

Everyone is a Teacher to Someone

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Back in 1993, then NBA All Star Player Charles Barkley starred in a Nike commercial where he spoke these words, punctuated with shots of him dribbling and dunking a basketball:

I am not a role model. I am not paid to be a role model. I am paid to wreak havoc on the basketball court. Parents should be role models. Just because I can dunk a basketball does not mean I should raise your kids.

In his book with Don Yeager, *A Game Plan for Life*, Coach Wooden provided his insight:

Barkley is absolutely right on one point: parents should step up to their responsibilities and take charge of bringing up their children.

But the rest of us have a responsibility too, and that responsibility is to reach out to others to share our own life experiences, successes and pitfalls.

Some parents are perfect mentors, but that shouldn't stop a person from looking to other people for additional mentoring; some parents refuse to take their job seriously, and then our job as mentors becomes more important.

Do any of us really have a choice as to whether a child looks up to us? Do we have any control over another person's choice to look to model themselves after our own lives?

Coach Wooden once said:

The most important profession in the world is parenting. The second is teaching and everyone is a teacher to someone.

Coach had two favorite verses on this idea:

*More often than we e'er suspect,
the lives of others we do affect.*

And

*No written word or spoken plea
Can teach our youth what they should be.
Nor all the books on all the shelves.
It's what the teachers are themselves.*

All of us are teaching somebody every day by our example. Who are you teaching? What are you teaching them?

Yours in Coaching,
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