

Collinwood School 4/21/99

5 years ago, MY YOUNGEST SON, Christopher Martin, WAS KILLED because he was sitting in a car that someone else wanted. Now, one of our young men, my son, is dead and another of our young men, the killer, is in jail for a long time for a car that he killed for and only had for about an hour. Don't you think the price for that car was too high? 1 person is dead & 1 person is in jail for at least 25 years. What a tragedy. Two families destroyed.

ISN'T IT TIME TO GET OUR PRIDE
BACK???!!!!!!!!!!!!

PRIDE IN OURSELVES,

Pride in our family and friends.

IT'S ALSO TIME TO LOVE YOURSELF.

Loving yourself doesn't make you selfish.

If you love yourself,

You will care for & about others,

You will have respect for yourself and others.

THAT MEANS YOU DON'T CONSTANTLY USE DEROGATORY WORDS WHEN TALKING TO OTHERS, ESPECIALLY YOUR "FRIENDS."

and young ladies, if the guys are calling you "B's" and whores, don't talk to them. INSIST ON RESPECT AND COURTESY.

AND, HEY, WHAT ABOUT THESE BAGGY PANTS AROUND YOUR KNEES SHOWING MORE STUFF THAN MOST PEOPLE WANT TO SEE --

I'm sure you know that in jail baggy pants means you are available -- is that what it means to you?

WORKING; the beginning of our life, our childhood, is spent playing and learning. Taking the steps toward being an adult.

NOT TOO MANY OF US GET ANYTHING HANDED TO US ON A SILVER PLATTER.

Back in the "old days," so that I could buy school supplies & clothes, I used to babysit, clean houses for elderly neighbors & pick berries in the summer. In high school, I worked at a library. I also volunteered at a hospital besides being on the drill team, the Spanish club, volleyball & baseball teams. It's all part of life and getting prepared for life.

IT'S UP TO YOU; IT'S YOUR CHOICE.

TO HELP DECIDE WHAT YOU MIGHT WANT TO DO IN LIFE,

Get involved -- in a church, in school activities like sports or in the drama, debate, chess, foreign language clubs, etc.

OR

Volunteer -- hospitals, nursing homes, church.
Become a coach or tutor for younger kids.

Study and set goals,

IT'S YOUR CHOICE -- you can make a difference.

There's a zillion types of jobs out there. Decide what you want to aim for and work toward it.

WILL YOUR LIFE CONTINUE TO GO FORWARD TOWARD YOUR GOALS?

OR

WILL IT BE ON THE STREET CORNER DEALING DRUGS, HAVING A DRUG HABIT, AND YOUR LIFE ENDING IN A VIOLENT DEATH --

-- KILLED BY EITHER YOUR "FRIENDS," A STRANGER OR A COMPETITOR.

CHOICES -----

IF YOU KILL SOMEONE, YOU GO TO JAIL FOR A LONG TIME.

Most murderers are caught and if by chance you don't get caught for this murder, you will get caught for the next crime unless somebody kills you first.

THE FRIENDS YOU CHOOSE & WHERE AND WHEN YOU SPEND YOUR TIME, MATTERS.

IF YOU ARE KILLED, AND IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU -- YOU ARE AT RISK FROM THE AGES OF 15 TO 25 -- YOU WILL BE PUT IN A COFFIN. WHEN THAT LID CLOSES, IT DOESN'T OPEN AGAIN IN THIS WORLD.

IT'S YOUR CHOICE --
POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE
FOR YOURSELF OR AGAINST YOURSELF.

REMEMBER, YOU ARE IMPORTANT.

TREAT YOURSELF LIKE YOU ARE IMPORTANT.
Moms and Dads aren't perfect either. We make mistakes, too. If your parents are there for you, work with them. Count yourself lucky.

If your parents have problems with drugs, alcohol or aren't there like you want them to be, your path in life is more difficult, BUT IT CAN BE DONE.

PLEASE KNOW THIS, YOU ARE WORTHY AND YOU CAN DO IT.

WORK AND STUDY TO ATTAIN THE SKILLS IN AREAS THAT INTEREST YOU -- DO IT FOR YOURSELF.

REMEMBER, WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES ALONG THE WAY, BUT WE WILL ALSO HAVE SOME SUCCESSES ALONG THE WAY. It's all part of learning and growing.

LIFE SHOULD BE A LONG ROAD FILLED WITH LOVE, JOY & HAPPINESS, WITH SOME PAIN & SORROW MIXED IN, AND LIFE'S UPS AND DOWNS.

IT SHOULD NOT BE A SHORT ROAD WITH YOUR LIFE CUT OFF BY A BULLET, A KNIFE OR DRUGS.

DON'T INCREASE THE RISK OF BEING IN THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME BY CHOOSING A DANGEROUS LIFE STYLE OR FRIENDS WHO ONLY WANT TO DO WRONG.

CHOICES --

Walk away from friends who want to sell drugs or steal or hurt others. Walk away from arguments.

YOU ARE PRECIOUS, LOVED AND IMPORTANT.

STAY ALIVE.

WE DON'T WANT TO ADD YOUR NAME TO THIS MEMORIAL WALL. IT'S LIKE THE COFFIN. ONCE YOUR NAME IS ON THE WALL, IT DOESN'T COME OFF.

STAY ALIVE.