



Béle Benard

From *newsrooms* to *classrooms*

By Béle Benard for the Play editorial board

Within the next four years, most high school students will enter the real world. This means that we will soon have to deal with whatever life throws at us on our own. We will be faced with tough decisions that we'll need to make wisely. It is important that everyone, including teenagers, pays attention to the news to keep up with the world around them.

Not only high schoolers, but also adults, seem to avoid the news with deliberation. Most people believe that as long as they aren't affected directly, paying attention to the news isn't worth taking the time to do.

It seems that one of the few things that captures the attention of the American people is a catastrophic event or things of that caliber. Regardless of where the problem lies, we all should be attentive and receptive — open eyes and listening ears are keys to establishing a solid foundation in understanding the world around us. Without that foundation, we can't make informed decisions or fix the problems we face.

Being aware of the day's news comes hand-in-hand with political involvement; it is impossible to make wise decisions at the voting booth without knowing what candidates are up to, or trusting that everything they will tell you is true. Keeping up with media allows us to decide for ourselves how we feel

about a certain issue. A teenager who is simply his parents' parrot isn't a smart one. Nobody wants to be that kid in class who gets sideways glances when he makes a stupid comment about politics because he refuses to acknowledge the other side of an issue.

It is important that we take the time to learn what is really going on around us, that we learn the truth about candidates, leaders and issues. That said, we need to make sure our news sources are giving us all sides of the story, not just the side we agree with.

News, in a sense, desensitizes us. It isn't always pleasant, and it prepares us for Murphy's law: what can go wrong, will. If we pay attention to the news, we're informed of what's going on and can be quicker to react and respond in the manner needed. This will be especially important when we're adults and have children of our own. It will be vital that we're aware of issues around not only the nation, but also the world. Those issues won't be affecting only us — they'll be affecting our children as well.

It takes initiative and effort to take the time to be informed with news. As we grow older, being informed will become more and more important to build ourselves into strong adults. ■