

International Boys' School Coalition

Pastoral Care for Boys: A School Based Program

- 1980 18 orphaned elephants were released into the Pilaneserg Reserve in South Africa.
- 1982 Of these, the adolescent male elephants began to exhibit aggressive, anti- social behaviour.
- 1983 Adult female elephants were released into the park, the aggressive behaviour of the adolescent males continued.
- 1992 Reports of aggressive, anti-social behaviour amongst the adolescent male population continues.
- 1993 A tourist and professional hunter are killed by adolescent male elephants.
- 1994 - '95 40 white rhinos are found dead.
- 1997 An adolescent male elephant was caught killing a white rhino.
- 1998 Six mature male elephants were released into the park.

Question: What happened next?

Answer: Once the mature males had encountered the adolescent male elephant population, the rhino killings stopped abruptly.

'There has been a total turnaround, the older males have disciplined the younger ones'. (Gus van Dyk, Field Ecologist; Pilaneserg Reserve, South Africa)



Adolescent Sociality

Of all mammals that experience adolescence, elephants' experiences are amongst the closest to humans.

- The Pilanesberg Reserve study showed that once the adolescent male elephant population was exposed to appropriate adult male role models, their behaviour changed immediately and permanently.
- Adolescence is a critical time when individuals acquire inter-personal skills which influence the development of inter-personal relationships.



Kate Evans and Stephen Harris, School of Biological Sciences, University of Bristol (2007 – '08) conducted a study of male elephants in the Okavango Delta, Botswana to assess the behaviour and social interactions of adolescent male elephants. Their results showed males had different needs at different ages:

- Younger adolescent males (10 – 15) showed a preference for mixing in close proximity with large social groupings of both genders and a variety of age groups.
- Older adolescents (16 – 20) showed a preference for mixing at higher social levels with older males.

Evans and Harris results highlight:

- Matriarchs are recognised as the repositories of ecological knowledge within breeding herds that contain a predominance of younger adolescents. This knowledge remains with all elephants throughout their lives.
- Mature males are reservoirs for knowledge within bull society. It is into these societies that older adolescent males migrate with the onset of sexual maturity.
- Proximity to older males provide opportunities for younger, sexually mature adolescent males to learn from the more experienced, older individuals. This knowledge remains with male elephants throughout their lives.

Question:

Could any parallels be drawn from the Pilanesberg Reserve or Okavango Delta study of adolescent male elephants and human society?

Boys Do Outperform Girls!

Question: In what fields do boys consistently outperform girls?

Answer:

- Higher rates of depression, alcoholism, drug addiction and homelessness.
- Males are 9 times more likely to be incarcerated.
- Suicide rates amongst males are 4 times higher than females. However, more females attempt suicide but males are considerably more successful.
- Males are more likely to be the perpetrators and or victims of violence. Home Office figures show males aged 16-24 are most at risk of being a victim of violent crime.
- Males are more likely to die or be injured in motor vehicle accidents.
- Males predominate in 'SN' (special needs) classes.
- Males have a higher mortality rate at every age. In the womb, male fetuses have a higher mortality rate.
- Babies are conceived in a ratio of about 124 males to 100 females, but the ratio of those surviving to birth is only 105 males to 100 females.
- Among the smallest premature babies (those under 2 pounds or 900 g) females have a higher survival rate.
- 90% of individuals aged 110+ are female.

Life Expectancy 2008			
	Males	Females	
Australia	79.16	84.02	- 4.86
United States	75.29	81.13	- 5.84
United Kingdom	76.37	81.46	- 5.09

The Problem with Boys

A great deal has been written to explain the factors behind the unique difficulties that boys face. These writings have offered a myriad of reasons why this is the case:

- **The 'cool to be a fool' behaviour.**

Boys predominate in detention classes and across suspension and expulsion statistics. Boys are four times more likely than girls to be expelled from school and two times more likely to be suspended.

- **The disparity in funding for boys' and girls' initiatives.**

- Girls' Education and Community Participation Project (GECP)
- Ambassador's Girls Scholarship Program (AGSP)
- Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative (WJEI)/EMPOWER)

- **The absent father.**

'Twenty five million American children are more likely to see a father on television than in their home' (Dr. Wade Horn, founder of the National Fatherhood Initiative).

