

FORUM

Hope for a Misguided Generation

Often one is left to wonder whether taking a stand to confront our youth, who are on the fast track of life, is worth the agony that may have to be endured. Even though negative consequences often appear more salient, there are many more benefits to being on the job, especially as a Christian parent.

My greatest concern is that parents must become involved in the learning process and feel a responsibility for learning along with our youth.

As parents, we must teach and model the importance and effectiveness of a positive attitude to help combat some of the hellish shows seen on television, in the movies or situations experienced by our youth when they are not with us.

They must learn to overcome life's obstacles and succeed no matter what the circumstances. They must discover how to make the most of their God given gifts and unleash their potential for excellence.



GUEST COLUMNIST

By ANN LITTLE-DUBOSE

ness of your brethren and to do your utmost to enlighten them—go to work and enlighten your

There are gobs and gobs of forces that entice our youth with the promises of . . . (sex, drugs, guns, etc.)

As parents we must teach them that there are no shortcuts. It's a known fact that everyone wants to be successful, but very few people are willing to do what it takes to succeed.

There are gobs and gobs of forces that entice our youth with the promises of big money and wonderful results (sex, drugs, guns, etc.)

Society, television and the entertainment field constantly try to convince them that they can have whatever they want without an investment in time, sacrifice, discipline, morals and an adjustment in their life styles.

Man was created in a state of innocence, but with the power of choice. He was tested under the most favorable circumstances. He was endowed with a clean mind and a pure heart with the ability to do right. Yet, man yield to the temptation and failed in the test.

We as parents cannot afford to continue to allow our youth, who were created in a state of innocence, to be influenced by the likes of Beavis and Butthead, Bart Simpson, MTV, some Rap Groups, weapons, peer pressure, sex

brethren!"

As a concerned parent, I call upon other parents to take a stand. The cold realization is that all the flowery and thrilling talk about "freedom," "justice," "equality," "inclusion" and "sensitivity" has meaning only in the Disneyland atmosphere if we don't guide our youth correctly. Knowledge is the key to a better tomorrow. As we approach the 21st century, we find ourselves moving in cadence in a familiar cycle of hope and disillusionment. Our youth languishes, as yet generally unreached. They must see that they become what they behold and what they think. Daily I remember that trials and tribulations are only opportunities for God to do something great in my life. Therefore, He will give me the unction to function as I take a stand to help our misguided, not lost, generation of youth see the light and trod the path to success and self fulfillment for a better tomorrow.

(Ann Little-Dubose, a resident of Winston-Salem, is assistant principal at Konnoak Elementary School)

Freedom School Continues

This summer, 17 Freedom Schools in eight cities provided hundreds of 5- to 18-year-old with federally funded meals and academic, cultural and recreational activities. Today, two of the Freedom Schools — one in Oakland and the other in Washington, D.C. — are thriving as successful after-school programs.

Interns from the Black Student Leadership Network (BSLN), who coordinated and ran the Summer Freedom Schools, continued their work in these two Freedom Schools.

The Fundi Freedom Schools, held at the Metropolitan Wesley AME Zion Church in Washington, D.C., meets three afternoon a week and two Saturdays a month. Sixty high school students and over 50 elementary and junior high students benefit from tutoring and mentoring, snack provided by a local community development organization and many other activities. Students participate in their own community service and advocacy projects and produce a newsletter for the surrounding community.

Director April Coleman says she is encouraged by the



CHILD WATCH

By MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

The success of the program is fueled by the hard work and dedication of the parents.

quality of more than 40 trained volunteers from Howard University and neighboring high schools to assist the program. "I really challenge the volunteers to look at what their motivation is as they help the children," she said. "When you're working the kids, they know it when your heart is not in the right place."

Future plans for Fundi include the addition of parenting classes for the parents of program participants and the kids' own theatrical presentation that the school hopes to use as a fund raiser.

When Margaret Payton, principal of Santa Fe Elementary School in North Oakland, Calif., visited the Summer Freedom School that was serving many of her students, she was so thrilled that she became a volunteer. As the summer came to a close and parents expressed an interest in seeing the program. Today, the Santa Fe Freedom School meets four days a week and serves 36 kids in grades K-6.

Students take advantage of a multi faceted curriculum that makes wide use of resources in

much as eight hours a week. Best says they have no problem enforcing this rule. "I am really overwhelmed by the level of community ownership of this project," she said. "Even if we weren't here, the program would still go on."

These Freedom Schools are just one example of the ways in which we can combine human and community resources to make a difference for black children. Their focus on creative learning, family involvement and inter-generational activities will help to rebuild the black extended community family and bridge the gaps between children, youth, adults and elders. These are necessary steps in our work to Leave No Child Behind.

To learn more about the Freedom Schools, the Black Student Leadership Network or the Black Community Crusade of Children, call 1-800-ASK-BCCC.

(Marian Wright Edelman is president of the Children's Defense Fund and a leader of the Black Community Crusade for Children.)

Doonesbury

BY G.B. TRUDEAU



The city of Winston-Salem has a big problem with a simple answer, but it will require, unity, time and an infinite supply of effort to solve it.

The mayor of Winston-Salem has put together the "Stop the Violence Task Force" and lately we have been hearing people asking for our support in the effort. They have suggested things like tying a ribbon on your arm or automobiles as a means of displaying our support. We have even been asked to participate in a march and turn on lights to demonstration our patronage to the cause.

These symbolic acts can seem like a futile effort when compared to the violent causes they are for. Young kids are killing each other and dying from drug overdoses while we tie ribbons around our arms and march. Somehow these symbolic acts seem to lack punch to the problem, don't they? What we need to do is attack the suit-wearing masterminds that finance the vending networks that bring these destructive commodities into our communities. This is the cry we have heard from some voices in the communities. Yes, maybe that is the answer. But wait. Why should the drug and gun business operate any differently than any other business in this country? The network that provides the supply is there because there is a demand. So we hit them at the top and take out the power structure today only to see it change hands tomorrow. It's called supply and demand.

So what do we do now? Well, remember that ribbon you were asked to tie around your arm? Its purpose is to tie a message around your mind. The African-American community has a history that has proven the majestic powers of having the minds of many ban together for a specific cause.



GUEST COLUMNIST

By ART BOONE

Now take a moment and think about our problem. If we tie the message that the ribbon symbolizes around our minds and march out into the streets of our communities and gather up our children to show them the light, the rest will take care of itself. It's simple economics. If there is no demand for guns and drugs, then there is no need for a supply.

(Art Boone, a resident of Winston-Salem, is maintenance supervisor at RJ Reynolds.)