

Tom Burgdorf's

Gymnet Sports Learning Library

Team Parents Section

Time To Stop Teaching "It's Okay."

"It's okay. Things will be fine. It's okay. Be happy with yourself regardless of your effort or outcome. No matter what, be happy with yourself. Things will be okay" Reality or a fake dream?

Who is going to take care of these kids when they grow up? It is time we stop teaching that "everything will be okay." You make things okay. You make things happen with desire, education, hard work, a thick skin, tools you learned when you were a kid and perseverance. We are doing a disservice to these children by always saying things will work out. That is a dangerous assumption.

I would rather be in charge of my future rather than waiting for "everything will be okay." I would rather wake up every day knowing what really could happen if I don't do a good job that day. I could lose my job or my business. I could go hungry if I didn't plan ahead, have enough money for groceries and actually go to the store. Lots of things "just happen" but are they always what is best for us? I want kids who are prepared to make the positive things happen in their life. And it doesn't help the learning of this important life lesson to teach "no matter what, you will be okay."

Children are getting the wrong message if they think their life is already planned for them. Their happiness? They are in charge of that. "Everything will be okay?" A pipe dream that isn't a guarantee. And is dangerous. The effort these kids put out has a direct bearing on how successful and how happy they are going to be. Our little Jimmy, doesn't work hard in baseball practice this week, still gets to play in the game along with the hard workers, doesn't hustle in the game and we embrace him at the end with a "that's okay." What the heck did we just teach little Jimmy? Who is going to embrace him when he is 30? Is his boss going to continue to let him "play" at his job if he doesn't work hard?

It is time we have adults in the lives of our children who say "more effort needed." Who say "do this and get that." AND "if you don't do this you DON'T GET THAT." Enough with faking these kids out. Allow them to be happy with a lack of effort and focus now so that they won't be sad? How sad will it be if they take these false lessons of "it's okay" into adulthood?

Don't try - don't get.

Don't study - don't pass.

Don't work hard in practice - don't get to play in the game.

Don't be pleasant to your parents - don't get to go to the show.

People CAN fail in their lives. Adults can be unhappy. Adults can die if they make the wrong choices. Teenagers die in car accidents and I hope, I hope, I hope that they aren't saying "things will be okay" as they are speeding down the road with 3 friends in the back seat.

Time to wake up that we have to teach these kids that life, destiny, just doesn't happen in your favor. You work for your success. You work for your happiness. You work for your relationships. You work for the life that you want.

No, we don't have to always have "happy children,. happy children, happy children" every minute.

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