

# An ABDL Primer

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You may be reading this because a friend or loved one desires to wear diapers or dress as a baby. Sharing this secret with you may have taken a lot of courage. He or she is placing a lot of trust in you. Your acceptance and understanding are important.

Put simply, *Adult Babies (ABs)* enjoy dressing as or being treated as babies. This is sometimes grouped as *ageplay*. In contrast, *Diaper Lovers (DLs)* enjoy diapers. Many enjoy both. They are collectively called AB/DLs or ABDLs. While some ABDLs are women, most ABDLs are men. Most have a specific trait that is traditionally called *infantilism* or *diaper fetishism*. There is generally no reason to believe these desires are due to a poor upbringing, trauma, etc. ABDLs usually become aware of these desires around the ages of 4 to 16. They generally can't get rid of these desires: Some ABDLs have struggled futilely against them for decades. These desires aren't dangerous and can be part of an otherwise ordinary life. They rarely go away.

The most direct way to learn about an ABDL's background or interests is to ask.

Not all ABDLs have these traits: Some ABDLs simply have a kink. For example, some tried diapers at their partner's urging and found that they liked them. They could easily move on to another kink if they wanted to.

There have been some TV shows on ABDLs. Like many things on TV, these are often exaggerated.

## To parents:

Learning that your child has an interest in diapers and/or babyhood can be a shock. Your child may have told you to avoid having to keep secrets or to eliminate the risk of getting caught. (Or as damage control after getting caught.) Younger children might also be seeking information from you.

While you remember those countless diaper changes, your child may not remember being in diapers at all. It would be reasonable for you to associate your child being in diapers with you having to change them. However, your child may not make that association. A child may say "I want to wear diapers", and a parent might misinterpret it as "I want you to diaper me." Your child isn't a baby, so your participation isn't required.

Commonly, children accept that their parents have a sex life but don't want any exposure to it. This detachment may be a reasonable starting point for the parents of an ABDL child. Parents can accept that their child is an ABDL without getting involved in the details.

However, there might be specific boundaries that need to be discussed, such as the parents' religious beliefs. It may also be worthwhile to discuss practical matters, such as appropriate and inappropriate times to wear diapers.

Dealing with the discovery that your child is an ABDL can be difficult. However, having such a big

secret out of the way may permit a closer relationship. As children's big secrets go, being an ABDL isn't that bad.

Additional resources: Stormdragon's If Your Child is an Infantilist or Diaper Lover, as well as frequently asked questions (FAQs) at About ABDL and Understanding.Infantilism.Org .

## **To partners:**

Developing a meaningful relationship can be difficult. ABDLs have the added difficulty of needing to let their partners know about their desires for diapers and/or babyhood. Ideally, this information would be shared when the relationship has shown long-term potential. This step is necessary. Otherwise, the secret might hinder or cripple the relationship. Communication will be important.

*Boundaries* are limits that are not expected to change, such as religious beliefs. Regrettably, some partners simply won't be compatible with each other. These boundaries should be discussed in hopes of finding a way to accommodate them. For example, an aversion to diapers can be accommodated by having your partner only wear diapers when alone. Like parents, partners also have the option of accepting the ABDL but not participating themselves.

Within the boundaries of both partners, relationships involve substantial give-and-take. The desires of the ABDL are just another detail in this exchange. Still, it is important to talk things through and find a situation that everyone can be comfortable with. Please remember that being an ABDL is only one aspect in the relationship. (If not, it isn't be much of a relationship.)

Negotiation should be a two-way exchange. Both partners should share their own boundaries, needs, wants, interests, kinks, fantasies, turn-ons, turn-offs, curiosities, etc. Consider taking turns for the first few discussions, so neither partner feels singled-out and both get a chance to voice their wishes.

Some aspects of being an ABDL are negotiable, and some aren't: Your partner may not be able to give up diapers, but that doesn't you have to change them. The goal of negotiation is to find a balanced compromise between equal partners. Balance is particularly important if you will be caring for an adult baby sometimes. This can be a lot of work. You should expect to be cared for equally (but may opt for less literal pampering).

Leave space for learning and adaptation. This flexibility is necessary during the process of finding things you both enjoy.

Partners should also discuss any emotional triggers due to their past - called "*landmines*". These should be shared to avoid the risk of accidentally setting them off.

Two ABDL-specific thresholds, sex and bondage, should also be discussed when appropriate. Some ABDLs incorporate sex into ABDL activities. Other ABDLs enjoy it only as a separate activity. Obviously, your needs must to be met as well. Similarly, some ABDLs enjoy the helplessness of being in bondage, while others shun it as un-babyish.

The specific times of engaging in ABDL activities are called "*scenes*." If a scene will involve new or dangerous elements, it should be negotiated beforehand. Negotiation of ABDL scenes is less critical than it is some other sexual variations because the typical ABDL practices are generally safe. An ABDL-specific or ageplay-specific resource on negotiating scenes may be useful.

Obviously, this negotiation should occur when both partners have clear heads.

Additional resources: Books on negotiation within relationships, and ABDL-specific books such as *The Age Play and Diaper Fetish Handbook* or others.

## Specific practices

What ABDLs enjoy, called ABDL "*practices*", vary widely. For example, many ABDLs enjoy wearing and wetting diapers, but not all do. The surest way to learn about the tastes of a particular ABDL enjoys is to ask.

