

# What's Going With Boys?

Marisol De Leon (Host)

Michele Luc & Heather Wynkoop-Beach (Co-hosts)

Jutta Dotterweich – Director

Act for Youth Center for Community Action



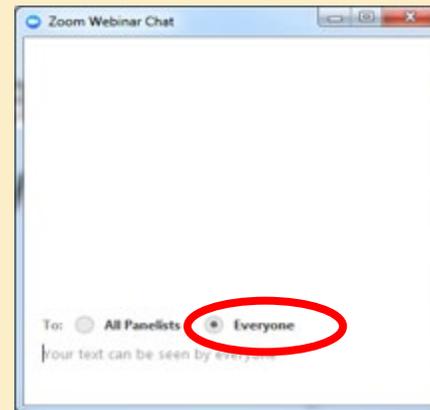
# House Keeping



**Experiencing delays?**  
Try **closing** out the other programs running on your computer



**Audio.**  
**You control** the volume



**Questions?**  
Use chat function. Post to Everyone.





Which toy do you remember  
playing with or wanting to?



You get bonus points if you remember their name!!



1



2



3



4



5



6 YOGA ★ JOES



7



8



9



10



11



12



# AGENDA

- Early Adolescent Development
- Boys as Learners
- How to Engage Boys
- Tips for What Works



# What's Happening? Everything's Changing!

Biologically	Socially	Emotionally
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gains in height and weight</li> <li>• Pubic &amp; underarm hair growth</li> <li>• Increased perspiration</li> <li>• Increased oil production of hair and skin</li> <li>• <b>Growth of testicles, penis, scrotum</b></li> <li>• <b>Nocturnal emissions (wet dreams)</b></li> <li>• <b>Deepening of voice</b></li> <li>• <b>Facial hair</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identity exploration</li> <li>• Close friendships gain importance</li> <li>• Peer group influence on personal interests and clothing styles</li> <li>• Less attention shown to parents</li> <li>• Tendency to return to childish behavior during times of stress</li> <li>• <b>“Boy Code” begins influencing behavior/decision making</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling clumsy or awkward</li> <li>• Embarrassed/self conscious about speed of development</li> <li>• Begin experiencing feelings of attraction</li> <li>• Moodiness</li> <li>• Improved ability to express oneself</li> <li>• <b>More likely to express feelings by action than by words</b></li> </ul>



# Chat in!

What are some changes you've noticed happening for boys in your programs?



# Social Emotional Learning

What do boys learn about:

1. Emotions
2. Their Emotions

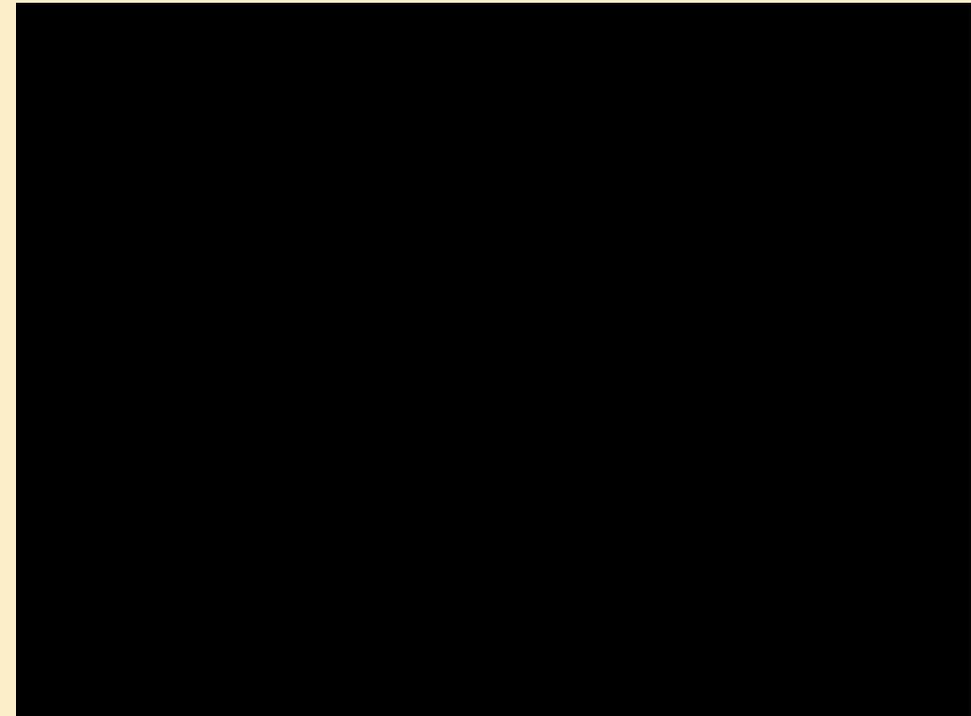
Who do they get the messages form?