- **The feminisation of education/classroom.**

Today over 80% of all primary teachers in England and Wales are female. A total of 28% of England's primary schools which teach around 950,000 pupils, have no male teachers (Coffey and Delamont 2000:46).

- **The breakdown of the notion of what it is to be 'male' (the redefinition of masculinity).**

The effects of radical feminism, shifts in the labour market and the expectations of men have forced a mind-shift in what the role of the 20th Century male now is.

The Problem with Boys

- **The destruction of traditional male roles/occupations.**

The term 'mancession' has been used to describe the recession in those sectors of the workforce which have traditionally been occupied by males.

- **Radical feminism.**

'Under patriarchy, every woman's son is her betrayer and also the inevitable rapist or exploiter of another woman' (Andrea Dworkan).

- **Insufficient/inappropriate male role models.**

"..calls for increasing the employment of male primary teachers to counteract the feminising effects of primary education and provide positive male role models has failed to ask questions about the type of masculinity being reproduced by male primary teachers...."

(Teacher Training Agency [TTA])

Is any one factor more influential than the others?

Father



Boys now more than ever are living in fatherless families or families where the father is absent for significant amounts of time.

The 'Hull Phenomenon'

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Director of the charity Generating Genius which targets black inner city boys to become scientists and engineers:
90% of all boys applying for places are from single parent families. 95% of boys from Caribbean families are from single parent families.

Where are the Male Role Models and What's Happening with Fatherhood?

- *"We can't destroy the inequities between men and women until we destroy marriage. (Robin Morgan, from Sisterhood Is Powerful (ed), 1970, p. 537)*
- *"Marriage as an institution developed from rape as a practice. Rape, originally defined as abduction, became marriage by capture. Marriage meant the taking was to extend in time, to be not only use of but possession of, or ownership. (Andrea Dworkin)*
- *"The nuclear family must be destroyed, and people must find better ways of living together.... Whatever its ultimate meaning, the break-up of families now is an objectively revolutionary process.... No woman should have to deny herself any opportunities because of her special responsibilities to her children. (Linda Gordon, "Functions of the Family," WOMEN: A Journal of Liberation, Fall, 1969)*
- *"The nuclear family is a hotbed of violence and depravity." (Gordon Fitch)*
- *"How will the family unit be destroyed? ...[T]he demand alone will throw the whole ideology of the family into question, so that women can begin establishing a community of work with each other and we can fight collectively. Women will feel freer to leave their husbands and become economically independent, either through a job or welfare." (Roxanne Dunbar in Female Liberation)*
- *"Patriarchy requires violence or the subliminal threat of violence in order to maintain itself.. The most dangerous situation for a woman is not an unknown man in the street, or even the enemy in wartime, but a husband or lover in the isolation of their home." (Gloria Steinem in Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem, pp. 259-61)*

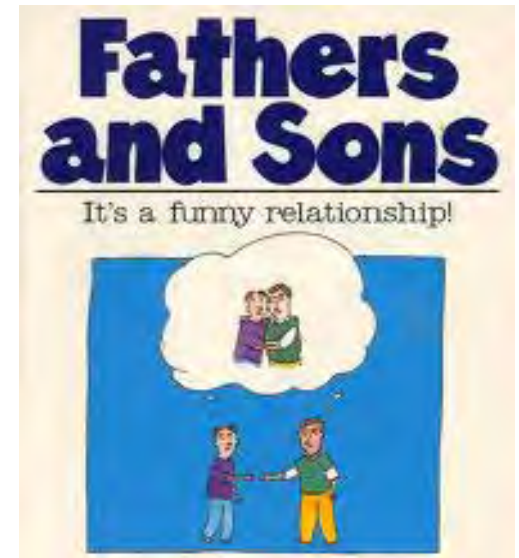
In all cases where Family Law Court Judges are asked to rule on residency, only 9% of all cases rule in the favour of the father.

Guy Barlow; Family Lawyer, Charles Coleman LLP Windsor:

“In 26 years of practice, I have only ever experienced two cases where a father was awarded residency. In the first case the mother was in jail for drugs offences, in the second case the mother was a patient in Broadmoor”.

