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To Whom It May Concern:

In a group of at-risk kids, leadership emerges. A young man named Steven sits in the circle of his peers: his clothing, mannerisms, and attitude all command respect from the kids around him. They might snipe at each other, show disdain or disregard—but when this young man speaks, they listen. He has found a voice—his bearing denotes his own brand of leadership ability.

But Steven is woefully unprepared for what lies ahead. In this venue, he has some level of respect; but in the adult world for which he is headed, the baggy pants and chains won't help him gain an adult's favorable vote in an interview. It's not because he's not interested in his own success; but he may not have the tools to operate in an adult world.

Al Betz has developed a concept called **Silent Marketing**, in his book *Polishing the Pearl*, which could give this young man, and thousands of other children in this country an understanding of how they market themselves daily, to an adult world in which they will one day need to function.

I've had the opportunity over the last seven years to work with teens at risk, in and around Baltimore, Maryland, through various initiatives funded by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Tobacco Restitution Fund, and private non-profit organizations, such as The Baobab Tree Project. The core of these programs has been education about the dangers of tobacco use; and helping children in this crucial age range develop leadership potential by teaching them how to communicate with each other—and adults—more effectively.

The message most children send is one of frustration, rebellion and exploration. As they move from this place in their lives to more interaction with the adult world, most are unaware that what they *don't* say is just as powerful as what they speak. Because they are not given tools to understand how impressions are formed, many will struggle with job or college interviews, as well as further work.

As a facilitator and communicator for over 20 years, I know how much unconscious communication influences attitudes and opinion. The **Silent Marketing** concept raises awareness by showing actions speak more eloquently than words ever will—and leaves a much deeper impression. If teenagers are given this powerful information, and taught how to make it work in their favor, they will be better prepared to meet the new responsibilities adulthood demands.

I would like to see ***Silent Marketing for Teens*** integrated into leadership curriculum nationwide. Helping teenagers become knowledgeable adults is the greatest duty we have; giving them tools to create an inspired life builds a firm foundation. Most at-risk teens will have a hard time succeeding, due to a lack of understanding about the way they already communicate. **Silent Marketing** could teach them to use another language, one they are unconsciously using every day. How much better would it be for them to use this powerful communication in their favor?

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