

An ABDL Primer

By B. Terrance Grey of Understanding.Infantilism.Org

There is a group of deep urges that involve a central theme: diapers and/or babyhood. Formally, these urges are known by the terms paraphilic infantilism and diaper fetishes. Informally, someone who has them is called an Adult Baby (AB) or a Diaper Lover (DL), respectively. The combined acronym is used loosely to those who have them (AB/DLs or ABDLs, or individually, an ABDL). ABDL practices generally involve wearing diapers, and may include related actives as well, such as sleeping with stuffed animals.

The majority of ABDLs are heterosexual males. An ABDL generally realizes that he (or less often, she) is different between the ages of 5 and 15. At this age, he realizes that he has a focused, persistent urge that others don't. The urges are a lingering, compulsive hunger. While young children might show a passing interest in diapers, the urges of an ABDL are generally life-long. An ABDL might have tried desperately to change. Few are successful, if any.

Being an ABDL is not directly harmful, but there are indirect psychological and social dangers. An ABDL may have thought that he was the only one with these urges, and may grow up with the stigma of being a "pervert." In some, this leads to isolation, guilt, and despair. The social and professional risks of being discovered can be severe. These urges are not a syndrome in the strictest sense: The backgrounds, interests, and practices vary from one ABDL to the next. They have come from loving homes as well as strict or abusive homes. Some ABDLs enjoy wetting and soiling their diapers, while other ABDLs find such activities gross. There are endless combinations and variations. This diversity suggests that the desires of ABDLs might have multiple causes. Whatever the cause, ABDLs have to live with a powerful desire.

Infantilism and Diaper Fetishes

At any given moment, ABDLs can be divided into two groups. The line dividing these groups can be as narrow as the line dividing a nurturing pat from a heated fondle. At a particular time, some ABDLs will want to cuddle with mommy, assuming the role of the baby. At other times, they may want a sexual encounter with their spouse, retaining the role of grown-up lover. This division generally affects three things: 1) the focus, 2) the roles played in fantasy or in scenes with an ideal partner, and 3) the level of sexuality in ABDL play.

Paraphilic infantilism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Baby • Self-image/alter-ego • Roleplay, such as baby with mommy • Sexual relationship with partner is separate from AB play • Adult Baby wears the diapers 	Diaper Fetish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diaper Lover • External object • No inherent roleplay • Play is actively sexual • DL, partner, or both wear the diapers
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The **diaper fetishes** are the easiest to describe. They are a fetish, a sexual attraction to diapers or other infantile objects. In it, the diapers themselves serve as a sexual focus. Someone with a diaper fetish is commonly called a **Diaper Lover (DL)**. Diaper lovers might also include those who have a rubber fetish or plastic fetish, who might skip the diapers and focus on the rubber or plastic waterproof pants. The diaper lover's idealized partner would be an erotic lover. If their actual partner is willing, diapers and other fetish objects can be incorporated into their sexual relationship. The diaper lover might prefer to wear the diaper, to have his partner wear the diaper, or for both to wear diapers. The presence of diapers may lend itself to roleplay such as doctor-patient or nurse-patient, but diaper fetishes don't inherently involve roleplay.

Less easily explained is **paraphilic infantilism**. (It is often called infantilism, for short.) Infantilism is not a fetish. Fetishes focus on a sexually charged object. Infantilism focuses on the self-image of the **Adult Baby (AB)**. The adult baby has an alternate self-image of a baby. This is similar to a transvestite, except that instead of engaging a female alter-ego every now and then, adult babies engage an infantile alter-ego. Adult babies cannot physically become infants, but try to simulate infancy. This may include the use of adult-sized diapers and baby clothing, toys, baby oils and powders, etc. If the adult baby's partner is willing to engage in roleplay, she will play the mommy (or he will play the daddy) while the adult baby would generally play an infant or toddler. When roleplaying, the adult baby might try to achieve a baby-like mood or mindset. As a result, sex during the scene might seem incestuous. The adult baby and partner may have an ordinary sexual relationship at other times, but not while engaged in infantilistic play. As would be expected, the baby wears the diapers.

