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All Dressed Up and No Place to Go, Breaking the Cycle, Nixon was Right

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ALL DRESSED UP AND NO PLACE TO GO -- We treat adolescents as children and expect little in the way of adult judgment or responsibilities. Then they break the rules, and suddenly, they’re adults.

University of Dayton sociologist Fran Pestello said Dayton’s current woes with youth behavior may be rooted in the fact that our society, our schools and communities issue conflicting messages for adolescents. "We have a problem in our society in which we’ve created a category of people who are all dressed up with no place to go. They’re given no responsibilities, they have no current job prospects and perhaps no future ones," Pestello said.

Schools can start by establishing clear rules about student behavior, while respecting students, said Pestello, who teaches a course on juvenile delinquency and criminology. "They need to define the limits and respect student autonomy," Pestello said.

Call Fran Pestello at (513) 229-2083.

BREAKING THE CYCLE -- Two University of Dayton professors will begin a new program working with women who are functionally illiterate and receive Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) assistance. Their goal is to find new ways to break a cycle of illiteracy that also perpetuates poverty.

While there are many different approaches to teaching adults to read, Brian Conniff and Betty Youngkin, both assistant English professors, want to develop a method directed to building literacy and confidence in women now receiving welfare. "The reason we asked to work with ADC women is the chance to have an impact on their children," Youngkin said.

Call Betty Youngkin at (513) 229-3437 or Brian Conniff at (513) 229-3430.

NIXON WAS RIGHT -- University of Dayton Professor Jaro Bilocerkowycz said former President Richard Nixon was right on one thing: the United States has to take a more direct interest in republics of the former Soviet Union and presidential candidates have to address the issue. "I liked what he was saying in terms of giving more attention to that issue," said Bilocerkowycz, a political science professor and expert on the region. If the democratic forces fail, "it will regenerate a cold war."

"That could cause us to build up our defense economy, and we won’t be able to focus on the domestic agenda. We do need to invest now in a constructive, economic fashion to finish the job that was begun there," he said.

Call Jaro Bilocerkowycz at (513) 229-2231.