

# "They also teach who only set an example"

The following article is reprinted from the Sept. 1998 issue of "Texas School Business" as requested by Rice CISD Assistant Superintendent

Fred Grahmman.

It seemed as if Mark was always in trouble. He rarely completed assignments, his language was foul, and he

was constantly caught stealing from the other students. His hair was unkempt, his clothes were dirty, and he had a distinctive odor. He was failing fourth grade... and we are failing him.

I was his principal and had visited with Mark on several occasions. But, quite frankly, nothing seemed to be changing as a result of our conversations.

As he sat in front of me once again with his head hanging down and a dejected look on his face, I asked him why he had been sent to the office.

"I stole some tenny shoes from a kids locker yesterday."

I wanted to tell him that a good thief would wait a few days before wearing them back to school, but I knew that wouldn't be appropriate.

After discussing the incident in the usual manner, I casually asked, "Have you stolen anything else here at school?"

I wasn't prepared for the answer... or should that be plural?

He spent the next fifteen minutes confessing to every item he had ever stolen at school: crayons, books, money, toys, food, jackets, toboggans. The list was endless.

After a few minutes of this, I began fumbling for a pencil to make some notes. This kid was one for the record book!

Once he appeared to be at the end, I took a deep breath, realized my mouth was hanging open, shut it, and pondered for a few moments.

"I feel I have to share this with

your parents," I told him.

I called his house and his mom answered after several rings. Rather than go into all the details over the phone, I asked her if it would be possible to come to the school to discuss a problem we were having with Mark. She said she'd be there in a few minutes.

As she entered the office, I noticed some similarities: her hair unkempt, her clothes were dirty, and she had a distinctive odor. *H-m-m-m-m*. I also noticed the unmistakable smell of alcohol on her breath.

She gave me a huge hug, looked me right in the eye, and, this is an exact quote, said to me: "What's the problem, Hon?"

Mark and I (hereafter referred to as "Hon") spent the next several minutes repeating the offense... or should that be plural?

When we finished, I will never forget her comment and her reaction. She stood up, held on the chair for support, squinted her eyes at Mark and somewhat growled as she said, "I can't believe you stole anything. You know good and well that your Daddy and I have taught you better'n than that! You're gonna catch it when you get home today, buddy!"

At that point, Mark stood up, and started wailing. "That ain't true, Momma. You know Daddy steals all the time from work... and he sneaks over to the neighbor's house and steals tools from his pickup... and he..."

"Shut up Mark! Shut up Mark!"

she squealed. 'That's a d-lie! He ain't never stole nothing in his life! Shut up, Mark!'

As they continued to shout at one another with accusations, I realized that once again my mouth was hanging open and my head was jerking from left to right as I would look at the person doing the talking... or should that be screaming?

When it was all over, I walked Mark out into the hall, told him we would talk again, gave him a hug, and suddenly saw him in a whole new light.

As I stepped back into the office, his mom was now sitting. Her head was hanging down and she had a defeated look on her face.

Here was a mother silently wondering why her child was stealing... but secretly knowing why.

And so, day after day, similar stories happen in schools, in homes, in offices, in government.

Some parents allow their teenagers to drink alcohol at home and they silently wonder why children are being killed for driving drunk.

Headlines read about some school board members who cannot conduct a civil meeting because of their poor conduct. And they silently wonder why students are not being respectful.

We see professional athletes cursing, losing control, and being removed from sporting events, and we silently wonder why children do not have self-control.

Entertainers admit to having sex-

ual relationships outside of marriage and America silently wonders why its youth are so sexually active.

Our elected leaders routinely admit they lied to the American public, and we silently wonder why our children do not trust one another.

Unfortunately, the grades are in... and too often, our examples deserve ample "X's"

"When you walk what you talk... people listen."

-Unknown

"Your job gives you authority. Your behavior earns you respect."

-Irwin Federman

"We expect our leaders to be better than we are? and they should be - or why are we following them?"

-Walt Disney

"Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing."

-Albert Schweitzer

To paraphrase a Chinese general: *If the world is to be better, my country must first be changed. If my country is to be changed, my community must be improved. If my community is to be improved, my family must be right. If my family is to be right, I myself must be a good example.*

So... may my example, and your example, be better today than it was yesterday, and better tomorrow than it was today.

