

Begin To Do The Uncomfortable; Begin To Discuss The Reality Of Child Sexual Abuse & Take A Moral Stand

I am puzzled by the range of responses to the firing of Joe Paterno. I am alarmed that the POINT of this tragedy is being masked by the game of football. The topic is child sexual abuse NOT football. Mr. Paterno and his colleagues made the conscious choice to not fully stop Mr. Sandusky. Period.

Each of these men did just enough to keep Sandusky's actions at distance, to not affect them, the college, the football program, publicity and scrutiny. Every day we make moral decisions and decide how much to make someone else's problem our problem. Each of these men made the decision this was not their problem to fix. Their moral price tag was revealed at the expense of children being harmed in horrific and unimaginable ways. The more the focus is on Joe Pa and his career ending in a not so storybook way, the more the focus stays away from the children. Why? Because it hits too close to home; it makes us think about the what if's, the deep fear that child sexual abuse might touch each of our lives. It makes us question our own moral code if we were faced with a similar situation.

DO NOT let this tragedy become clouded with the game of football. DO NOT minimize the impact that Sandusky's very sick illness has had on these innocent victims. DO NOT excuse the accountability of each of these men. From the graduate assistant Mr. McQueary and his father all the way up to the top to Mr. Spanier. Be courageous, echo the right moral words, they each messed up, BIG time. If just one of these men demonstrated courage many innocent young boys over the course of a decade could have been saved from the pain and humiliation of sexual abuse. Remember these boys when conversation turns to the safe topic of the game instead of the uncomfortable topic of childhood sexual abuse. If it was your child or grandchild next in line to be a victim of sodomy by Sandusky, would you care so much about the legacy of Penn State football? Would you look the other way and send your child into harm's way to "take one for the team?" NO! Think about this reality as you echo uncaring words that focus on the game and not the victims. These are innocent precious children who experienced the unimaginable at the hands of a very powerful adult. They were sexually abused. Period. It is appalling that NO ONE stopped Sandusky! This is the outrage not the firing of Joe Pa! The victims need to be rallied behind and deserve our support, do not re-victimize them again with unkind and uneducated words. Do the right

moral thing in your everyday conversations, step up and say no form of childhood sexual abuse is ok for any reason, NONE, ever! Period.

The Nationwide statistics show that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18 and 1 in 5 children are solicited sexually while on the Internet. This is a HUGE problem in our nation and in York county. Remember these statistics as you discuss the comfortable topic of football and don't discuss the uncomfortable topic of child sexual abuse. Remember the odds are you are talking to someone whose life might have been affected by sexual abuse. In an instant innocent young boys became innocent and scared victims of horrific abuse by a very powerful man. If this were not enough they each had to endure the painful message that they did not matter. If they did matter someone would have done the right thing and helped them. Mike McQueary did not do the right thing; he should have entered the shower and pulled Sandusky off that innocent young boy. Can you imagine how that little boy felt when he saw McQueary but no one came and rescued him? The message "you do not matter" was sealed; the message "I am more powerful than you and no one will believe you" was received. These boys did not choose to be abused. Each of these men chose to look the other way and not stop Sandusky. Remember this reality when you feel outraged over Mr. Paterno being fired. Remember this young boy and the numerous others for whom NO ONE did the MORAL thing. Begin to do the uncomfortable, begin to talk about it, use this tragedy to educate yourself and your children. Use the tragedy in some way to do good; the first step in doing this is to support the victims not the game of football. These young men matter, it is time they hear this message, they have waited way too long.

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