Unlike diaper lovers, adult babies are generally masochistic. Masochism is a desire be deprived of status, comfort, or control. Individual adult babies will fall into one of three sets, based on how their masochism is expressed. The first set is simply infantile. Assuming the role of baby inherently involves surrendering control. In some cases, this may be stretched into an early childhood role to include spanking or scolding. The second set has a conventional masochism that they practice when they aren't engaged in baby play. They might be in diapers one evening, and in leather or chains the next

evening. The third set integrates conventional masochism into infantilism in a single scene. This might involve mixing baby items with bondage and discipline that would be abusive if used on a real baby. The hard restraints bring a tangible sense of powerlessness. However, they also tend to ruin the babyish mood by corrupting any sense of nurturing. Because of this, the practices of the third set are incompatible with the other two sets of ABs.

While the division between infantilism and diaper fetishes is clear at a particular moment, ABDLs might practice both. Many ABDLs describe themselves as "mostly AB" or "mostly DL", based on which they engage in more.

What ABDLs are Not

Having touched on what an ABDL's desires are, it may be helpful to mention what they are not.

Pedophilia

Pedophilia is a compulsion to treat children as sexual objects. Unlike pedophilia, ABDL play does not involve actual children. It takes place between consenting adults. In its strictest sense, ABDLs do not involve sexual acts with adults pretending to be children. The ABDL community does not condone involving actual children in infantilistic, fetishistic, or other age-inappropriate acts.

Regression

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. Adult babies sometimes regress, but those who regress aren't necessarily adult babies.

Mental Retardation

'Paraphilic infantilism' is usually shortened to 'infantilism,' but this isn't entirely correct. Infantilism may also mean 'lacking development.' Mental retardation is a case of mental infantilism, but not paraphilic infantilism. Mental retardation involves never having achieved average capacity and maturity. Paraphilic infantilism involves people of average mental capacity and maturity, who set their maturity aside at times.

Practical or Voluntary Use

Someone who needs diapers for medical reasons might be an ABDL, but probably isn't. While he or she may wear and use diapers, it isn't necessarily to express an alternate self-image or indulge a fetish. Of course, some who have medical reasons for wearing diapers are also ABDLs. This also applies to those who use diapers for practical reasons, such as astronauts, divers, and sadomasochists.

There are many that wear diapers but aren't paraphilic infantilists or diaper fetishists in the strictest sense. Their motivations and underlying mechanisms are different. However, those who share ABDL interests and practices are generally welcome in ABDL communities.

Elements of ABDL Fantasy

While each individual ABDL will have his own preferred fantasies, there are some common elements.

Coercion

Force or coercion is sometimes present in fantasies to remove guilt. The ABDL deflects the guilt of wanting to be put back in diapers by fantasizing that someone else forced it upon him. Superficially, this makes it someone else's fault.

Identification

ABDLs may enjoy looking at pictures showing who they want to be, as opposed to who they want to be with. For example, a heterosexual male adult baby may enjoy looking at pictures of men in diapers: He may be imagining himself as the men in the diapers.

Permanent Regression

A common fantasy among adult babies involves a permanent return to a more infantile status. This may involve being put back in diapers or returned to the nursery for the rest of their life. These fantasies may be enjoyed even by adult babies who are consciously aware that they wouldn't want to give up their adult lives.

Exhibitionism

Modesty and self-consciousness are learned traits, not expected from infants and small

children. Babies can be out in public in just a diaper and T-shirt, and can be changed openly. Adult babies can't legally do these things, but commonly fantasize about it.

Integrating other Interests

The individual ABDL may have other interests that have become integrated with ABDL. For example, sissies are male adult babies that have integrated the urge to be a baby with the urge to be female. The urges may be fully integrated, and so only expressed together. Such an individual would simply want to be a baby girl, but not a baby boy or a woman. They also might be only partially integrated, so they might be expressed separately as well as together.

Another example are those who have integrated infantilism and a furry alter-ego. These people are called babyfurs . They fantasize about being puppies, kittens, or cubs. Typically, these baby animals would wear diapers and have other human traits as well. Sissies and babyfurs are among many groups resulting from the integration of side-interests with infantilism. The combinations can themselves be combined in countless ways. For example, there are sissy babyfurs.

Elements of ABDL Practice

Aside from the many things that ABDLs would like to do, but can't, there is an extensive list of practices that they might actually engage in. Some common elements and practices are listed here.

