

THE STATE OF AMERICA'S BOYS

AN URGENT CALL FOR MORE CONNECTED BOYHOOD



BOYS FEEL A LOT OF PRESSURE TO CONFORM TO HARMFUL BOYHOODS

What sort of boyhood might allow boys, in all their diversity, to realize their full human capacities?

2/3

agreed with the statement "My parents taught me that a 'real man' should act strong even if he feels nervous or scared"

75%

agreed with the statement "Guys should act strong even if they feel scared or nervous inside"

68%

agreed with the statement "A guy who doesn't fight back when others push him around is weak"

EVIDENCE OF CHALLENGES DUE TO HARMFUL BOYHOODS

FAMILY

at home, healthy and unhealthy ideas about manhood shape boys, and they are made to fend for themselves

HARSH DISCIPLINE

UNCHECKED MASCULINE VIOLENCE

FEAR OF BULLYING OR VULNERABILITY

SCHOOL

can reinforce traditional masculine norms (the Man Box)

NOT SHOWING EMOTIONS

DOMINANCE

AGGRESSION

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

boys' perception of their bodies as purely instrumental – instead of connected and caring – lead to actions that are harmful to their and others' health

SUBSTANCE USE

RECKLESS DRIVING

SELF-RELIANCE

VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

societal norms naturalize harmful behavior in boys, attributing it to biological factors

BULLYING

CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

PUNISHMENT INSTEAD OF PREVENTION

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

boys are subjected to more frequent punishments, disproportionately affecting boys based on race and class

SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

DIGITAL LIFE

certain types of games, particularly those with dark or violent plots, are designed with boys in mind

MEDIA LITERACY

NEW FORMS OF VIOLENCE

TOWARD A NEW BOYHOOD

Despite the persistence and press of harmful masculine norms, a new boyhood is more likely than not – but there are challenges to getting there.

CHALLENGES AND AMBIVALENCE

while progress toward gender equality is evident, some young men struggle to adapt to evolving expectations, as younger generations of women and girls demand full equality and challenge traditional gender roles

HARMFUL MASCULINE NORMS

DIFFICULTY FINDING PARTNERS

NEW MASCULINITIES

boys are reinventing and bending their masculine identities

SUPPORT TO RESIST THE MAN BOX

WHOLENESS

CONNECTION

EXPANDED SOCIALIZATION

INTERSECTIONAL APPROACHES