& How?

Chat In!!



# Emotions? ...They Change



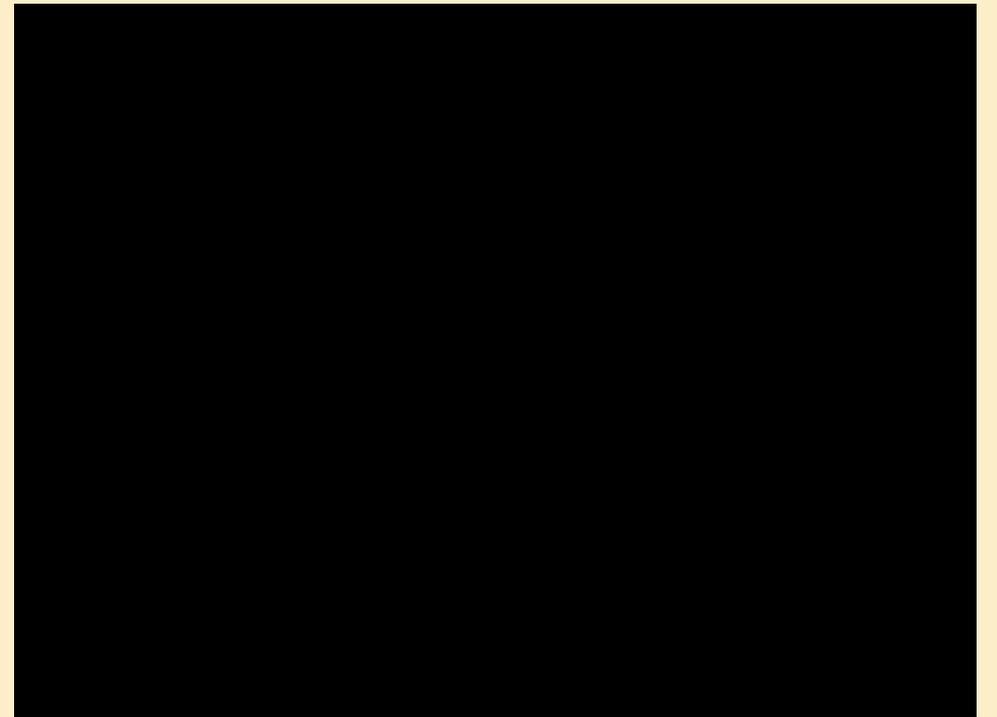
# Chat In Social & Emotional Development

How does society tell boys to engage with one another and deal with their emotions?

- Media?
- Family?
- School?
- Friends?



# How soon can we talk about L♥ve?



## How does society tell boys to engage with one another & deal with their emotions?

### ➤ What does it mean to be a **GOOD** man?

- “**Caring**,” a male student in the front said.
- “Putting other’s needs **before** *yours*,” another young man said.
- “**Honest**,” a third said.

