

What role do yeshivas play here?

Posted by Aaron613 - 17 Feb 2021 23:39

I'm newly married and was having an open discussion with my wife about my struggles in the past with shmiras habris and shmiras einayim and how many (if not most) guys have at some point has this struggle. She asked why don't yeshivas confront this issue and help out the Bachurim. I didn't have an answer. This has actually been bothering me for a few years now while. Other than a select few yeshivas out there, most mainstream yeshivas do not confront this prevelant issue at all. All I've ever heard is "we have to be so careful in these inyanim!"...very nice shmooze but not so helpful. In today's perverted world there is such a need for rabbeim to deal with it head on. It's only natural that young men are going to pursue the sexual culture that is being shoved in our faces. The mehalech has always been that yeshivas don't talk openly about this topic because it will get people thinking about it (in a bad way). We just can't keep working with that, Yeshiva bachurim are dying inside and doing things they don't want to but are falling and need a helping hand (i know I was), it's about time our rabbeim deal with it in a real and tangible way and not just a shmooze once a year about kedusha.

I could be wrong here and I'm happy to hear other opinions.

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?

Posted by OivedElokim - 19 Feb 2021 18:50

I know the mechanec to be someone with a fair amount of his head in the sand. However it's just his perspective and there's truth to it. Parents are so clueless about this issue...

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?

Posted by OivedElokim - 19 Feb 2021 18:52

He was talking about the issue of boys having smartphones at home and in Yeshiva, open internet access etc. That is a big part of the issue for countless bochurim.

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?

Posted by eyes - 19 Feb 2021 19:25

True,

But it is not the only thing. We dont know how to respond to boys sexual desires

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?

Posted by OivedElokim - 19 Feb 2021 20:43

That's correct.

How would you suggest that be rectified?

Seems to me like the struggle and desires have to be validated. First and foremost.

Then tools have to be provided to contend with it. Like GYE. Like mentoring.

Just sharing my thoughts.

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?

Posted by OivedElokim - 19 Feb 2021 20:43

And mechanchim and parents need to get trained and educated themselves.

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?

Posted by Shmuel - 19 Feb 2021 21:26

[OivedElokim wrote on 19 Feb 2021 20:43:](#)

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My opinion which is based on my experience is that a child/teen needs to know that he can reach out/talk to adults about this. One of the ways that happens is if said adults stop acting as if these things don't exist. An example would be to stop skipping Yehuda and Tamar in class and other parts of Torah that talk about these sensitive topics. The message it gives when it's skipped is that it's something adults can't talk about. It also causes a kid to investigate on his own and we all know where that ends up.

I think as a whole it's about normalizing the topic TO AN EXTENT. If it's never ever discussed in child/teen is hearing that the adults in his life can't/won't talk about this. Once that happens it's downhill from there...

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?
Posted by starting - 20 Feb 2021 23:09

[Shmuel wrote on 19 Feb 2021 21:26:](#)

[OivedElokim wrote on 19 Feb 2021 20:43:](#)

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I can't see this as being the solution.

This would only show a kid that these subjects do exist in a normal adult life. It will not tell him that it's OK to discuss your desires and urges with your parents /reb I. The problem could be made worse if this would encourage him to try discussing it and be turned off/be made feel awful because the adult wasn't prepared to explain and help.

The adult figure in this discussion would have to have the conversation properly prepared and if every reb I just starts teaching these subjects without being ready/able to take it further it could

potentially make it worse.

This discussion could take place without every subject being studied by every rebbi, but rather having one specially chosen rebbi being available to 11-12 year old or something like that.

I'm not saying this is a solution, just that I think this probably is a more practical way along your lines (which I think has a lot of cracks along the lines of how to get kids to trust this adult etc)

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?
Posted by Shmuel - 21 Feb 2021 14:18

[starting wrote on 20 Feb 2021 23:09:](#)

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This is a real concern! It's a very sensitive thing and needs to be done with seichel. However, I believe that the issue of teachers and parents not knowing how to discuss these topics with the correct sensitivity can also be rectified with "normalizing" the conversation!!

I believe we will never break out of the circle unless we breakout of the circle. How can we as adults know how to have the conversation if it is a conversation that was never had? By having the conversation. And yes the beginning will be hard and awkward for some (many) but once it's more "normal" conversation we will ALL get better at it and ALL gain children, teens and ADULTS!!

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?
Posted by Aaron613 - 22 Feb 2021 04:10

i hear your opinion, but when i made the original post for this topic i was not suggesting that these discussions should necessarily be done in a public setting in detail. I believe that it is up to the yeshivas to address it, that could mean in private or that rabbeim should find a way to help out bachurim another way. To avoid it entirely in my opinion is foolish.

And to say that rabbeim "by and large know whats going on" what good does that do if the bachurim are still struggling and yeshivas are taking the same approach as they did for the last 100 years.