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## Police

two-vehicle accident in the parking lot of B & B Foods at 1:35 p.m., where Eunice Williams backed into a Better Beverage vehicle being driven by Larry Bujnock. An accident report was filed.

Officer Carl Risk conducted a traffic stop at 10:20 p.m., which resulted in the arrest of Mark Glover for possession of controlled substance and unlawfully carrying a weapon.

Ronnie Kuykendall was also arrested for failure to identify while fugitive. A third suspect fled the scene.

Glover and Kuykendall were processed at the police department, then transported to CDC for confinement.

Later, the third suspect, Royce Ashton, turned himself in at the sheriff's office, where he was processed and charged with possession of

controlled substance, failure to identify while fugitive and evading arrest.

Oct. 3 at 2:05 a.m., Officer Risk received a call of a welfare concern on Clark Street. The resident was found to be okay.

At 7:15 a.m., Officer Brian Ochoa met with a complainant at 800 S. McCarty in reference to criminal trespass. Information was gathered and a report filed.

Officer Ochoa was dispatched to E. State at 7:42 a.m. in reference to a theft. Ochoa gathered information and submitted a report.

Officer Ochoa investigated a two-vehicle accident in the 700 block of E. Main involving Kenneth Campbell, who turned into the outside lane of traffic at Allen St. and hit a vehicle

driven by Rosa Gonzales. Several victims were taken to Rice Medical Center for treatment.

Officer Ochoa arrested Lucio Luna at 12:26 p.m. for public intoxication, after receiving calls of him being intoxicated.

Luna was transported to CDC, but was refused because of injuries prior to his being arrested. Ochoa transported Luna to the Columbus Community Hospital for treatment and issued him a summons for court.

Oct. 4 at 9:36 a.m., Officer Ochoa was dispatched to Simmons Street in reference to criminal mischief. A report was filed.

Officer Ochoa was dispatched to Church St. at 2:48 p.m. about a civil (See Police, Page 8)

## Sales tax

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sales tax allocation, up 2.4% from the \$4 million payment for the same month last year.

El Paso's sales tax rebate of \$3.2 million was up 7% over the \$3 million payment delivered in Sept. 1997. El Paso's local sales tax payments year-to-date are 6.4% ahead of those for the first nine months of 1997.

The City of Round Rock appeared on the top 20 cities list for the first time with a \$1.7 million rebate, up 62.8% year-to-date, due in part to a sales tax increase of 0.5% effective Jan. 1. Without the tax rate increase, Round Rock's total rebates would have been up 29.6% year-to-date.

Sept. sales tax rebates to other selected Texas cities, along with their increases year-to-date were:

Amarillo, \$3 million, up 5%; Beaumont, \$1.8 million, up 5.1%; and,

Tyler, \$1.6 million, up 11.1%.

Other cities in our area, the amount of their sales tax rebate this month along with the change from the same month last year are:

Columbus, \$57,160.64, up 0.59%; Weimar, \$9,847.26, down 10.13%; Sealy, \$91,202.65, up 53.73%; Bellville, \$7,048.73, -66.53%; El Campo, \$133,379.36, up 0.49%; and Wharton, \$72,999.89, -10.80%.

Year-to-date for the above cities and the change from last year are: Columbus, \$550,573.03, +11.25%; Weimar, \$101,436.99, +10.66%; Sealy, \$871,713.77, +68.80%; Bellville, \$183,430.23, +6.93%; El Campo, \$1,295,977.30, +5.84%; and Wharton, \$776,739.09, +2.35%.

On the county level, Colorado County received \$42,537.34, down 25.42% from last year's payment of \$64,388.12. Austin County received \$52,490.15, down 26.51%. Wharton County received \$89,280.68, down 9.16%.

Year-to-date figures for these counties are, Colorado, \$442,516.03, down 5.98%; Austin, \$685,437.84, +18.46%; Wharton, \$905,848.62, +6.80%.

The Comptroller's next sales tax allocation is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 9.

\*Sealy increased their portions from 1% to 1.5% in Oct. 1997, therefore, this is not an accurate comparison.