- **Teenagers Living Without Their Biological Fathers**

- Are more likely to:
 - experience problems with sexual health
 - to become teenage parents
 - to offend
 - smoke, drink alcohol and take drugs
 - to play truant from school
 - to leave school at 16
 - to live in poverty and deprivation
 - to run away from home
 - to be held back and more likely to drop out all together
- Boys are prone to more anti-social behavior.
- Boys have higher risk of physical and psychological health problems.
- Boys are at greater risk of suffering physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.
- Boys are less committed to school and less likely to go to college than girls today.
- Boys are three times more likely to be enrolled in special education classes than the typical girl.
- Boys are four times more likely to be referred to a school psychologist.



Some Statistics for Reflection

- **Boys and Discipline**

- Research tells us that boys are more likely to be punished in schools and at home, and when punished are likely to face harsher penalties.
- Judges commit boys to the juvenile justice system more than they commit girls, even for the same crime.
- African American boys are three times more likely to receive corporal punishment in school, six Caucasian boys are hit for every one Caucasian girl, and eight Asian boys are hit for every one Asian girl.
- Boys are more likely to be hit at home -- a study in Canada showed that boys were 50 percent more likely to be physically abused by their parents than girls.
- Boys are also more likely to face verbal abuse by adults in the classroom and at home than their sisters.
- One study shows that kindergarteners who are spanked at home are more likely to be physically aggressive at school and much more apt to be bullies.

- **Boys and Violence**

- 95 percent of juvenile homicides are committed by boys.
- Boys are the perpetrators of four out of five crimes that end up in juvenile court.
- Boys under the age of 18 are responsible for close to one-fifth of the violent crime in the United States.

- **Boys and Their Well-Being**

- Boys are three times more likely to be diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder than girls.
- Boys are four times more likely to be prescribed Ritalin.
- Currently over one million boys in the United States take Ritalin daily.
- Boys mature more slowly than girls and as a result are slower to achieve cognitive milestones than girls their same age.
- Boys are slower to develop impulse control than girls.

- **Boys and Their Emotions**

- Newborn boys are more emotionally expressive than newborn girls.
- Boys become less facially expressive with emotions as they age, while girls become more so.
- Are boys less emotional? No. Recent research on second graders found that boys were more emotionally stressed when listening to a crying baby, but were less capable in handling these emotions. The result? The boys tried to avoid the source of the emotional conflict.
- Studies of parent interaction with both boys and girls suggest that when a girl asks a question about emotions such as "Why is that boy crying?", her mother will give a longer explanation and will more likely ask her daughter to speculate on the feelings behind the emotional response.
- Preschool girls have a greater range of "emotion" words (sad, love, angry) than boys and use them more often.

- **Boys and Their Fathers**

- Fathers play a unique role in the lives of boys and are particularly important in the development of future success.
- In a twenty seven year study of children, the single most important indicator of a child's future income was father attendance at PTA meetings.
- Children whose fathers are both emotionally close and highly involved are more likely to go to college and get advanced degrees. They are also less likely to commit delinquent acts.
- Research shows that the most influential factor in developing a boy's empathy is having a father who is involved in the child care.
- Roughhousing (safe, active play) is highly arousing for boys and is thought to be important to both cognitive and emotional development.

Young Adults Who Grew Up Apart From Their Biological Fathers:

- Are less likely to attain qualifications
- Are more likely to have low incomes
- Are more likely be on income support
- Are more likely to experience homelessness
- Are more likely to go to jail
- Are more likely to suffer from long term emotional and psychological problems
- Are more likely to develop health problems
- Tend to enter partnerships earlier and more often as a cohabitation
- Are more likely to divorce or dissolve their cohabiting unions
- Are more likely to have children outside marriage or outside any partnership

(All statements; Rebecca O'Neill , 2002, The Institute for the Study of Civil Society [CIVITAS])

Children growing up in single parent families are:

- 75% more likely to fail at school
- 70% more likely to become drug dependant
- 50% more likely o become alcoholic
- 35% more likely to be unemployed as an adult
- 48% of children in the UK will see their parents divorce before they are 16.
- 46% of babies born in the UK are born to single mothers

(Centre for Social Justice UK, 2011)

The Absence of Older/Adult Males

Fathers

Attitudes Towards Work and Care (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 'How Fair is Britain', Triennial Review, 2010)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	% of fathers who agree	% of mothers who agree	Responses
Fathers are responsible for providing for their family	47%	31%	2234
Childcare is the primary responsibility of the mother	23%	34%	2232
The parent who is paid more should stay at work regardless of whether they are male or female	55%	41%	2217
Fathers should spend more time caring for their children	62%	59%	2230

The vast majority of fathers work full time and six in ten of the survey work in excess of 40 hours a week. Father's attitudes towards parenting roles are becoming significantly less traditional than one might expect, but they are still struggling to find sufficient time in their working lives to play a greater parenting role in the lives of their children.

