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PREVENTING BOYS' PROBLEMS IN SCHOOLS THROUGH PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING: A CALL TO ACTION

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Controversy currently exists on whether boys are in crises and, if so, what to do about it. Research is reviewed that indicates that boys have problems that affect their emotional and interpersonal functioning. Psychoeducational and preventive programs for boys are recommended as a call to action in schools. Thematic areas for boys' programming are enumerated including life skills and issues with masculinity ideology and gender role conflict. An example of a program that promotes positive and affirmative masculinity is given. Some of the barriers and strategies to implement programs for boys are discussed. © 2009 Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

Over the last 10 years, boys' lives have been in the national spotlight (Hall, 1999; Hoff Sommers, 2000; Pollack, 1998; Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Tyre, 2006; Von Drehle, 2007). Numerous publications have produced heated debates about the current status of boys' lives. William Pollack's book *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood* (1998) and Peg Tyre's *TIME* magazine cover story, The Boy Crisis (2006), state that boys are in trouble and in crisis. Two other publications, Christina Hoff Sommers's book *The War Against Boys: How Feminism is Harming Our Young Men* (2000) and David Von Drehle's *TIME* magazine cover story The Myths about Boys (2007) conclude that no crisis exists with boys and that the "boy crisis" is blown out of proportion.

The developmental health of boys has become part of the cultural clashes in America, and feminism and scientific rigor have been the battleground. Christina Hoff Sommers's book attacks the research of Carol Gilligan and William Pollack, two of the most influential feminist researchers on boys' and girls' development. She argues that these two scholars' research does not justify their alarm about the dire states of boys' and girls' lives, whereas Von Drehle's article simply dismisses boys' problems as myths. As his *TIME* magazine cover story puts it, "Experts say boys are in trouble. Here is why they got it wrong."

Our response to these cultural clashes is to recommend preventive and psychoeducational programs for boys in schools. Research does indicate that boys have developmental problems in schools that deserve special attention. We agree with Pollack's (1998) recommendations for schools to teach boy-friendly subject matter and use teaching methods adapted to boys' unique learning styles. Furthermore, Pollack recommends that boys' different rates of learning be respected and that patience be shown when boys fall behind. Other recommendations include experimenting with same-sex classes, hiring more male teachers, developing mentoring programs, and creating safe environments for boys to talk about themselves and their feelings.

We add to these recommendations by encouraging preventive psychoeducational programs for boys. These programs can teach boys' life skills and emphasize male strengths and potentials. We believe that boys' developmental problems should become priorities for administrators, teachers, counselors, and parents. Educators can promote boys' growth through preventive programming and curriculum development in life skills and male gender role development.

The critics may charge that this kind of programming cannot or should not be done. Some may argue that gender roles are too complex for young boys to understand and that examining masculinity is too threatening. Others may feel that parents can be threatened or believe gender roles should be taught at home. Some supportive educators may not know what to teach boys and

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how to institutionalize a gender role curriculum in schools. Some of these issues may be valid, but America's dilemma with boys' problems remains unsolved. Boys' experiences of being male is conspicuously absent from the curriculum in public education. We believe that preventing boys' problems in schools and community settings deserves a call to action.

Do Boys Really Have Problems?

Boys' lives have received more attention over the past two decades. Unfortunately, much of this attention has come from the tragic violence by boys. The 35 school shootings in the United States over the last 15 years were all committed by young boys. The Columbine shootings forced America to examine two alienated boys (Derek Klebold and Eric Harris) who were not grossly abnormal, but whose anger and rage exploded into mass murder. More recently, Cho Seung-Hui assassinated 32 people at Virginia Technical University. Cho's life was also full of boyhood pain from being bullied, ridiculed, and humiliated. He experienced anxiety, depression, and rage, and then committed mass murder.

Certainly, school shootings are extreme examples of boys' problems, but they do provide insights on how gender roles are central to boys' problems. For most of these school shootings, there was little analysis of how these boys experienced their male gender roles. Analyses of what caused the boys to kill indicate that the following precursors were involved: power, powerlessness, restricted emotions, loss of control, abuse, humiliation, emasculation, and revenge. These are current issues in the psychology of boys and men.

