

Why not use this space to jot down thoughts or questions

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# Making it an Issue

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The technique described has many applications. The idea is that....

👉 You make a contract which appears to have the child as the winner

👉 You make it as a way of showing how wrong you were

👉 There are no threats involved and it's not a punishment

When applied to wet beds, it could go like this...

(To child) Now I'm sure there're times when your mum/dad tells you to 'Put those wet sheets into the laundry/etc. That must make you a bit mad - it's not really treating you like a big boy/girl.... it's treating you like a kid! I bet they do that to you in other ways too! Well, I've got an idea that I think might help you with this.

(To parents) Do you have two sets of sheets which could be '*Child's name*'? Yes? Great!

(To child) Now let's say that one morning you wake up and the bed 's wet. So all you do is get the wet stuff and put it in the..

(To parents) Where?

(To child) Right, so you put it in the...

(To parents) Now, do you promise to wash and dry all that wet stuff? Sure? I think we can trust you.

(To child) OK. Great so far. You put the wet stuff into the .... and it comes back to your room dry. Easy!

(To parents) So, if there's wet stuff in the... you'll know there was a wet bed and if there's no wet stuff you'll know there was a dry bed. **You'll know this and won't ask. You won't even mention it!!**

(To child) Now let's pretend one morning you forget to take the wet stuff to the .... That afternoon you can do it and put the spare dry set on the bed.

(To parents) **And I didn't say 'make your bed'**. All '*child*' has to do is put them on the bed any way they like to sleep on them.

(To child) OK, so what if you didn't take the wet stuff down in the afternoon and the spare set got wet that night.... Still no problem- put both sets into the..... in the morning and they'll both come back dry. Great!!!

(To both) Do we have a deal? Great!! Sign it later.

(To child) Oh, one last thing.... and it's really silly cause I know it'd never happen but.... What if you find that one night you forget to put both sets into the.... and there's no dry stuff. I guess that'd mean there'd be no sheets that night. But that's so stupid it'd never happen. So it's not even worth talking about.

(To parent) When it does happen, you've got to be prepared for it. You'll be told that it wasn't their fault, you should give them a second chance, you're horrible etc. It's really important that you don't get drawn by these arguments, questions, pleadings or taunts. Try to stay calm and repeat variations on the theme of ...

'I'm sorry it's taken me so long to realise you really were grown up.'

'It was only after I spoke with Dr Cassey that I could see how wrong I'd been picking up after you and telling you what to do.'

'I'm sorry for checking up on you all the time. I only realise now how hard it must have been for you.'

'I'll try harder from now on to do things better' ... etc

**Remember that you aren't punishing them and you must smile sweetly and humbly while you're saying all this. Don't answer! Act like a politician!** They'll give up eventually and storm off. Remember, the contract was made in good faith. They may not have another sheet and it'll do them no harm to sleep one night without sheets.

John Cassey  
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