- 'My new year's resolution is to become a mum and I've found the man to be the father. But marriage? I don't believe in it' (Julia Bradbury, TV Presenter, 2011).
- 'I don't think a father is necessary to raising a baby' (Jodie Foster, 1999)

Father

Big Brother / Extended Families



Boys now more than ever are living in fatherless families or families where the father is absent for significant amounts of time.

The 'Hull Phenomenon'

Dr Tony Sewell, Director of the charity Generating Genius which targets black inner city boys to become scientists and engineers:
90% of all boys applying for places are from single parent families. 95% of boys from Caribbean families are from single parent families.

Families are getting smaller, fewer boys have older brothers.

Fractured families prohibit young males associating with older male members of their extended family.

The Absence of Older/Adult Males

Big Brothers

Women in 2009 compared to their mother's generation in 1964 and their grandmother's generation in 1937.

- Women in England and Wales are having fewer children than at any time since the government started keeping records of the nation's fertility in 1924. Levels of childlessness are also the highest on record.
- Fertility rates have sunk to 1.64 children per woman in 2010, compared with a peak of 2.93 in 1964 (The Office for National Statistics [ONS])
- The size of the average family is getting smaller (ONS).
- In 2009 women had on average 1.9 children compared to their mother's generation in 1964 who had on average 2.4.
- Twenty per cent of women born in 1964 were childless, compared to 12% of women born in 1937.
- Only one in 10 women in 1964 had a family of four or more, compared to twice that number for their mothers' generation in 1937.
- The commonly-used figure of "2.4 children" only really represents the families' of women born in the mid-1930s to early '40s.
- Figures published by the ONS earlier this year showed a fall in the annual birth rate in England and Wales for the first time in eight years.
- Not only are women having less babies later in life, their children are born closer together lessening the opportunities for boys to have an older brother with an age gap that would allow him to act as a role model.
- 10% of the 1964 group had four or more children, compared to 20% for the 1937 group.
- Government statisticians predict the number of children will have fallen from 21m in 2000 to 11m in 2011.
- The ONS reported 594,634 live births in England and Wales last year, a decrease of 1.6%. The proportion born outside marriage was 40%, compared with 30% in 2000.

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The Absence of Older/Adult Males

Social Clubs

- In 1910 the Boy Scout movement had 50,000+ members.
- In 1966 the number of Boy Scouts in the UK peaked at 55,206.
- In 1969 the number had fallen to 21,698.
- In 1988 the number had fallen to its lowest point to less than 10,000 despite the 1976 decision to admit girls to the Boy Scout Movement. The official number of Boy Scouts now listed, includes girls.
- Not only are fewer boys joining the Boys Scouts, more girls than boys are now joining increasing the feminisation of the once boys' only movement.
- In 2010, 4,330 girls joined the movement outnumbering the 3,796 boys who joined.
- There are now 66,576 girl scouts in Great Britain.
- No figures for the number of boys in the Boy Scouts movement could be obtained.

- The Church of England Boys' Society (CEBS) had 52000 members across all states of Australia in 1970.
- In 2010, the number of members has fallen to 16000 and is unrepresented in 50% of those capitals.



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Big Brother / Extended Families

Clubs

Tradesman / Employment



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The Absence of Older/Adult Males

Tradesmen/Employment and the Changing Worksite

Flexible Working Arrangements are Available
In this Sector.

Percentage of the Workforce Based on Gender.

Male Female

Manufacturing Industries	25%	17%	2%
Construction Sector	38%	20%	1.5%
Community and Social Work	62%	4%	12%
Public Administration, Education and Health	63%	3%	18%

- Over the last three decades there has been a marked increase in the number of employee jobs performed by women in the UK.
- In 1985 men filled 2.0 million more jobs than women.
- In March 2008 the numbers were similar, with each of the sexes performing around 13.6 million jobs.

