

Raising Boys: Parent Tips

1. The 5 Dangers to Our Boys

(i) Absent Fathers

Boys without fathers not only experience more physical and sexual abuse, more mental disease, and more emotional distress than other children ...
... but also receive lower grades, drop out of school at higher rates, act out in school with more frequency, end up in juvenile courts in higher numbers, and report low self-esteem and low educational expectations.

David Blankenhorn, *Fatherless America*, 1996.

Interesting to note that Father-deprived girls "show precocious sexual interest, derogation of masculinity and males, and poor ability to maintain sexual and emotional adjustment with one man.

Patricia Draper and Henry Harpending, *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 38 (3) 1982. p258.

(ii) TV & Screen Time

By the time your son reaches 18, he'll have spent 22000 hours watching TV, more than any other activity besides sleeping.

By age 16, your son will have seen 200 000 acts of violence on TV, 33 000 of them murders.

April 2004 issues of *Paediatrics* Dr Christakis presented research that followed 2600 children from birth to age 7 and discovered that,

"for every hour of TV watched per day, the incidence of ADD and ADHD increased by 10%.

(iii) Bubble Wrap

There are a number of Australian reasearch projects that show that being an over protective parent has a significant impact upon a child's life. Some of the consequences are;

- a lack of adventure and appropriate risks which is critical in a boy discovering his physical limitations

- becoming less resilient and self-reliant

- that they are ill-prepared to cope with life

- they have weaker social and problem-solving skills than past generations

- unable to make independent decisions

- increased obesity and mental illness including childhood deepression

(iv) Apron Strings

For a boy to become a man the boy must die or he will just grow up on the outside and remain a boy on the inside. Hence it is vital that at around age 12 - 13 the son ceases to be the mother's "little boy" and is released to become an emerging man.

(v) Pornography

It is clear from the extensive body of research that pornography is destructive to the individual consumer in multiple ways from damage of relationships to impeaded sexual function, significant financial loss to distorted thinking. Research on porn addiction and sexual addiction indicate that the first exposure to pornography was usually around age 10.

2. Practical Tips

Boys tend to be action orientated hence passivity is the antithesis of masculinity

Boys learn responsibility in different ways to girls. They must be taught to embrace their power (rather than prove their power) and use it for the good of the community

Boys learn about masculinity from men

Women cannot give a boy his sense of masculinity however she can arouse it, & take it away - emasculate him

Boys learn authentic intimacy from men

Boys tend to express emotions through movement

Boys need affirmation and nurturing from both their mother & father

Watch their psychological diet

Engage them (& with them) in activity, challenge, movement and risk

Dad's step up onto the bridge and take the lead

Mum's learn to know when to let go

Single Mum's open door ways for male connection

Clear age appropriate boundaries that are enforced

Love & accept them for who they are in spite of what they do