Beyond these extreme examples of violence, what evidence exists that boys have problems and in what areas? A review of the statistics from reliable national sources tells the truth about the problems of growing up male in America. Consider the following statistical facts about young boys and men: a) 35% of 15- to 17-year-old boys are below the grade common for their age (United States Census Bureau, 2003); b) boys are three times more likely to be enrolled in a special education class than is the typical girl (United States Census Bureau, 2005); c) boys have higher rates of suspension and expulsion compared with girls (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005); d) 14% of 18- to 24-year-old males are high-school dropouts (United States Census Bureau, 2005); e) 37% of 12th-grade boys score below basic levels on standardized writing tests (Persky, Daane, & Jin, 2003); f) five times as many 15- to 24-year-old boys commit suicide compared to girls (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007b); g) 16% of school-age boys have been diagnosed with attention deficit disorder (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2005); h) 12% of high-school boys report being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007a); i) 95% of state and federal prisoners under the age of 25 are male (Harrison & Beck, 2006); and j) twice as many 18- to 29-year-old males abuse alcohol as do females of the same age (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006). These are known data and do not reflect the unreported problems that boys have. These data suggest that not every boy is in personal crises, but many boys face significant problems during the first 20 years of life.

Masculine Gender Roles and Boys' Problems

How male gender roles contribute to these specific adolescent problems is largely unknown. However, research suggests a direct relationship between boys' restricted gender roles and their emotional and psychological problems. Empirical studies indicate that boys' adherence to traditional masculine norms are stressful, produce dysfunctional behavior, and relate to lower self-esteem (Blazina, Cordova, Pisecco, & Settle, 2007; Chu, Porche, & Tolman, 2005; Pleck, Sonenstein, & Ku, 1993). Furthermore, five studies have assessed how boys' gender role conflicts including restrictive emotionality, restrictive affectionate behavior, and conflict between work, school, and family relate to psychological problems (Blazina, Pisecco, & O'Neil, 2005; Blazina, 2007; Cadenhead & Huzirec,

2002; Soublis, 2003; Watts & Borders, 2005). Boys' gender role conflicts have significantly predicted boys' psychological distress, family problems and stress, conduct problems, anger management, and negative emotions (Cadenhead & Huzirec, 2002; Blazina et al., 2005; Soublis, 2003; Watts & Borders, 2005). In the only qualitative study, Watts and Borders (2005) found that boys report gender role conflict, and they conclude that these problems are developmental and begin in adolescence. More research is needed, but initial findings indicate that masculinity ideology and gender role conflict are related to adolescent boys' emotional and familial problems. Furthermore, more than 230 studies have correlated adult mens' gender role conflict with a wide array of psychological problems including depression, anxiety, stress, low self-esteem, fears about intimacy, and abuse and violence in relationships (O'Neil, 2008). Whether adult mens' gender role conflict begins in boyhood is not known from any longitudinal research, but it is likely that adult problems have their etiology in boyhood. Overall, the empirical research indicates that how boys experience their masculine gender roles relates to problems that could affect learning and interpersonal functioning. This gender role conflict research is unknown by many educators and therefore has not been integrated into most school curricula.

Boys' Problems: Denial and Neglect in Schools

Many educators are unaware of the negative effects of restrictive gender role and how sexism affects boys. Specifically, there is denial that boys have problems with their socialized gender roles. Admitting that boys have problems raises the question of whether adult men also have problems because of masculine gender roles. There has been a denial of both boys' and mens' problems that emanate from sexist stereotypes. Most everyone knows that males have problems, but society overall has been slow to acknowledge the "hazards of being male" (Goldberg, 1977).