(Office for National Statistics)

The Absence of Older/Adult Males

Tradesmen/Employment and the Changing Worksite

The 'Hull Effect'; studies have shown a direct correlation between the decline in traditional male occupations in the Hull area of North East England and the increase in single-motherhood. As males see themselves dislocated from the workforce and society, they also see themselves dislocated from fatherhood and their social responsibilities.

"Many of its policies aimed at supporting families with children reinforce a traditional division of labour, so the Fatherhood Institute recently ranked the UK 18 out of 21 OECD countries in its support for shared working and caring within families.

Employment

Since 1979, 90% of jobs created have been in service industries, which have traditionally drawn a majority of female workers. 90% of those jobs lost since 1979 have been in manufacturing, production and mining, occupations that have traditionally drawn a majority of male workers. There is a clear shift away from male occupations to female occupations.

Martin Mac an Ghail (1994) stated that there is a 'crisis of masculinity' as traditional working class male roles are under threat as women become the main breadwinners.

The unemployment position appears to be far worse for males than for females: in December 2009 17.2 per cent of young male graduates were unemployed compared to 11.2 per cent of female graduates (Higher Education Policy Institute [HEPI]).

The Absence of Older/Adult Males

Big Brothers, the Decline of Male Boarders

Table of **number** of boy boarders in IAPS schools 1987-2007 (+ Years 11 and 13 in Senior Schools [BSA])

	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Year 3	807	459	272	149	130
Year 4	2291	1565	913	690	531
Year 5	3226	2430	1440	1114	915
Year 6	4155	3355	2042	1753	1413
Year 7	5536	5010	3373	2814	2443
Year 8	5721	5256	4075	3760	3330
Total in IAPS Schools	21,736	18,075	12,115	10,280	8762
Year 11	8341	8420	6793	5714	5713
Year 13	6568	7547	6924	5900	6410

The Absence of Older/Adult Males

Big Brothers, the Decline of Male Boarders

Table of **percentage** of boys who are boarders in IAPS schools 1992-2007 (+ Years 11 and 13 in Senior Schools [BSA])

	1992	1997	2002	2007
Year 3	4.0%	2.3%	1.1%	1.0%
Year 4	11.4%	6.6%	4.8%	3.7%
Year 5	15.9%	9.8%	7.0%	5.9%
Year 6	19.3%	13.1%	10.4%	8.6%
Year 7	20.7%	15.7%	12.9%	11.5%
Year 8	25.2%	18.7%	16.9%	14.6%
Year 11	34.2%	26.3%	25.2%	23.5%
Year 13	39.3%	35.2%	32.4%	33.5%

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Big Brother / Extended Families

Clubs

Tradesman / Employment

Teachers / Education



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Very few male teachers, particularly in primary schools.

Gender in the Classroom; Current Data

Men account for less than 25 percent of all teachers in United States public schools. Kansas has the largest percentage of male teachers at 33%, and Mississippi and Arkansas both have the lowest percentages at about 18% (2006 National Education Association). In UK state primary schools 20% of teachers are male.

Why More Female Teachers?

- Females as a group are more drawn than men to careers that involve working with elementary and preschool children. The National Education Association survey cited on Edutopia.com showed that more men than women stated that salary is a significant factor in them pursuing other, often more lucrative careers than teaching.

For example, a Seattle newspaper said in December 2005 that in the Seattle area alone, according to the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction, men take jobs as administrators and superintendents, with 81 percent of area superintendents being male. The same articles says that at the University of Washington, only 12 percent to 15 percent of the students in the elementary education program are men.

Advantages of Male Teachers

- A 2006 study in Education Next, by the Hoover Institute, and conducted by Thomas Dee, an economics professor at Swarthmore College, found that boys learn better from male teachers. The study states that having a teacher of the opposite sex hinders a boy's academic progress. Boys were less likely to be seen as disruptive in a class with a male teacher. Male teachers are more likely to include games and competition in their teaching methods.

Advantages of Female Teachers

- The same 2006 study conducted by Thomas Dee found that girls learn best from female teachers. Women often teach in ways that may fit girls better, such as sitting at desks and using worksheets for learning. More female teachers than male expect a quiet and orderly classroom, which girls appreciate.

Gender in the Classroom; Current Data

Quoted by Melanie Newman in the article, "Male students are now the weaker sex, says Hepi study", Times Higher Education, 11 June 2009.