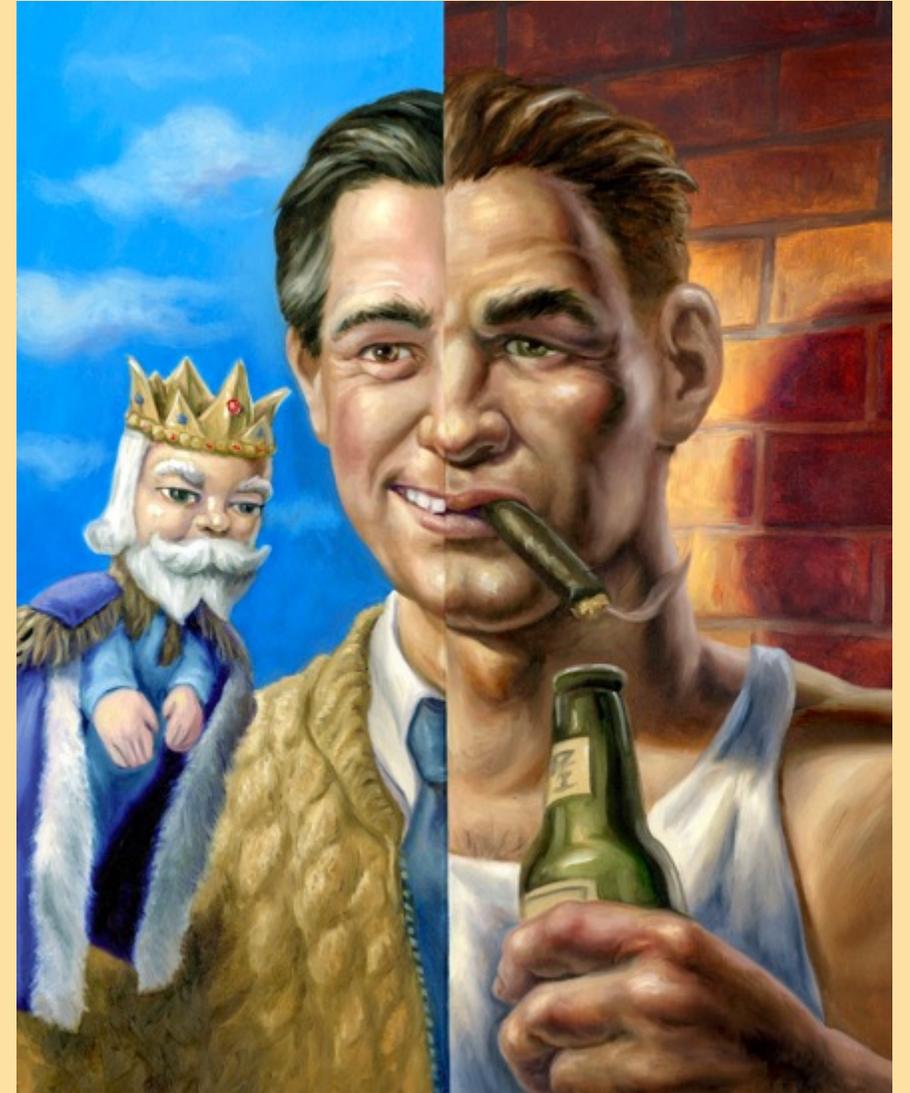
### ➤ What does it mean to be a **REAL** man?

- “**Take charge**; be authoritative,” said James, a sophomore.
- “**Take risks**,” said Amanda, a sociology graduate student.
- “It means **suppressing** any kind of weakness,” another offered.
- “I think for me being a real man meant talk like a man,” said a young man who’d grown up in Turkey. “**Walk like a man. Never cry.**”

## Stats:

- Men and boys in the U.S. account for 78 % of all suicides,
- 80 % of fatal heroin overdoses, and 98 % of mass shooters.
- While suicides, substance use, and mass violence show variation by race/ethnicity, the dominance of men is consistent in all categories.

