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# what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

Okay, I know it's Christmas, I know 'tis the season to be jolly, but we can't do jolly 100 percent of the time. I have sort of been waiting and thinking about this topic for the right time. And I guess that time is now. This whole Penn State, and now Syracuse, situation makes me ill. And what infuriates me more than the abuse itself is the apparent fact that so many people had knowledge of this over many years. It never ceases to amaze me, how supposedly caring human beings can witness something heinous and not take responsibility to address it. Case in point - the assistant coach who admitted that he was a witness - he said he reported it, and maybe he did, but when nothing happened and everybody slipped it under the rug, what did he do? He rationalized that he had done everything he was supposed to do. Wrong. That's a failure on his part as a human being. It's a failure of the system. It was a conspiracy to not rock the boat, to wash their hands and turn the other way - it's wrong. I guess this is what you call the code of silence. The code of silence is sick, it's a weakness. If you participate in the code of silence, you are weak and scared. Everyone in OJJ is a mandatory reporter and just reporting it is not enough. If you feel you have seen abuse of a child, you are legally, as well as morally, responsible to address it, and ensure that the matter has been properly reported. That applies to everyone in the agency, no matter where you serve. We are responsible for ourselves and a safe, healthy work culture. It is my hope that during this Christmas season, that we can all reflect upon who we are and what we stand for. Do we stand for an agency with integrity, or are we like members of the Penn State athletic department? There were, I'm sure, countless more victims being abused right under everybody's nose. I know that I have brought this up before and I will continue to do so, as long as we have some employees who know more than they say they know, and say things like "I just don't want to be involved." What? I just don't want to be involved? Really? That is really self-centered and selfish. And cowardly. The code of silence is eventually going to erode. That is where we're going and that's where we're going to be. I know this is not an uplifting message. I'm saving myself for next week. But when I see these issues on the national stage, I also know that we should not be pointing our fingers at them until we've cleaned up our own house. Thus, the point of this What's Up, Doc.

Now that that's off my chest and onto yours, there are just few other things to report. We had our first Acadiana facility meeting with the architects and Facility Planning, and we are actually ahead of schedule. We also had a very productive meeting about some of our issues with the Columbia project. We've had some starts and stops due to items being over budget and unforeseen issues, but it appears to be getting back on track. Many thanks to **Curtis Badon**, who is the hardest working mechanical engineer in the agency. (We're lucky that he's hard working, because he's the only one we have.)

Glad to see everyone survived Black Friday and the madness at the malls. How 'bout those Tigers? 11 and 0 and two more to go. So, wishing you all a wonderful weekend, with my thanks to each and every one of you, wherever you serve, for all that you do, every day, to meet the mission.

Sincerely, "Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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