



August 13, 2007

*Parental Wisdom – Emails
Who's Judging?*

Popular culture finds a formula and repeats it. American Idol lead to copycat shows such as America's Top Model, Dancing with the Stars, America's Got Talent, Last Comic Standing, and others. In each case, there is a clear winner.

Parental Wisdom could have easily fallen into the same trap. In a recent email 'The Real Secret', I wrote about how the media might consider reporting less on troubled celebrities and instead focus more on young people that positively contribute to society. The young people highlighted in that email truly deserved the praise. The idea of creating a 'Good Person' award came to mind, inviting nominations from Parental Wisdom members.

But I stopped myself because when it comes to awards; the question is who's judging? Perhaps, like me you've come across winners who simply know how to win the crowd, or fool the judges. I didn't want to add to a list of undeserved rewards.

Case in point: members of a high school soccer team were caught doing something dumb. The entire team was lined up and the principal asked any guilty parties to step forward. Despite the fact that a number of boys were, only one young man took a step, and he was suspended. The other boys didn't step forward as it would have jeopardized their scholarships and national honor roll status. We talk about character education, but sometimes conveniently turn our heads.

Feedback from last week's email on play

Last week's email on outdoor play hit a nerve; thank you for your comments and stories. Apparently there's an underground movement encouraging play. One parent (from CA) wrote about insisting her children get in at least an hour of what she calls a daily dose of 'vitamin G' which stands for green time, translating to outdoor playing.

Another parent (from VA) was fed up with the pressure to enroll her children in activities so they don't fall behind their peers. The thing we all have going for us are instincts. That is, for those smart enough to use them.