

March 18, 2021

From Annette Sadelson

To Council Members and Dr. Travis Gayles

My short story:

My son has watched the entire nation go through the pandemic and watched the states open up to football and all other sports. He knows that BCC soccer club plays at WJ football field. He knows they pay money to be out there. Yet he can't even hang out with other football players to exercise on his public school field. What message does that teach him?

We talked about him moving with friends and family to 3 other states to play football so that he play and hopefully earn a scholarship to college. We don't have the means to pay for college but football will get him there. He was willing to leave me behind to follow his dreams.

He has been playing sports since the age of 4. I have coached flag football and basketball since his age of 4. I am a former collegiate basketball player. We value what sports teach; Teamwork, Dedication, Spirit, Motivation, Sense of Belonging, Identify, etc. All this and more carries over into adulthood and make great teammates in the work place!

He is a social butterfly but he has been stuck inside for One year now and has watched the reports say, Back to Play, not back to Play, Back to Play then not.

This back and forth and watching the entire nation and the State of Maryland return to football and all other sports but MoCo; even cancelling the only 3 games has been heart wrenching. We visited his pediatrician 2 months ago because he began suffering from depression.

Does anyone realize the emotional impact this is having?

I am sure this is not the only story where a vibrant, well-adjusted teen, is suffering from depression because their life has been living in doors for one year and the thing they love is out of reach.

One last thing, the pediatrician wanted to put my son on Prozac for his depression. That only disguises the problem. In a conversation with my son regarding the depression and Prozac, he said, "mom, if we can only go back to playing football, I will be fine. All other sports are playing."

Prozac or Football.

We choose football.

Thank you for reading.