

Dear Las Vegas Junior Tennis players and parents,

Below I have pasted an article I found on AOL.com. It is enlightening to see the two types of children growing up in America today;

1. **UNSTABLE CHILD:** the constantly texting, cell phoning, picture snapping, my spacing, girlfriend and boyfronding, video gaming, partying, gossiping, bad mouthing insecure child; and
2. **STABLE CHILD:** (Our children in Tennis!) the athletic, hard working, academic achieving, learning, good attitude, focused, patient, kinder child who will lead this country, it's businesses and communities in the future. (They are not perfect but on the right track)

I have always loved the "Tennis parent" because they go the extra mile to raise their child, although at times some get too caught up in wins and losses, at least tennis parents care and create activities to keep their children strong, smart and on the road to happiness and success.

This article is both a warning to you and the children about what is out there and what kind of children can influence your own at school, and also a congratulations for what you have done to provide your child with an alternative to this behavior; Tennis, school, and a community of tennis friends who have a more disciplined and successful life then most.

It is important I send this letter and article out because I have the benefit of seeing how many children through the years were doing great in tennis, and with just a few wrong choices ended up throwing it all away fro the party scene, and in the end they always regretted that decision.

It is for this reason that I have created the USTA-Nevada movie nights, and other social events like our annual AWARDS BANQUET AND NATE SCHULMAN TENNIS BALL (This May 10th), in hopes of creating a fun social life for our children who strive to be greater then the mediocre masses. So they too can have a fun social life, without the poor decisions and behaviors most associated with teens getting together on a Saturday night.

I truly see our junior tennis players as the leaders of tomorrow and look forward to seeing where your efforts of driving them each day, paying for lessons, travel and all the hard work they put in, will lead them.

I want to remind the junior tennis players, when reading the article below, or hearing those children at school gossip and talk about their social lives, remember somehow everything is backwards in high school. Often, the children who are on the road to happiness and success, who play sports, great at school and stay away from the party scene, are considered "Brains" etc. Yet the child that is self destructive, parties, hardly performs at a high level in sports and academics is considered "popular." This is backwards. Why would failing be considered popular?

REMEMEBER that today's popularity means absolutely nothing. Once high school is over those that are popular, party and do the cell phone antics you see below, will end up depressed and lost at a community or mediocre college, if college at all. The behaviors they practice in high school will stay with them into their young adult life, and, unless they have a drastic change, which is rare, in the real world acting the fool, sending wild text messages, partying, "hooking up" does not result in happiness. It usually ends in sadness, loneliness and trouble.

So be grateful that your parents have you in sports, excelling in academics and your friends have futures ahead of them, because the children in the article below will need a job one day, and hopefully, with the path you are on now, you will have your own business or be in the position to offer them one! You will be the leaders of tomorrow, and they will be there emulating you and

wishing they had played sports, took school seriously, instead of focusing on the shallow short term excitement of popularity, parties and cell phone gibberish.

You on the other hand will always be a success because that is the lifestyle and habit you are now forming from a young age, and never let a mediocre person try and get you to doubt that. I always use Trent Alenik as an example, who now is on scholarship at the #11 business choll in the US, Villanova University. I use Trent because he was a social child that struggled at first with training tennis instead of going to the parties. Trent trained 3-4 hours a day, working a job to pay for tennis, striving for straight A's, and one day he literally cried telling me "I AM MISSING OUT ON ALL THE FUN IN HIGH SCHOOL." When I asked him why he believed this he said his friends always tell him "ALL YOU DO IS TENNIS, YOU ARE MISSING OUT ON THE HIGH SCHOOL PARTIES AND GIRLS."

I told Trent what I will tell you now, "YOUR FRIENDS ARE NOT REALLY HAVING FUN, BUT BECAUSE THEY ARE INSECURE, THEY PRETEND THEY ARE HAVING FUN. THEY SEE YOU SUCCEEDING AND FEEL SMALL NEXT TO YOU, SO THEY TRY AND CONVINCE THEMSELVES, AND YOU, THAT YOU ARE THE ONE ON THE WRONG ROAD, AND THAT YOU SHOULD JOIN THEM AT PARTIES. EVEN IF THEY FIND A GOOD PARTY A COUPLE TIMES A YEAR, THE FUN LASTS ONE NIGHT, THEN THE INSECURITY OF KNOWING YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED VERY LITTLE STARTS TO SET IN AND LASTS THE WHOLE WEEK.

BUT YOU (TRENT) ARE THE ONE WHO WILL REALLY HAVE THE LONG TERM FUN, WHEN YOUR HARD WORK STARTS TO PAY OFF, YOU WILL FEEL A HIGH AND CONFIDENCE LEVEL THAT IS UNMATCHED, AND AS YOU GO TO COLEGE, THEY WILL BE LEFT BEHIND REGRETTING ALL THEIR HIGH SCHOOL YEARS.

I also promised him that by putting off the girls friends and parties to improve himself as a person athletically, academically, mentally and physically, he will achieve more then he can imagine, and when at college he will have countless girls wanting to date him, which is exactly what has happened. Trent was also the only one of his friends to leave Las Vegas to go to college and the only one to get a scholarship, and most of his friends could not get into UNLV. I don't think they had a good time from this perspective.

Although the parties and girls and boy friends look like fun now, for most at this young age it results in depression, sadness and regret. And although the hours on the court and studying look like hard work, it always results in a feeling of self confidence that is real and will carry with you your whole life.

Life is a paradox, what looks like fun, is misery in the long run; and what looks like hard work, is really the road to long term happiness. Short term pleasures rarely lead to feeling good. Delayed gratification, accepting short term work and discipline, will always bring you long term happiness.

Please read the article below about a set of teenagers whose futures are very limited. Be aware of this mediocrity around you, and realize that who you hang out with is who you are inspired by, either in a negative or positive way.

Please read the article from aol.com below.

Ryan Wolfington

p.s. This is not the opinion of the USTA, but a personal letter from me to you. I was compelled to write this letter out of my desire to see the children in our tennis community stay on the right track, considering we are in a competitive world for their attention and focus.