- Child Trends 2016

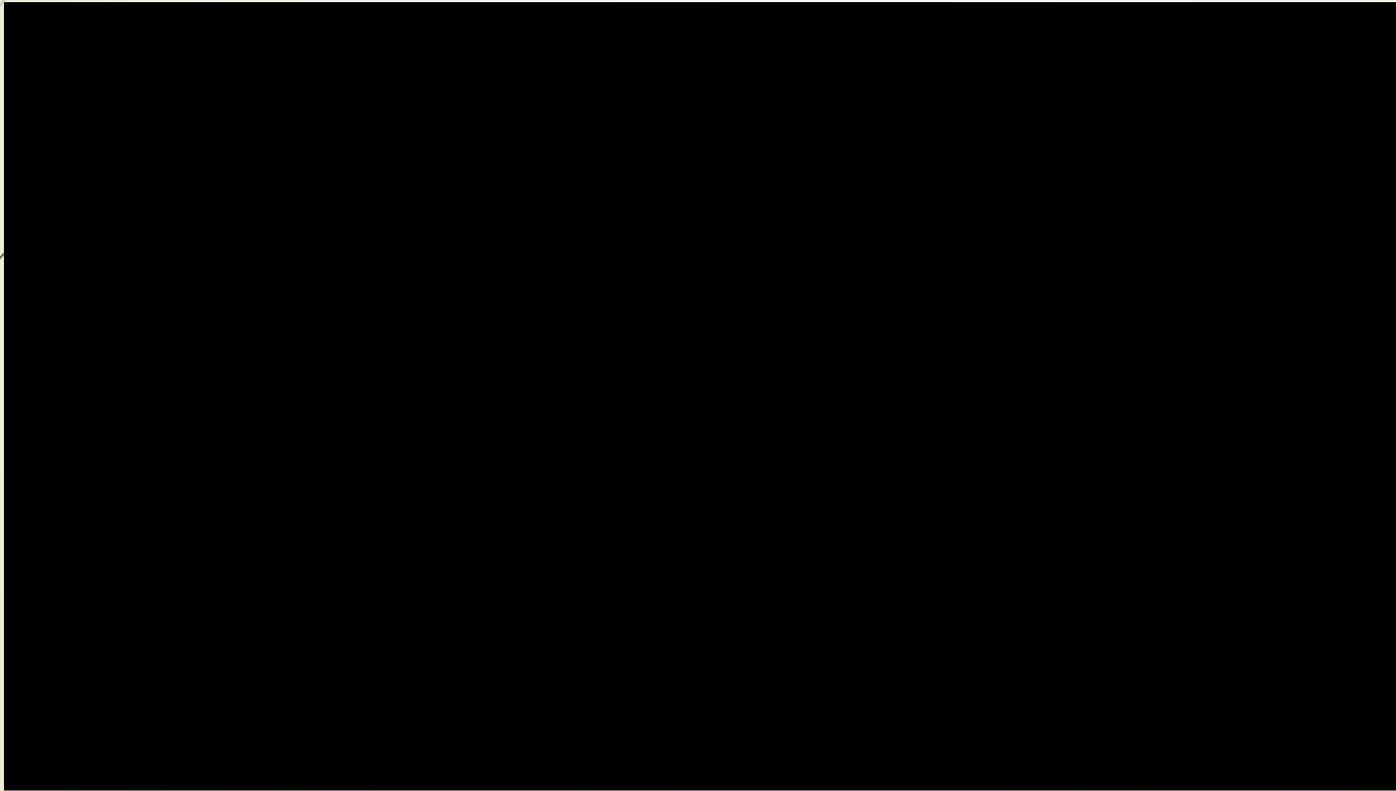


Owen Smith; [NYTimes](#)



# The Mask You Live In - Trailer

## Video by The Representation Project



# THE BOY CRISIS IN AMERICA

THREE OR MORE BOYS COMMIT SUICIDE EVERY DAY



AND SUICIDE IS THE THIRD LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FOR BOYS



BOYS ARE:



MORE LIKELY THAN GIRLS TO FLUNK OR DROP OUT OF SCHOOL



MORE LIKELY TO RECEIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION



MORE LIKELY TO BE EXPELLED



93%

93% OF BOYS ARE EXPOSED TO INTERNET PORN BEFORE AGE 18

21%

21% OF YOUNG MEN USE PORNOGRAPHY EVERY DAY



ONLY 22 STATES REQUIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO TEACH SEX ED

# Learning Gap

## The middle schooler's brain

*“When I’m a grown-up, I want to be totally awesome.”*

The sorts of jobs traditionally dominated by men (such as driving) are among the most likely to be automated in the coming decades



Borgonovi says: “In schools, learning is the incidental thing that happens while kids are socializing. There is a lot of, ‘How do I impress my peers?’” Boys often do that by misbehaving.

2/3 of educators are female and 97% of early childhood educators are female.