Misinformation, dubious assumptions, and significant problems reinforce our denial about boys' problems. The first assumption is that "boys will be boys." This means that boys' problems are normal and not that significant. This slogan also implies that boyhood difficulties are usually only short term and remediated as the boy matures. The "boys will be boys" assumption is flawed because it reflects a superficial assessment of boys' lives and does not capture the deeper and unidentified sources of boys' conflict. Many boys appear normal, but underneath their defensive masks is turmoil and trouble. Many boys carry their unidentified adolescent problems into adulthood. This assumption is also reinforced by the belief that boys' behavior is exclusively influenced by innate, biological, and hormonal development. Individuals embracing this assumption conclude that you should not interfere with biological imperatives driving male behavior. For those believing in biological imperatives, psychoeducational programming for boys is unnecessary and even considered dangerous. Biology does play a part in a boy's development, but so does sexist gender role socialization in families, with peers, and in schools.

Another dubious assumption is that education about gender roles could negatively affect boys' gender role identity or promote homosexuality. Parents, administrators, and educators may conclude that programs on gender roles feminize and encourage homosexuality. These conclusions are unwarranted. The proposed educational programming is different than discussions about sexual orientation and does not support the femininization of boys. Education about gender roles facilitates a boy's positive views of what it means to be a man in terms of healthy character development and maximizing masculine potential. Boys' education about gender roles does not specifically focus on sexual orientation issues and has the much broader educational agenda of promoting life skills and character development. Homophobic reactions by parents and teachers when educating boys about masculinity issues are significant barriers to developing prevention programs. These reactions need to be monitored so that the central purpose of the programming is not distorted. This can be accomplished by having concise programming goals communicated to parents.

The lack of knowledge about boys' gender role development by educators and parents is another problem. Many educators and parents do not perceive boys as gendered persons until after puberty. Even after puberty, the awareness of boys' gender roles may be limited and have negative connotations. Many adults lack awareness that boys learn sexist stereotypes at an early age in families, in schools, and with peers. Parents and teachers may be unaware of the narrow masculinity ideologies that boys learn that negatively affect their learning and relationships. Masculinity ideologies are beliefs about the importance of men adhering to culturally defined standards of male behavior that define, restrict, and negatively affect boys' and mens' lives. (Levant et al, 1992; Mahalik, et al., 2003; Pleck, 1995; Pleck, Sonenstein, & Ku, 1993; Thompson & Pleck, 1995). The sexist beliefs about masculinity ideology can distort truths and alienate boys. For example, boys may equate emotions with femininity and avoid having feelings because they are considered not masculine. Rather than view emotions as human, the boy may repress his feelings, thereby forfeiting emotions needed to solve his problems. Young males may learn that boys are innately smarter than girls and therefore devalue girls and femininity. This sexist attitude promotes heterosexual antagonism and beliefs that males should be dominant in personal and work relationships. Without knowledge of boys' masculine ideology, educators cannot understand the complex problems that boys face in the classroom and in interpersonal relationships.

The last problem is a lack of curriculum and administrative support to teach boys about their journeys from boyhood to manhood. The specific content areas for boys' programming have gone unspecified. The lack of knowledge about boys' development hinders the creation of psychoeducational programs. Furthermore, significant resistance to programming may exist from Boards of Education, school administrators, and parent groups. Resistance, misinformation, and denial about boys' problems contribute to boys' gender roles being one of the most neglected curricular areas in public education.

Primary Prevention and Psychoeducation: Contexts for Boys' Programming

Based on the research and the denial about boys' problems, we recommend that boys' programming be conceptualized in terms of primary prevention (Albee & Gullotta, 1997) and psychoeducational processes (O'Neil, 2001). We feel that primary prevention and psychoeducation are credible contexts to promote a call to action with boys' problems in schools. Psychoeducational approaches emphasize both cognitive and affective processes and facilitate boys exploring the complexity of gender roles. Primary prevention interventions help boys learn positive views of masculinity and femininity before sexist stereotypes distort the truth about gender roles.

Primary prevention is defined ". . . as coordinated actions seeking to prevent predictable problems, to protect existing states of health and healthy functioning, and to promote desired potentialities in individuals and groups in their physical and sociocultural settings over time" (Bloom, 1996, p. 2). In this way, primary prevention is focused on healthy or at risk people, seeks to reduce risk factors and to increase protective factors, and includes ecological, systemic, collaborative dimensions that are empowering to others (Conyne, 2004). Prevention defined in this way implies that boys are at risk to have problems and can be empowered and protected through psychoeducational programs that facilitate healthy male development.

