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Keys to Inclusion

Meeting emotional needs of BOYS



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Inclusive
Solutions

Welcome!



Welcome and LISTEN!

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Setting the tone.....

- ♦ Not all boys are failing, or have unmet emotional needs.
- ♦ Equally we cannot assume that all girls are achieving their best or that they have all their emotional needs met.
- ♦ Class, poverty, ability, sexuality, ethnicity, life experiences all exert major influences on children and their emotional needs


If we can teach our sons to honour and value their emotional lives, if we can give boys an emotional vocabulary and the encouragement to use it, they will unclench their hearts.

Kindlon and Thompson: 2000

THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

RAISING CAIN

PROTECTING THE EMOTIONAL LIFE OF BOYS



Dan Kindlon, Ph.D. &
Michael Thompson, Ph.D.



"Raising Cain gives a long-needed insight into that mysterious, magical link, the psyche of boys. Every parent, teacher - or anyone who wants boys to flourish - should read this book." Daniel Goleman, bestselling author of Emotional Intelligence

What children need...

- ♦ Permission to have an internal emotional life
- ♦ Safe places for high activity
- ♦ To be talked to directly in their own language
- ♦ To learn that emotional courage and empathy are sources of real strength in life
- ♦ To see an adulthood of emotional attachment
- ♦ To learn there are many ways to be a adult

Understand the person plus the emotion underneath the behaviour

The long view....

Loss, separation and divorce

- ♦ 70-80% of children do not experience enduring problems after parents separate
- ♦ But...parental separation is an important risk factor for children's adjustment
- ♦ Boys more vulnerable than girls to developing difficulties - link to fathering



• The child was *responsible* for the break up – self blame

• ..if they try hard enough they might bring parents *back together*

FALSE BELIEFS

• The remaining parent will *also leave* – fear of abandonment

• Their father no longer sees them because they are *unlovable*

....lets think about this as music plays...

False Beliefs

- ♦ that the absent parent is all they would wish them to be...

COMMON BEHAVIOURS

That have their own twisted emotional logic.....

- Difficulties in concentrating - preoccupation with what might be happening elsewhere
- Do things that mean you will get punished
- Grow up quick – ‘run away and get a job’
- Unable to cope with praise/never cry – feelings are too risky and may overwhelm you
- Failing to take care of themselves... frequent ‘accidents’
- Aggressive behaviours – testing whether others will leave them too and then being overwhelmed by helpless sobbing
- Regression to earlier ways of coping – not ‘growing up’
- High sensitivity to change and overly upset by small losses/ Temper tantrums for ‘trivial’ reasons

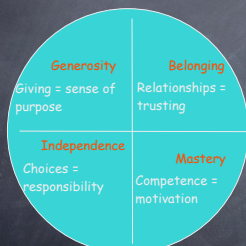
BUILDING RESILIENCE

- An age appropriate explanation of the reasons for parental separation
- Knowledge about the absent parent even if no contact
- Successful adjustment of remaining parent – understanding that the quality of the contact can change
- Restore Hope, ‘Bear Witness’ ‘Now I know how to go on’
- Knowing ‘where you stand’ with the important adults in your life

Trust

- ♦ What do people do to inspire trust in others?
- ♦ What works for you?
- ♦ How do you behave when you don't trust someone?

Circle of Courage



© 2000

3 Gargoyles of Change



FEAR



CONTROL



COMPLACENCY

Permission for an internal emotional life?

- ♦ Naming feelings to build up our emotional literacy
- ♦ Confused feelings...and where they go - Uncertain feelings recycled as ANGER
- ♦ Emotional isolation...the fortress of solitude: strong and silent type?
- ♦ Need to hear older males admit to a wider range of feelings and to uncertainty

Acknowledging Feelings

- the bus driver shouted at me and they all laughed
-embarrassment....
- 'sounds as if that was embarrassing'

Handling emotions

- What do you need when YOU are angry?
- Off Track, stressed out?
- Feeling guilty?

Peer support, mediation and counselling

- Training young people to listen and to get involved
- Anti bullying strategies
- Playground mediation
- Circles of Friends

Accommodating emotions

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Depression
- Avoidance
- Jealousy
- Irritation
- Need for control

PRAISE

- When can you hear it and when can you not?

Dads...



- Rough and tumble and the big male lesson...knowing when to stop...
- Show full range of emotional literacy
- Make time
- Be active
- Share discipline
- You will be copied
- Respect women

Ballet and Dads?

Mothers and sons

- Images of connection..
- Be kind warm and enjoy them and don't stop being 'close'
- Praise your son's looks: maintain unconditional love
- Let him learn consequences of actions
- Keep calm in adolescence
- Don't displace your partner



...as a boy moves farther from his mother's protective physical presence....he needs to be able to carry her in his heart, in the security that her love provides him and the emotional education she has given him.....He needs to know that he can always find the place where he is loved "best of all".

Kindlon and Thompson,2000

What do you need?

RESTORATIVE INTERVENTIONS IN SCHOOLS

Can be used with incidents
of...

- Bullying
- Name Calling
- Physical & Verbal Assaults
- Harassment
- Truancy
- General Misbehaviour

RESTORATIVE PHRASES

- "What happened?"
- "What were you thinking about at the time?"
- "What have you been thinking since it happened?"
- "Who has been affected by what you have done?"
- "How can you put it right?"

Learning to listen

- ♦ Moving from control to collaboration
- ♦ Attend carefully to both what is said and what is actually meant
- ♦ Regard actions as communication
- ♦ Take other people seriously!
- ♦ Ask 'who loves this person?'

Herb Lovett: Learning to listen (1996)

Boys without men in their lives



Worth considering...

- Mentors (especially form 14 +)
- Boys Brigade
- Drama group
- Throwing good men in their way...good, safe, male role models
- Elders
- Therapeutic power of helping

Our Heroes

- ♦ Robbie Williams
- ♦ The Rock
- ♦ Shaggy
- ♦ Baddies
- ♦ Big tough men
- ♦ Dad!
- ♦ Kane
- ♦ Robbie Williams
- ♦ Shaggy

Louis aged 6



Elliot aged 8