# Key Features In Adolescent Growth & Development (Ages 10-14)

Cognitive	Emotional	Moral/Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interests tend to focus on the present, thoughts of the future are limited</li><li>• Intellectual interests expand and gain in importance</li><li>• Ability to do work (physical, mental, emotional) expands</li><li>• Capacity for abstract thinking increases</li><li>• Risk-taking behaviors may emerge (experimenting with tobacco, alcohol, physical risks)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sense of identity develops</li><li>• May feel awkward or strange about themselves and their bodies</li><li>• Focus on self increases</li><li>• Close friendships gain importance</li><li>• Realization grows that parents are not perfect, have faults</li><li>• Overt affection toward parents declines</li><li>• Occasional rudeness with parents occurs</li><li>• Complaints that parents interfere with independence increase</li><li>• Friends and peers influence clothing styles and interests</li><li>• Childish behavior may return, particularly at times of stress</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Testing of rules and limits increases</li><li>• More consistent evidence of conscience becomes apparent</li><li>• Capacity for abstract thought develops</li><li>• Ideals develop, including selection of role models</li><li>• Questioning of moral rights and privileges increases</li></ul>

## Understanding teens' new thinking skills

Teens enjoy exercising their budding ability for lively debate. For them, conflicts may just be a way of expressing themselves. Adults, on the other hand, tend to take arguments personally and may view them as intense and disruptive or as a direct threat to their authority.

- Be patient with teens.
- Disrespect should never be tolerated
- Avoid correcting or putting down an adolescents' logic
- Don't take it to heart when teens criticize adult opinions and behaviors.
- Unless a teen has a known history of problematic behavior, don't worry if they demonstrate melodramatic tendencies.
- Remember that not every disagreement is a conflict.



# Cognitive Ignition



Ian Taylor / Design Pics/First Light/Getty Images

Freshly acquired reasoning and logic skills are like a new gadget adolescents are just itching to try out. Here are some ways you can help young people make effective use of their developing capabilities.

- Ask open ended questions
- Never subject an adolescent to public criticism or mockery of their thoughts or ideas.
- Encourage a deeper understanding of issues and topics
- Make sure teens grasp the role of emotions in the decision-making process
- Realize teens bring a variety of strengths

# Decision-Making Strategies

Adolescents need opportunities to practice and discuss realistic decision-making. Here are some ways adults can facilitate the process:

- Get youth actively practicing decision making
  - Look at how you make decisions and then lead by example.
- Demonstrate to teens how to choose between competing pressures and demands.
- Many adolescents live in the now.
- Encourage adolescents to spend time with friends who share their values.

