help my sister.

Maya

Dear Maya: First you can help her by urging her to talk honestly with her nurse, doctor, or any other health official with whom she is in contact. He or she can give her the kind of parenting and birth control information your sister apparently needs.

Second, you can help her by continuing to be encouraging: Having two children at 17 is a stumbling block, but it does not mean that life is over. Now, it's even more important that she stays in school--for her own future, and for the future of her young ones.

This Student

Won't Go To

Her Counselor

DEAR YOLONDA: I read your column every chance I get. I'm a senior in high school with fairly good grades. I've never been in any serious trouble, but if I were I'm not sure I'd follow your advice if the advice is, "Talk to your teacher or counselor at school."

The problem most teens have is that they don't have a teacher or counselor who is willing to help them do anything.

If a student at my school did something wrong, or was accused of doing something, all the counselors here would do is draw up the suspension papers. So, for the sake of your high school readers, please don't send them to their high school counselors. I'm sure many student feel as I do.

Pauline

DEAR PAULINE: Too bad that you find your teachers and counselors unhelpful, but that's certainly not consistent with what I see. Instead, I see a lot of headstrong teens who are unwilling to seek experienced help, until it is too late.

I get your point, but I'll continue to refer young readers to their high school counselors and teachers. Everyone needs someone who they can turn to. A wise student knows the value of an ally on the teaching staff.

Got a problem or a gripe? Ask Yolonda Gayles, P.O. Box 19112, Chgo., IL 60619.

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