- Report calls for fresh mindset as women begin to dominate post secondary education institutions.
- Female students are no longer the disadvantaged sex in higher education.
- A study for the *Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI)* notes the increase in the participation rate in tertiary education of women aged 18 to 30 was 49.2 per cent in 2007-08, compared with 37.8 per cent of similar aged men.
- Female students now outnumber males across all types of institution - despite claims that they dominate only "lower-status" universities - and are more likely to achieve first or upper-second degrees, the study says.
- The report, *Male and Female Participation and Progression in Higher Education*, says that to tackle male underachievement the sector must change "a mindset that continues to see males as advantaged and females as disadvantaged".

- In 1849, 68% of pupil teachers in English elementary schools were male and only 32% were female (Tropp 1957:22).

The gender and social class composition of teachers in primary schools has altered throughout the last century due to a complex range of social, political and economic circumstances, including wars and changing global labour markets (Copelman 1996).



Who is this man?

- The General Teaching Council reports that Jamie Wilson, who works for the Merseyside Children's Centre, is the last male under 25 in England working with under 5's as a state school nursery teacher.
- In July 2010, two schools in Bracknell Forest (one of which I am a Community Governor) saw their 11+ year group graduate for the 5th consecutive year having never been taught by a male classroom teacher.
- Despite the total number of state-registered teachers rising by almost 3 per cent to more than 560,000 in 2010, the General Teaching Council's figures showed the percentage of male teachers overall had slipped from just over 25 per cent to 24.9 per cent. In primary schools, it remains just over 12 per cent.

Male or Female?

- Most students will end up being educated by female teachers. In the middle and high school years, they will probably have a few male teachers. Both males and females bring different approaches and techniques to learning styles.
- Experiencing both male and female teachers may be best for students so that they can experience the advantages that both sexes bring to the classroom and a wider variety of teaching methodology.
- Because research shows that young boys may learn best with male teachers, the educational field has been stepping up efforts to recruit male teachers. Websites such as menteach.org and the 'Call Me Mister' male teacher recruitment program promote teaching as a desirable career for men.
- Figures revealed through the Freedom of Information Act show that one in four primary schools have no male teachers at all. In Derbyshire, Essex and Hertfordshire, male primary teachers are a rare breed, with more than 100 primaries where teaching is done solely by women.

- When boys look around for a group to join, too often it is not a school sports team but the local gang. With their hierarchy and strict discipline, street gangs are nothing more than a distorted mirror image of the house system common in private schools where loyalty and team effort are all important.
- With broken, fatherless families common, young kids look for mentors and role models — and too often find them in gangs.
- The overwhelming majority of gang members join between the ages of 12 / 15, the age that adolescent boys need an appropriate male role model in their lives more than at any other time.
- High-risk boys are poor, mostly from dysfunctional homes where there are no rules, where one parent has left, usually the father.
- Those with a chaotic family life need school to be a refuge and a contrast. Even more than middle-class boys with a stable background, they need school to provide authority, moral leadership and an outlet for their aggression. It should be giving boys what they need to thrive: discipline, sport and a group with which to identify

Government initiatives to support girls' education:

1. Women into Science and Engineering (WISE)
2. Girls and Technology Education (GATE)
3. Girls into Science and Technology (GIST)
4. Computer Club for Girls (CCG)
5. The American "Educational Equity Act"
6. World Education; Girls' and Women's Education
7. United States Aid for International Development;

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Gang Membership



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Gang memberships are growing on such a scale that many police forces throughout the world have set up a special task forces to combat them.

Gang Membership

- Boys join gangs for a variety of reasons. For most individuals gangs act as a substitute family structure.
- The best predictor of gang membership amongst teenage males is the absence of a positive male role model.
- Author Lonnie Jackson identified a number of factors that make males at risk of becoming involved in gangs. Most relate directly to inadequate or absent parenting/male role models.
 - frequent exposure to crime and violence during formative years
 - few positive role models, particularly males of their own ethnicity
 - unstable family life, with little parental control
 - lack of economic opportunities conducive to lawful self-sufficiency
 - inadequate constructive social and recreational activities for youths
 - hopelessness engendered by minimal employment opportunity
 - inadequate skills, education, or employment qualifications
 - unmet needs for safety, a sense of belonging, and secure emotional relationships
 - low self-esteem and feelings of insignificance and powerlessness

(Partnership in Opportunities for Employment through Technology in the Americas [POETA] 2002)

Why Young Men Join Gangs



- Too many young men suffer from an absence of authority at home, in school and on the street.
- Because they are afraid, there is nobody to protect them at home; “There’s no one to look after me but me” .
- Teenage boys need different treatment to girls to become responsible members of society, they need a male role model but these men are missing in their lives.
- When my son was about nine he became resentful of his young female teachers. He had no respect for them. He then moved to his middle school where most of his teachers were male. The change was dramatic. Suddenly it was all, “Sir says this and sir says that.”