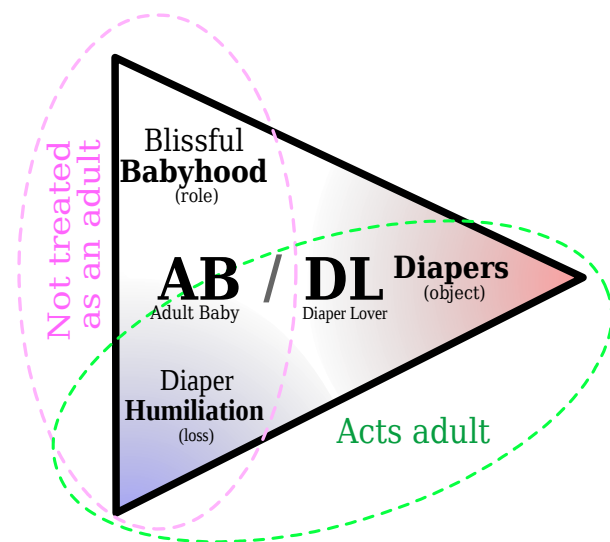
An adult baby may enjoy *roleplay*, such as a toddler with mommy. When roleplaying, some adult babies also *regress*. This is similar to an actor going past merely reading the lines and getting into the role. Even when regressed, the ABDL won't be "just a baby." The caregiver of an ABDL can expect that their little one will maturely abide by the negotiated limits. ("Yes, you can throw spaghetti from your highchair - if you are volunteering to clean the kitchen afterwards.")

Similar to the daily cycle of meals, many ABDLs have periods of inactivity separated by activity. This cycle may be weekly or monthly instead of daily. Once satisfied, the desires will go away for a time. It is rare for the desires to go away or suddenly end without returning later. However, As with meals, moderate and regular is best. Unstable *binge-and-purge cycles* should be avoided. Also, there may be a tendency for ABDLs to want to increase their level of activity. This might not be a problem, but moderation is still necessary.

## The ABDL triangle

Movies can be summarized by their genre. They may be action movies, comedies, romances, etc. Genres can change or mix along a continuum, as in romantic comedies. Similarly, an ABDL's interests can be summarized by their emphasis: Diapers, babyhood, and humiliation.

- Right corner: Those who emphasize **diapers** are typically diaper lovers. They and/or their partners may wear diapers as fetish objects, or simply enjoy wearing them. The focus is on the diapers, even though other ABDL elements may be present.
- Upper left: Those who emphasize **babyhood** focus on the blissful escape of babyhood. They may fantasize about drifting off to sleep in the arms of a loving mommy.
- Lower left: Those who emphasize **humiliation** focus on the loss of status and control. They may enjoy being shamed and spanked for using their diapers. (Yes, the bottom corner includes spanked bottoms.)



The contrast between babyhood and humiliation is sometimes unclear. Unlike the blissful baby, the infantilized man is aware that he is being belittled. While acting as an adult, he isn't treated as one. They both may lack control, but only one has a sense of loss. Again, emphases can be mixed and can change.

Sex is more typical when diapers are emphasized and less typical when babyhood is emphasized.

## What it is not

ABDLs usually don't have a **serious medical condition**. ABDLs generally have a manageable, lifelong trait that includes a desire for diapers and/or babyhood. Directly, this exposes them to a risk of diaper rash. Indirectly, they may have had to deal with not being "normal." This may have caused guilt, shame, isolation, and depression. However, these are cultural issues. They are due to a shortage of understanding and acceptance, not the desires themselves. If the ABDL has serious symptoms other than these, a serious medical condition may be present.

Professional help might be beneficial for dealing with the indirect cultural issues and confirming the absence of a serious medical condition. However, it shouldn't be expected to result in a "cure."

**Regression** is a broad term with many meanings. Generally, it means to act with a decreased level of maturity. In some cases, regression can be unconscious or involuntary. In contrast, adult babies are mature but may act immaturely when appropriate. Adult babies regress, but those who regress aren't necessarily adult babies. *Regression therapy* differs in that it is a structured process, supervised by a therapist.

Similarly, **mental retardation** isn't common among ABDLs. ABDLs are mature, although they may set their maturity aside at times. A related source of confusion is the term "infantilism." Outside of an ABDL context, infantilism may refer to a body part that never properly matured. Among ABDLs, infantilism causes a desire to set aside maturity and be babylike.

ABDLs are not inherently **homosexual, bisexual, or transgendered**. Most ABDLs are non-transgendered males, and the majority are heterosexual. However, some ABDLs collect pictures of people they want to be like. They may want to be like the character, in the same situation, etc. Identifying with these characters is often easier if they are the same sex as the viewer. Additionally, some male ABDLs use femininity to enhance a sense of infancy. They are called *sissies*, and may have no interest in being a woman. A sissy ABDL who is a heterosexual, non-transgendered man may enjoy looking at pictures of men dressed as baby girls.

Questions about an unrelated condition, **pedophilia**, are common when first learning about ABDLs. ABDL play takes place between consenting adults, who may be dressed as or acting like babies. It does not involve actual children. In general, the ABDL community does not condone involving actual children in any adult practices and will work with the proper authorities to prevent child molestation.

Finally, the **practical use of diapers** by incontinent people, astronauts, deep sea divers, etc. does not make them ABDLs.

## Closing

Thanks for having an open mind and seeking to better understand the desires of your friend or loved one. This is an important step towards a more open and honest relationship. It is OK to have questions and reservations. Keeping an open channel of communication between you and your loved one is critical. However, this is also a confidential matter, so please ask the ABDL before sharing it with others.



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