Obama talks about AIDS - to kids in school!

September 7, 2009 By Regan Hofmann

Tomorrow, President Obama will address the nation's youth as they start their first day of school. His much discussed speech (some parents are so worried about what he will say to our little ones that they have threatened to keep their kids home from school to prevent them from being "brainwashed" by Obama's words) can be read here.

I imagine the posting of the speech was in response to those who wished to censor their children's access to it (a gesture to show that the speech contained no evil ideas or untoward influence) and while I think the suggestion that our elected leader should have to share his words prior to giving them is insulting to him, I think it's clever of the White House to post it online because now ALL kids will get their hands and eyes on it, even (and especially) if their parents try to block their access.

I also think it's great that Obama's words are posted for those people who doubted his intentions...because when those same doubters scour the speech searching for dangerous subliminal messages with which Obama intended to brainwash America's unsuspecting youth they will find, instead, a heck of a great message. And perhaps those who feared Obama's intentions will realize what a brilliant man, leader and dad he is. I dare anyone to take offense to his offerings in this speech.

I found Obama's words inspiring, though they were not written for me and though it's been many, many years since my last first day of school.

In it, he calls on children to serve themselves and their country by committing themselves to a mission and working on it until the problem is solved.

Here's how he mentions AIDS:

"...And this isn't just important for your own life and your own future. What you make of your education will decide nothing less than the future of this country. What you're learning in school today will determine whether we as a nation can meet our greatest challenges in the future.
You'll need the knowledge and problem-solving skills you learn in science and math to cure diseases like cancer and AIDS, and to develop new energy technologies and protect our environment. You'll need the insights and critical thinking skills you gain in history and social studies to fight poverty and homelessness, crime and discrimination, and make our nation more fair and more free. You'll need the creativity and ingenuity you develop in all your classes to build new companies that will create new jobs and boost our economy.
We need every single one of you to develop your talents, skills and intellect so you can help solve our most difficult problems. If you don't do that - if you quit on school - you're not just quitting on yourself,

you’re quitting on your country."

I am so encouraged that the president mentioned AIDS. I’m sure there were many people lobbying for him to mention all kinds of issues and diseases. And though I know that many are frustrated that Obama has yet to solve many of the issues that he inherited in his presidency (can we please give him a break? it amazes me that people think he should solve these massive crises that were years in the making in a matter of a couple of months...) the fact that he’s addressing the issue of AIDS is a huge step.

Especially to a group of people who have heard so little about AIDS in the last 8 years that they comprise 50% of all new HIV infections in the United States.

We give our kids too little credit for their ability to handle the medical and biological truth about sex and their bodies and it is killing them. Let this first (albeit passing) mention be the beginning of an ongoing conversation with children that includes, normalizes and destigmatizes HIV/AIDS.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/obama-talks-about-ai