Psychoeducation has a 30-year history in psychology (Mosher & Spinthall, 1973) but has lacked conceptual clarity and been vague in terms of instructional processes. Given the denial about boys' problems, definitional clarity on what psychoeducation means is critical in promoting prevention programs. Psychoeducation is a synthesis of various theories about learning (Kolb, 1984); student development (Knefelkamp & Slepitza, 1976; Perry, 1970; Touchton et al., 1977), and curative group therapy (Yalom, 1995). Psychoeducation is defined as teaching that uses psychological

and learning principles to facilitate personal, emotional, and intellectual development of students in a classroom or group setting. Boys need to personally embrace their gender role issues, use cognitive frameworks to understand their socialization, and find safe places to express their thoughts and emotions. Because psychoeducation focuses on both the cognitive and affective domains of learning, feelings and emotions have equal weight with conceptual and factual knowledge. Optimally, the psychoeducational environments are places where students can renew and transform themselves.

Psychoeducational teaching is premeditated, strategically planned, and sequentially ordered to maximize student learning and emotional growth. The instructor uses learning theory and other data-based approaches allowing the cognitive and affective domains of learning to interact and complement each other. The psychoeducator invites learners to participate in the learning at their optimal comfort level with no pressure to participate personally and emotionally. The teacher is interactive, personal, and strategic in presenting the content and regulating the learning process. Opposition, resistance, and defensiveness to this kind of learning is expected and discussed openly as the learning occurs. Some students may need extra help or referral to understand their thoughts and feelings as they explore their gender roles. One of the most critical issues is to identify the themes that are appropriate for boys based on their ability and readiness to explore male gender roles.

Thematic Areas to Implement Psychoeducational Programming with Boys

Considerable empirical evidence indicates that adult mens' gender role conflict is correlated with psychological and interpersonal problems (O'Neil, Good, & Holmes, 1995; O'Neil, 2008). This research provides direction for educational programming because many boys live out their problems in adulthood. Research on boys is much more limited; therefore, topics for psychoeducational programming have gone unspecified. The research indicates that boys' gender role conflict relates to psychological distress, family problems, conduct and anger management problems, and negative emotions (Blazina et al., 2005; Cadenhead & Huirec, 2002; Soublis, 2003; Watts & Borders, 2005). This research supports programs related to boys' gender role conflict, stress management, communication skills, and emotional intelligence.

Based on the existing research reported earlier and our own understanding of boys' developmental needs, numerous areas of psychoeducational programming can be recommended. Given the likely difficulties of programming for boys in schools, we recommend that content areas be labeled "boys' life skills" rather than exclusively focusing on masculinity ideology or gender role conflict issues. The life skills label should not stimulate as much resistance or controversy. Table 1 lists 27 thematic content areas in educational programs that could be developed for boys. The programming areas are enumerated to the degree that gender role issues are emphasized. The programming areas include both life skills topics and gender role knowledge areas. Areas 1–7 could be presented with limited emphasis on masculinity issues. Areas 8–17 are topics where some masculinity contexts could be useful to boys. Areas 18–27 are thematic areas where masculinity would be core to any programming.

The 27 areas deserve careful review to determine whether the thematic topics are appropriate for the boys based on their age, cognitive complexity, affective ability, ethnic and racial backgrounds, reading level, and overall maturity. For example, it might be quite appropriate to develop a simple program on personal health care or problem solving with third graders, but inappropriate to offer other programs on male and female relationships or societal and personal oppressions. Furthermore, programs should be selected that have support from school personnel and based on needs assessment data or focused groups.