## BRAIN BOX



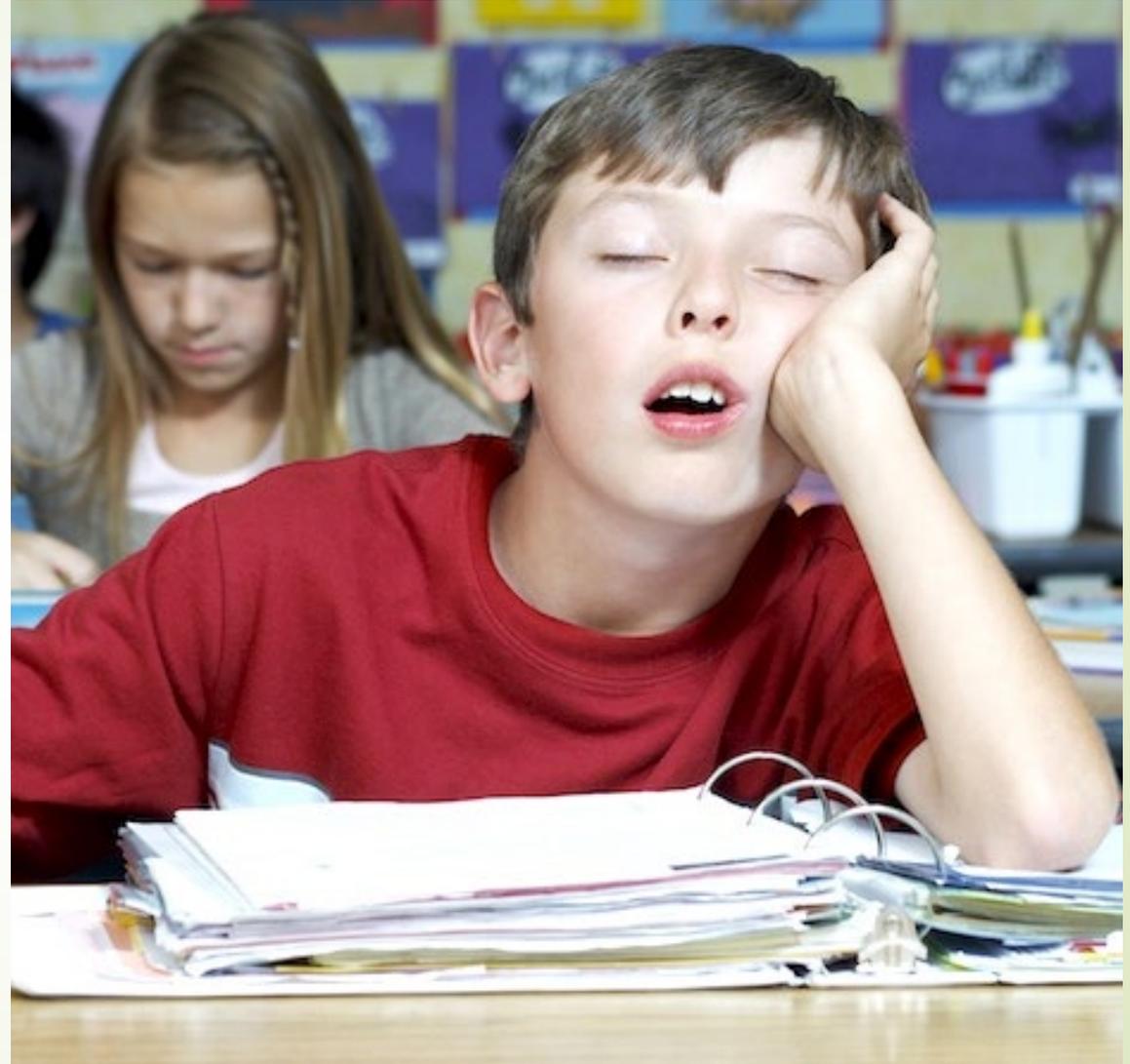
The teen years are a time of intense brain changes. Interestingly, two of the primary brain functions develop at different rates. Recent brain research indicates that the part of the brain that perceives rewards from risk, the limbic system, kicks into high gear in early adolescence. The part of the brain that controls impulses and engages in longer-term perspective, the frontal lobes, matures later. This may explain why teens in mid-adolescence take more risks than older teens. As the frontal lobes become more developed, two things happen. First, self-control develops as teens are better able to assess cause and effect. Second, more areas of the brain become involved in processing emotions, and teens become better at accurately interpreting others' emotions.

SOURCE: Steinberg, L. (2008) A social neuroscience perspective on adolescent risk-taking. *Developmental Review*, 28:78-106.



## And Then There's Sleep Teen brains need more *Zzzzzzzs*

- Until the age of 10, most children awaken refreshed and energetic. In adolescence, the brain's biological clock, or circadian rhythm, shifts forward. Melatonin secretions, which trigger sleepiness, **start later at night and turn off later in the morning.**
- Teenagers actually need as much sleep **or more** than they got as children - nine to 10 hours are optimum.
- Too little sleep can result in uncontrolled napping (either in class or, more dangerously, behind the wheel), irritability, inability to do tasks that are not exciting or of a competitive nature, and dependence on caffeine drinks to stay alert.



# How Boys' Learning Styles Differ

## (and How We Can Support Them)

### ➤ Key factors differentiating girl/boy learning:

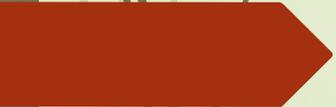
- Boys show more areas in the brain dedicated to spatial-mechanical strengths, whereas girls generally demonstrate a focus on verbal-emotive processing.
- Girls are generally hardwired to be less impulsive, enabling them to sit still, focus, read, and write at an earlier age than boys.
- Boys' brains need more rest times during a day of learning. When bored, boys tend to “zone out” more than girls and require rest periods before reengaging in learning.

### ➤ Tips for ensuring a boy-friendly educational environment:

- Boys are energized and motivated by movement. Teaching styles which encourage the experiential/kinesthetic learning modality support boys' natural biochemistry, helping them to stay engaged and focused.
- Boys do their best work when educators establish authentic purpose and meaningful, real-life connections.
- Ensure the presence of positive male role models, who emphasize the importance of education.



