

“Just because you can, doesn’t mean you should.”

I first heard Dan File, a past assistant principal at NPMS, speaking this line. I loved it. Mr. File was speaking to the 8th graders at the end of the year celebration where we mark the moment our 8th graders finish with NPMS.

Dan was telling the kids that over the summer and on into their high school years they will frequently be exposed to ideas that sound like fun. When ideas sound fun, enthusiasm to be involved is close behind.

What do cable TV, the music industry, movies and computer games teach our kids that “fun” is? Scary thought isn’t it? Glamorizing tobacco, alcohol, drugs, violence, and sex in order to increase sales convinces our youth that these things are desirable. Do we want middle school kids involved in any of it?

Obviously not.

Are our children capable of finding all these things in the next few years? Obviously so. Some of them are already caught up in it. Sadly, many parents finally catch on when the kids are caught doing it.

What can parents do to prevent poor decision making?

Communicate with your kids. It takes time and it can be scary, and they may not appear to be listening. They are and you must!

Catch them watching a tacky music video? Sit down and watch with them, and then talk about how in your family women will be treated with dignity and not as objects. Watching the Super Bowl and see an advertisement showing a group of young partiers drinking beer? Take time to talk about minimum age laws, DUI’s, and how you will be harder on them than the judge will be. The next time a meth lab gets busted in the North Pole area, explain what a toxic, addictive and destructive substance it is.

Tastes better! No fear! Just do it! No limits! When the moment is

right!

The suggestions are everywhere. The only way to help our kids make safe choices is to make sure they understand the consequences of making poor choices.

So parents, when the moment is right, just do it, there are no limits to what you must talk to your kids about. No fear. Just do it....

....because you have to.

Borrow Dan's line. He'd be pleased.

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