Table 1
Thematic Areas to Implement Psychoeducational Programs for Boys

Thematic Areas for Programming	Description
1. Problem-Solving Skills	Knowledge about how to identify problems and the specific steps to resolve them in positive ways
2. Conflict Management Skills	Knowledge about how to work through disagreements using communication, nNegotiation, and compromise
3. Decision-Making and Goal-Setting Skills	Knowledge about the steps in decision making and how to create and achieve goals that can be implemented
4. Career Awareness and Planning	Activities that fosters increased career identity and that lead to career decision-making skills
5. Personal Health Care	Information about how to stay physically and psychologically healthy
6. Stress Management	Knowledge about how to identify personal stressors and skills to mediate the thoughts and feelings that maintain the stress
7. Service Learning, Altruism, and Helping Others	Knowledge about the importance of service and altruism in terms of personal growth and development
8. Positive and Healthy Masculinity	Deriving a personal definition of positive and healthy masculinity
9. Assertiveness Skills	Skills on how to use your personal power positively to protect your rights and roles
10. Self-Control and Centering	Skills at being able to control thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and the ability to develop inner solidity inside oneself
11. Empathy Skills	Learning how to sensitively respond to others' feelings, thoughts, and experiences in caring ways
12. Listening Skills	The ability to accurately hear and respond to another person's thoughts and feelings
13. Competition	Knowledge about how to strive against a rival to win or gain something as well as the potential problems with kinds of interaction
14. Courage and Resilience	How to learn to face your fears and bounce back from a failure, loss, or defeat
15. Developing Integrity	How to develop a moral or ethical code of conduct to live your life
16. Sensitivity to Social Justice	Knowledge on how discrimination and oppression operate and how to be involved in eradicating social injustices
17. Emotional Awareness and Expression	Knowledge and experiences on how to label, experience, and express emotions appropriately
18. Power in Relationships	How to understand control, authority, influence, and coercion in relationships
19. Understanding Psychological Abuse	How power, control, and words are used to hurt others emotionally
20. Masculinity Ideology	Knowledge about how men and boys learn assumptions about masculinity and sexist stereotypes that limit human potential
21. Patterns of Gender Role Conflict	Knowledge about how restrictive gender roles can produce negative consequences for boys, men, and others
22. Relationships With Girls and Women	The critical issues with relationships with girls and women in terms of friendships, dating, coworkers, intimacy, and sexual relationships
23. Relationships With Boys and Men	The critical issues with relationships with other boys and men in terms of friendships, intimacy, teamwork, competition, and homophobia
24. Puberty	Understanding how this gender role transition alters one's sense of self personally, interpersonally, and sexually
25. Sexuality	The critical issues related to sexuality in terms of masculine identity, and intimacy in human relationships
26. Understanding Parents	Knowledge about how to manage the complex dynamics between sons and parents
27. Dealing With Loss	How to deal with losing something or someone important to you in terms of experiencing grief and recovery

Psychoeducational Programming on Positive, Healthy, and Affirmative Masculinity

Male gender role problems are sensitive topics for boys; therefore, resistance to participating in programs needs to be fully considered. One strategy to attract boys is offering programs on life skills and positive aspects of being male.

Paradigms of positive masculinity are needed to describe boys' strengths when transcending sexist stereotypes. Patterns of positive masculinity can help boys learn alternatives to sexist attitudes and behaviors that cause gender role conflict. Programming could emphasize what constitutes "healthy masculinity." Mens' strengths and potentialities could focus on themes like responsibility, courage, altruism, resiliency, service, protection of others, social justice, positive fathering, perseverance, generativity, and nonviolent problem solving. Positive masculinity moves away from what is wrong with boys to identifying the qualities that empower males to improve themselves and society. Programs on healthy masculinity could change the misperception that the psychology of men is about documenting what is wrong with boys and men.

Ideas about affirming boys, men, and positive masculinity are emerging. Kilmartin (2007) discusses the positive aspects of masculinity in terms of courage, decision making, problem solving, and risk taking. More affirmative dimensions of masculinity have included: liberated man, "real" man, fully functioning man, mature masculinity, positive male scripts, heroic masculinity, nonsexist masculinity, positive male norms, androgynous man, and spiritually based masculinity. There are only a few examples of interventions that promote healthy masculinity. One activity that has been used in our classes at the University of Connecticut has been the Positive Masculinity Intervention. This intervention has been useful in breaking down resistance and defensiveness with college-age men who are exploring their gender roles. We describe this intervention below as an example of how to promote affirmative masculinity with boys and men.