(Statements taken from; *Handle with Care, an investigation into the care system by Harriet Sergeant, published by the Centre For Policy Studies*)

Question: What has been the single most important factor in reducing crime in America?

Answer: Legalising abortion. In those state which legalised abortion, crime rates fell on average 15 – 20 years after abortion was legalised. The higher the abortion rate, the greater the decline in crime. (R. Layard, Happiness, Lessons from a New Science, 2005)

Fathers Caring For Sons Program

As a Head of Pastoral Care I designed and implemented a whole school pastoral care program which was implemented through the pastoral care (PSHE) syllabus. The program was offered to pupils from Year 8 (13+).

The program was not about changing boys or changing parents, But rather changing responses through the empowerment of alternatives to narrow masculine stereotypes. We all have the opportunity, through the clarity of our actions, to role model and support versions of masculinity which are constructive, encouraging and ultimately loving.

The program was designed to involve fathers/guardians of all boys. This component of the program was offered one evening a week over eight weeks. Each evening a different presenter was invited to discuss issues relating to boys. These included:

- **Evening 1** **Absent Fathers**

I presented this evening during which I set out the program for the following workshops. I also took the opportunity to discuss with fathers the range of issues that confront their sons so that the theme for the ongoing workshops had a framework.

- **Evening 2** **What is a Father?**

A local GP who specialised in family counseling led this evening. He focused on aspects of the roles of a father, specifically within the framework of appropriate role modeling.

- **Evening 3** **Childhood Behaviors**

A local pediatrician presented an evening which focused on the changes in boys' behaviour as they progress through adolescence within biological and social frameworks.



- **Evening 4 Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques**

The school's Guidance Officer, who was a trained psychologist, ran a workshop which focused on providing fathers with techniques they could use when stressed, particularly when dealing with issues relating to their sons.

- **Evening 5 Resolving Conflict, Managing Anger**

I led the second evening during which I invited staff from the Drama Department to role play various scenarios involving 'situations of conflict' that might arise between fathers and sons and how these may be addressed in ways that would resolve rather than ignite potential conflicts.

- **Evening 6 Sex Education, Resourcing Fathers with Answers**

I invited a counselor from the Family Planning Association who spoke to the fathers about approaching/initiating conversations with their sons about the 'facts of life'. Fathers were given the opportunity to discuss personal scenarios and how these might be addressed.

- **Evening 7 Local Resources, How and Where to Access Them**

A representative from the local Department of Health was invited to discuss with fathers local resources that are available to them. Flyers, handouts and information booklets were provided throughout the evening.

These resources included:

- Local GP's
- Family and individual counseling services
- Mental health professionals
- Child psychologists
- Pediatricians
- Drug and alcohol counseling

- **Evening 8 Debrief**

The final evening was couched by me. This workshop provided fathers with an open forum to discuss what they had learnt from the previous evenings and how this information had helped them to be more competent and confident fathers. At the completion of this evening the fathers decided to set a date on which they would gather with their sons for an overnight camp. This was undertaken about a month later and was held on the school grounds.

By coincidence, the overnight camp coincided with Father's Day!

What Was Achieved

- Fathers were provided with an opportunity to network with like minded people.
- Resources were developed and shared.
- Fathers were made aware of the difficulties facing their sons. It was acknowledged that many of these difficulties did not exist for the fathers at the same age.
- Cycles of inadequate parenting were broken. The fathers wished that their fathers had this opportunity.
- Concrete links were built and reinforced between the school and home, benefiting both parties and ultimately more importantly, the boys.



*Dad, thanks for always helping me find my balance.
Happy Father's Day*

Two questions

1. Who teaches fathers to be fathers?
2. If those lessons are inadequate or inappropriate, what position are fathers in to do things any differently?