Coming Out

A difficult choice that each ABDL must face is who to tell about his interests. This offers the possibility of being accepted for who he is, and not having to hide. However, it also includes the risk of disgrace at home, school, and work. While this is generally not the first practice to be engaged in, the ABDL needs to consider this before other practices, because all practices include the risk of being discovered.

Wetting and Soiling Diapers

When wearing diapers, many ABDLs like to urinate in them. Others do not wet their diapers, either because they find it gross, or simply don't enjoy it. Some ABDLs who wet also like to soil their diapers. Others don't because they find it gross, don't enjoy it, don't want to go through the cleanup afterwards, or aren't in a place where they can mess

themselves without being obvious. Some ABDLs have difficulty wetting their diapers when they want to. Such shy or overtrained bladders can be moderated using behavioral methods.

Wearing Diapers Under Clothes

A common compromise between wanting to wear diapers and needing to go about daily life is to wear diapers under normal clothing. When adult babies do this, they would do so in their grown-up mindset, as opposed to an infantile one. ABDLs who do this may need to pay more attention to how detectable their diapers are than they would need to if they were wearing them for medical reasons. This is especially true of those who still live at home with their parents, or wear diapers at work. They need to maintain a level of stealth, so their diapers aren't detected. In other circumstances, the ABDL might be OK being simply discrete, so that it isn't obvious that he is diapered. If a passerby on the street that noticed the diapers, he or she would probably dismiss them as medically necessary.

The Binge/Purge Cycle

After engaging in ABDL activities, some may be driven to try to give up being an ABDL altogether. They 'purge' by discarding their collections of diapers and other items, deleting computer files, etc. After a few days to a few months, the urges build up, and cause the ABDL to 'binge.' He intensely returns to ABDL activities, by buying more diapers, etc. After the urges have been vented, the ABDL may again be driven to give up, leading to another purge. The binge-purge cycle is destructive, but can be moderated.

Finding a Mommy or Daddy

A difficult part of life as an ABDL is finding a compatible spouse. For diaper lovers, the search is difficult because there are few other diaper lovers in the general population. For adult babies, the search is harder still because infantilism has no clear counterpart. That is, while there is a set of urges driving some adults to be babied, there isn't a matching set of urges driving others to baby adults. In contrast, a masochist can find happiness with a sadist, for example. Some ABDLs are willing to be 'switch' mommies or daddies, either taking turns as the baby, or tending to 'baby' while wearing diapers under their own clothing. Nonetheless, the high demand for female ABDLs causes some to be secretive to avoid being overwhelmed by those looking for mommies. Female ABDLs are not necessarily willing to be mommies. Typically, ABDLs need to find a partner from the general population that is sufficiently maternal, paternal, or open-minded. ABDLs should discuss their interests with their spouse before the marriage. For diaper lovers, there are prostitutes open-minded enough for diapers. For adult

babies, there are professional 'adult babysitters.'

Wearing Diapers all the Time

Some ABDLs progress beyond intermittently wearing diapers under their clothing, to wearing diapers all the time. While there is substantial variation between individuals, this may reduce urinary control. In rare cases, this has caused partial loss of control. Some adult babies actively seek to lose urinary control through hypnosis or behavioral untraining methods. A few ABDLs also wish to soil themselves uncontrollably. In contrast, other ABDLs enjoy to wear diapers intermittently more than they would enjoy wearing them all the time.

Cloth vs. Disposable

The ABDL's urges often focus on a specific type of diaper. ABDLs raised in disposable diapers might not be interested in cloth diapers at all. The interests of older ABDLs may be specific to cloth diapers, or the waterproof pants worn with them. This focus can give a clue to the age at which the urges developed. Some ABDLs spent their infancy in cloth, but ended up focused on the disposables that they were exposed to as children. ABDLs who wear diapers under their clothing might wear either type, for practical reasons.

Habituation

As in everything else, the newness and novelty of specific ABDL practices eventually wears off. This habituation is why movies that we've seen many times don't seem as intense, and why movies are becoming more violent over time. Some ABDLs are stable and continue doing what they have been doing, at about the same frequency. Others will try new things to maintain the novelty. These new practices are usually more elaborate and extreme. This pursuit continues until stability is reached, or some other factor limits the escalation.

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