**POLL:**  
It is harder to  
engage boys than girls in my  
programs.



Engaging boys in programming

# Best Practice Tips

- Directions
  - Break down into small steps
  - Repeat
  - Present on board as visual reminder
- Get them moving
  - Interactive activities
  - Energizers
- Build relationships & support
  - Regular check-ins
  - Homework help
- Have small group discussions
  - Healthy masculinity
- When playing sports or other physical activity, discuss healthy eating & nutrition
- Structured curricula including videos/audio that can be used to structure your programs
- Offer sessions multiple times a week (if possible)
- If you are a coordinator:
  - Building staff capacity
  - Hiring facilitators with experience working with boys or PYD background
- Involve parents & families
  - Family movie night
  - Sending pictures or written communication home

# Resources

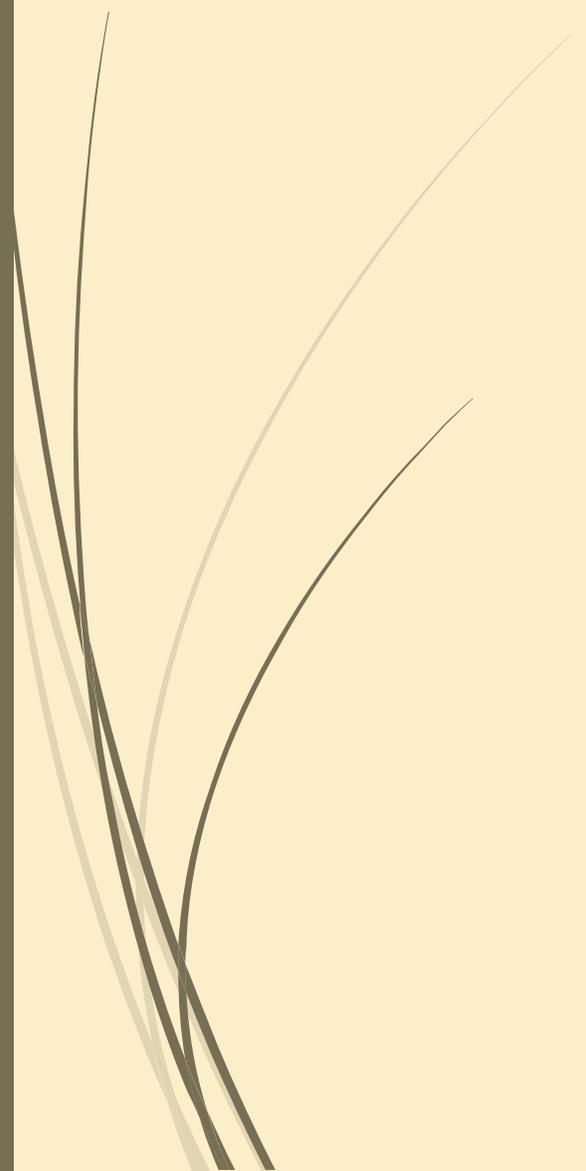
- ACT for Youth
  - [http://actforyouth.net/sexual\\_health/boys.cfm](http://actforyouth.net/sexual_health/boys.cfm)
  - <http://www.nysyouth.net/relationships/chemistry/>
- CDC.gov
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/prc/study-findings/research-briefs/teen-years-explained.html>
- Amaze.org
  - <https://amaze.org/video/puberty-finding-out-who-you-are/>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onggxBVl4qw&feature=youtu.be>
- PBS.org
  - <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/spring-fever>
- NYTimes.com
  - <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/12/learning/lesson-plans/boys-to-men-teaching-and-learning-about-masculinity-in-an-age-of-change.html>



# Resources/Good Reads



- Childtrends.org
  - <https://www.childtrends.org/big-boys-dont-cry-how-social-norms-hurt-boys-and-the-rest-of-us>
- Goodtherapy.org
  - <https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/how-boys-learning-styles-differ-0211134>
- Kidshealth.org
  - <https://www.kidshealth.org.nz/adolescent-brain-development>
  - <https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/stay-healthy/?WT.ac=k-nav-stay-healthy#catboy>
- Youngmenshealth.org – Coping with loss
  - <https://youngmenshealthsite.org/guides/loss/>
- Researchgate.net –The myth of pink
  - [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/296597224\\_The\\_myth\\_of\\_pink\\_and\\_blue\\_brains](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/296597224_The_myth_of_pink_and_blue_brains)



Thank You!!