



THE 8 THINGS BOYS REALLY REALLY NEED FROM THEIR MUMS

By Glen Gerreyn

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Others all over Australia are tearing their hair out trying to manage the hormonal changes happening to their once tender boys. This smelly, grunting, obnoxious

teenager is a far cry from her little sweet boy that once allowed her to smoocher him with kisses. Now all he seemingly wants to do is eat, masturbate and play computer games. These moments are only disrupted with outbursts of anger and frustration.

So what does a boy want? In working with teenage boys for over 15 years I have compiled a list of my top eight tips to help mums give their boys what they are really after.

1. Surround him with great examples of honourable men both past and present. Young men will usually gravitate to images of strong men powerful men such as Batman or Superman or GI Joe. But teach them also about men who were powerful not just because of their brute strength but because of their determination, creative and integrity.

2. Teach him how to communicate about how he is feeling. Ninety-three per cent of all prisoners in this country are men. I am convinced most of them are in that situation because they never learnt to count to ten before acting. Teach him how to communicate what he is feeling and instil it in him from a young age.

3. Let him explore. Boys need adventure they need to be outside playing next to creeks and wandering in the wilderness. Yet in our nation our backyards have shrunk and our theatre rooms have expanded. Take every chance you get to allow him to wander outdoors.

4. Help him understand what a wrong concept is. Statistics say that on average teenage boys spend six minutes in the presence of their fathers and 14 seconds in meaningful conversation a day. By the same token teenage boys are averaging four hours a day in front of the TV or internet. With that much media exposure he needs to be taught about what is a right and wrong concept.

Don't allow the media to teach your son values. There is a clear divide occurring in this nation. On one side there are the boys who are being raised by active engaged parents, then there are those being raised by the media.

5. In his teenage years let him break away. He will at some point during adolescence want to cut the proverbial umbilical cord. Let him. He needs to be led to the door of manhood by other men but he has to open and go through the door alone.

6. Affirm his Masculinity. Don't castrate it. A father's role is to impart to his son honourable masculinity and a mum's role is to affirm it. Encourage him in his quest to develop his masculinity and help him understand that it is good not evil. Being masculine is about being respectable, strong, kind and emotionally intelligent. Affirm those qualities and shun the negatives.

7. Help him understand what a great woman is and be that example. You are the first woman he will fall in love with. He will judge all future women by your example. Show him what it means to be a great woman.

8. Communicate with him by doing. If you want to talk to him. Sit down with him and play computer games. Go for a run with him. He will tell you things during those moments you have never heard. Be prepared for long moments of silence punctuated by small moments of oratory brilliance.

Lastly let me say to every mum out there just in case nobody has ever told you. You are doing a fantastic job. Remember as grown up as they might seem they are just kids and will occasionally say and do stupid things. But when they are sick, hurt or in trouble they don't want their friends they want their mum and dad. You are truly the most important people in their life even though sometimes they may not show it.



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