I dont know what the answer is but clearly something has to change in a serious way, the challenges are getting harder and help is needed for bachurim more than ever.

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?
Posted by chancy - 22 Feb 2021 17:38

Thank you.

You reminded me of a joke (its almost Purim)

A father ran to the Rabbi and screaed " Rabbi, You must help my boy! Hes insane, He wants to kiss girls and eat pork! RL! you must give him a brucha to help him!

So the Rabbi said " If he would be asking to Kiss pork and eat girls, he would be insane.... now hes just human.....

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?
Posted by chancy - 22 Feb 2021 17:47

I would like to share my thoughts and experience on this matter.

The first problem is that in the beginning when boys start having these desires, they don't know what it is and therefore don't know how to handle it, then it continues and can turn into an addiction and all different kinds of perverted ways. If a smart Rabbi is aware he can easily tell which boys are starting to struggle and can talk to them privately and explain a bit that this is something that's normal but is better off left for later in life and not to think too much about it, maybe give some ideas how to distract themselves, the main thing is to teach them boys how dangerous this could be if taken the wrong path...

Then there are kids with serious problems that will need professional help. but most kids can be saved by a smart and aware rabbi that knows a little bit about these issues.

One thing is for sure, if we would do this, then there would be a lot less boys that grow up with SSA. I'm 100% positive about that.

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?
Posted by OivedElokim - 22 Feb 2021 18:14

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I love this story.

I recently told this to a 15 year old Bochor...

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?

Posted by EvedHashem1836 - 13 Apr 2021 00:08

Can't believe I missed this discussion when it happened.

To add in my two cents - I don't think relying on a smart rabbi to speak privately to bachurim will help as you need to have a really perceptive rebbi and there are really not many of those (I personally don't know any who would qualify). I don't think that was the intention of the person who said it just wanted to point that out.

Ive thought a lot about my future of being a parent (currently a bochur) and thinking that there will be no television and no smartphone/computer access until absolutely necessary. Is that crazy? Society says yes but realize they managed without these things until 30 years ago, I'm sure we can manage too. Even before I started really struggling I thought they were a waste of time but now I realize that they are that but also teach stuff to your children that should not be taught - has a bad influence.

I was just reading "Dear Rabbi Dear Doctor" (Rabbi Twerski) and the TV idea came up and he discussed it so this was on my mind. To expound on what I said before if you sit a kid in front of a TV/electronics for 8-10 hours a day you have allowed the electronics to take your place as an educator. 4-7 hours and its still a very harmful influence that will likely at the least turn into an addiction to technology which causes all sorts of problems (I know soooooo many people that literally cannot look up from their phone! At the table in the beis in the bathroom in bed while moving around etc.) 1-3 hours you can make an argument for to give the parent a break but its just so harmful the things that come up come up with a better activity. Play a board game or a sport or a puzzle or read a book or play an instrument or something. Also Youtube is interchangeable with television if not worse.

Obviously I may be hopelessly naive because I am yet to be a parent. I just know in my family in particular and the problems we are going through if I asked my parents if 20 years back they could decide to have no electronics in the house and give everyone kosher phones I can't guarantee they would say yes (because they themselves are heavily dependent) but they would at least consider it because of all the trouble we have gone through.

I think mzl/porn was always an issue (maybe porn less so) but theres a reason that theres so many people affected now that its been dubbed "The battle of the generation" and thats because of the devices. So why follow society? Just because everyone else does it? Absolutely ridiculous! I'm not saying this would get rid of the issue altogether but at least bring it down to a scale where its less people scarred from seeing things no one should have to see. Its one thing to see an innapropriately dressed woman on the street or a sign or banner or whatever but another to see images intended to arouse.

I personally aspire to go into chinuch (I love learning Torah and theres so many areas that I felt lacking in my education, first and foremost Simchas Hatorah and the passion that should come with it but instead it didn't feel different than math or biology or you name it - just a regular class with tests etc.) and definitely plan on addressing this issue

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Re: What role do yeshivas play here?
Posted by shmuel83 - 13 Apr 2021 06:02

I heard a rabbi for at-risk teens once say to his "boys": "For years, I defended you and allowed you to blame everyone. Your parents who didn't care, your uncle who molested you, your school that kicked you out, etc. But, at a certain point, you have to get up off your behind and ask yourself what YOU are going to do with your life."

We have all been dealt a heavy hand. Whether it's our marriage, our schools, or everyone around us. The question we have to ask ourselves is what WE are going to do about it. And I think that is how we have to educate our kids too. They need to know that no matter what their yeshivos deal with or don't, they can ask any question they want from us without fear of being put down, and we can say "I don't know" and then go find an answer.

I am not sure if that is particularly helpful advice to give to at-risk teens who are already struggling...

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