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## A Household Word: Throwing in the Towel

By Carol Band

This morning, as I stepped out of the shower and went to grab a towel out of the bathroom closet, I discovered that, except for the few fancy washcloths that I save for special occasions (like if Queen Elizabeth ever needs to wash up at our house), the cupboard was bare. And so was I ... wet, too. So I opened the door to the hallway, just a crack, and yelled for someone to bring me a towel.

This was not the first time that I had been left high and not-so-dry by members of my family, who seem to think that our bathroom is part of the Hilton hotel chain – complete with an endless supply of bath towels. Again, I hollered for someone to rescue me ... no response.



**A Household Word**  
BY CAROL BAND

Why is it that I can sit in my neighbor's kitchen two doors away and my [kids](#) can hear me whisper that I joined Weight Watchers (and then share that information with the entire school bus stop), but they can't hear me yelling my lungs out from the second-floor bathroom of our own house?

A more daring [mom](#) might have dashed naked through the hall and into her bedroom, but we are not a family that parades around the house in the buff – not since my son was 2 and observed, "Mommy bottom BIG!" I do know parents who are comfortable walking around naked in front of their children and, while I admire their uninhibited spirit, it's not a mode that the Band family embraces.

I also don't kiss my kids on the lips, although I've seen many parents plant a wet one right on their child's mouth without causing any apparent psychological damage or catching the flu, but to me it just seems ... well, icky.

Perhaps, though, if we were a tad less hung up, there would still be clean towels left in the linen closet. But, we are a modest people, so I unhooked the shower curtain, wrapped it around my naked self and went to hunt for a towel. It didn't take long. On the way to the laundry room, I peered into my daughter's bedroom and spied a terry cloth heaven. Fluffy white bath towels filled the room like clouds.

Just last night, I witnessed my lovely daughter, Perry, walk from the bathroom, where she had used all of the hot water and the last of my hair conditioner, to her room. There was a towel twisted turban-style around her silken tresses, another towel wrapped around her size 0 body and a third towel gently draped over her slightly damp shoulders to ward off any possible post-shower chill.

Being a teenage girl, who is actively worried about the huge negative social impact of body odor, pimples and hair that might not be as shiny as hair on Pantene commercials, it is not unusual for her to take two showers a day. Multiply that by three towels per shower and well, 17 damp bath towels pile up quickly. No kidding. There were towels hanging on the back of her door, towels adorning her lamp, towels on the bed, towels shoved under the bed with her \$40 T-shirts from Abercrombie & Fitch and towels that had barely touched her slightly damp shoulders and then been tossed onto her overflowing laundry hamper. I suggested to my darling daughter that while Paris Hilton may have the luxury of unlimited bath towels, she, not being a hotel heiress, does not.

I suppose I should be grateful that she is clean – cleanliness and modesty – both very desirable qualities in a teenage girl. But 17 bath towels? Frankly, I was surprised that we even owned 17 bath towels. Turns out, we own 28 bath towels because after I gathered the ton of terry cloth from Perry's room, I harvested seven ripe towels from my oldest son's room and three from Lewis', the youngest. Frankly, it's enough to make me want to throw in the towel, and when I do, I'll make my kids do the laundry.

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Carol recommends cold water and phosphate-free detergent. Write to her at [carol@carolband.com](mailto:carol@carolband.com).

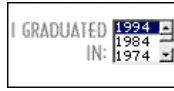
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