

Point of View

Editorial

How powerful is the black vote this time around. Are all candidates making an honest effort to get the black vote? We don't see or feel that there is a positive effort to get the black vote. At this point we are virtually days away from the test of time and this huge bloc of voters are being written off.

Rumor has it that the powers-to-be had a meeting recently and have decided that essentially the black vote poses no threat--that the numbers aren't there.

This is the time, more than ever before, to pull our bootstraps up and put the vote only where our populace will truly benefit.

Let's face it, if the candidates who ignore this lesson take the gamble, only they will be the ones to be left out of the GENERAL ELECTION--a hint to the wise is sufficient.

*"As a race,
we are too jealous and
grudgeful of each other's
successes and prosperity."*

Rev. G.W. Johnson
1890

CHILD WATCH

by Marian Wright Edelman
President, Children's Defense Fund

Why Children Drop Out of School

By eleventh grade, John was heavily involved with drugs. His only concern was his next high. He says he dropped out because he lost all "patience and motivation" to attend school.

Bridgette's mother had emotional problems and her father left the family. While still in high school, Bridgette gave birth to a child. She says that the problems with day care caused her to drop out.

These young people, both of whom have since returned to school, told their stories at a National Education Association (NEA) conference on dropouts held in May. Recent statistics released at the conference show that this problem is alarmingly common among our youth.

Many youngsters, like John and Bridgette, says they leave school because of emotional or social factors: they marry or have a child,

leave to seek a job for financial reasons, leave because of poor relationships with teachers or peers, lack of support in the home for their education, general lack of emotional support, or language or cultural barriers.

Others say they leave because school itself has become a hated place: they do not like it there, feel frustrated by a learning difficulty or low grades, they have a history of failure in school, were pushed out by higher school standards, or burned out trying to meet them.

Underlying many of these stated reasons are economic problems and other social disadvantages that make it more likely that youngsters from low-income neighborhoods will drop out. Lack of adequate health care during childhood, inadequate school resources, and family pressures all increase the odds against youths' staying

"Dear Dr.-Faulkner:

I have read your columns about drugs but I still do not know what to do to keep my children away from them. My daughter is 17 and still lives at home with me. My son is 18 and has been in college for a year.

I am frightened to death about drugs and I have warned my children about the dangers of them. They both promised to stay away from drugs. What more can I say or do to protect them? Sandra, Philadelphia."

Dear Sandra:

You are on the right track by seeking to do something before the problem rears its ugly head. It would be wise for every parent to begin drug education as early as possible. Since drugs are readily available in elementary school, it would not be unwise to begin the

NNPA FEATURE

COPING

by

Dr. Charles W. Faulkner



Educate Your Children About Drugs

education as early as ages seven or eight. (Even earlier in major cities).

Parents must say more to the child than merely to "stay away from drugs." They must become educated about drugs. There are many excellent books and pamphlets at your local library.

You should tell the child about the negative impact of major popular drugs.

1) Crack - A derivative of cocaine, is chemically clear and provides a sudden, intense high that is exhilarating, (this is known as free-basing). The high lasts approximately 20 minutes. During the high, problems are forgotten. After the high, the user often becomes deeply depressed. This drug is both

psychologically and physically addictive.

2) Cocaine - Is a drug which is often mixed with impurities in order to stretch the amount so the seller can have more to sell and make more money. The power is inhaled through the nose and produces a 15 minute high. The effect is similar to that of crack, often results in depression and is psychologically addictive.

3) Heroin - Is also mixed with impurities in order to stretch the amount. Most users boil the drug before use in order to separate and remove impurities. Heroin produces a "rush" and stuns the system with a high that was described by one user as "better than 10 birthday parties, 20 sexual experiences and 18 parachute jumps all rolled into one." The drug, which

is injected, is immensely addictive, physically. No one uses this drug without eventually becoming addicted.

4) PCP - Is a chemical compound that is made with easy-to-acquire chemicals. It produces a sudden surge to the brain and excites the user. This drug deadens certain areas of the brain temporarily (permanently if used regularly). The high is also exhilarating and produces a psychological need for more. In addition to being psychologically addictive, it gives the user abnormal strength and unrealistic confidence.

These descriptions are necessarily brief and incomplete. The parent should seek additional information and present it early to the child.

FROM CAPITOL HILL

By Alfreda L. Madison

Administration Is Kicking And Screaming Over The Supreme Court's Decisions

June and July were banner months for civil rights organizations. During these months, the U.S. Supreme Court strongly rebuffed the Reagan Administration's intense determination to eradicate civil rights gains in school.

Not surprisingly, the dropout rate is worst in our cities. School officials in Boston report that last year, for the first time in the city's history, the number of high school dropouts exceeded the number of graduates. Last spring, a Chicago school district monitoring group documented a city-wide dropout rate of 43 percent, a figure that is at least 10 percent higher than school officials had been admitting, but that is now widely accepted.

and return to the discriminating pre-sixties' days.

Affirmative action has worked well for around twenty years, under both Republican and Democratic presidents. Until Mr.

Minority youth are at especially high risk of dropping out. While white youth average a nationwide dropout rate of 13 percent, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, 17 percent of black youth and 19 percent of Hispanic youth are dropping out.

We know the costs to these young people and to all of us when they leave school without a diploma. They are less likely to be able to find jobs and more likely to end up in reform school or in jail.

Reagan, who is bent on accommodating the radical right by making the demise of civil rights a top priority.

The Edwin Meese-Brad Reynolds' Justice Department has seriously objected to the use of goals

What can be done to prevent these young people from dropping out of school?

We need to give all children the help they need to stay in school, or to return to school, like John and Bridgette did. Encouragingly, we now have some excellent examples of dropout prevention efforts that have made a difference for our children.

and timetables in affirmative action. It has denounced class action and instead has emphasized that only identified victims of discrimination are covered by affirmative action remedies.

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