Positive Masculinity Checklist Intervention

The goal of this activity is to generate ideas about positive masculinity using The Positive Masculinity Checklist (PMC). Table 2 shows the PMC. The PMC is a paper-and-pencil checklist that is used to stimulate ideas about positive masculinity. The PMC lists 60 qualities of positive masculinity. The instructions ask respondents to circle the top 10 qualities that are most important in defining positive masculinity. Next, respondents are asked to rank order their positive qualities of masculinity, with 1 being the most important quality and 10 being the least important. After careful reflection of the top 10 qualities of positive masculinity, participants are asked to write a brief statement on what they think are the attitudes, values, qualities, and behaviors of positive masculinity. Small groups are used for sharing the statements. A more elaborate process is assigning a writing activity that follows this outline: a) Why is it important to develop a new positive paradigm of masculinity? b) Give your own operational definition of positive masculinity; c) Discuss the dimensions of positive masculinity using your PMC (Be explicit about the attitudes, values, qualities, and behaviors, of positive masculinity and define your terms as you describe your new paradigm of masculinity); d) Describe what you want positive masculinity to be in your life; e) Write a concluding statement on what it meant to do this assignment and any problems or gains that you experienced. The overall goal of this intervention is to create positive paradigms of masculinity to which boys can aspire. Instructional impact data indicate that this exercise helps college men break through defensive barriers that limit their gender role journeys (O'Neil, 2001; O'Neil & Egan, 1992).

Implications: Guidelines and Strategies to Gain Entry Into Schools

No guidelines exist on how to effectively enter schools and implement psychoeducational programs for boys. Overall guidelines can be specified and adapted to individual settings. First,

Table 2
The Positive Masculinity Checklist

Below are many qualities of positive masculinity. Read through them and add additional qualities that you think represent positive masculinity. Read through them again and select 10 of the qualities that are most important to you in any definition of positive masculinity. Circle those qualities that would be on your "top 10 list." After you have chosen the qualities, in the space below at the bottom, rank order your positive qualities of masculinity, with 1 being the most important quality and 10 being the least important.

Noncompetitive	Optimistic
Empowering	Nonviolent
Honest	Ambitious
Confident	Open minded
Respectful	Free spirited
Passionate	Asks for help
Nurturing	Supportive
Loving	Goal oriented
Says what he thinks	Kind
Believes in equality	Gentle
Positive model for children	Affectionate
Accepts others	Partners
Intuitive	Not afraid of the unknown
Willing to lose	Tells the truth
Loyal	Responsible
Motivated	Funny sense of humor
Competitive	Self-controlled
Assertive	Able to give up control
Respecting women's power	Takes care of self
Vulnerability	Calm
Doesn't sweat the small stuff	Monogamous
Protectors of society	Peacemakers
Good listeners	Achievers
Creators	Hopeful
Activists	Generous
Protectors	Providers
Gracious	Fights injustices
Good fathers	Moral
Intimate	Has and shares wisdom
Courageous	Compassionate
Add any additional qualities	**Add any additional qualities**

Rank ordering with (1) being the most important and (10) being the least important.

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

programmers should write cogent rationales and data-based proposals that document the need for boys' life skills programs and psychoeducation about gender roles. Second, consultation with teachers and administrators is necessary to determine whether there is openness to preventive programming for boys. A needs assessment or focus groups with boys, teachers, administrators, and parents can provide valuable information about how to offer the initial programming and decrease overt resistance. Presenting needs assessment data from the boys and using it in the program design

can help bring legitimacy and ownership by the school personnel. Funding sources through grants can be sought to release school personnel to develop programs for boys. Financial incentives may be needed for teachers who already feel overburdened by their teaching loads. Schools could team up with local universities that train counselors and school psychologists in designing, implementing, and evaluating programs for boys. A task force of school professionals and boy leaders could create the programming. The title of the program is critical because research indicates that program names can affect appeal and resistance to attend (Blazina & Marks, 2001; Robertson & Fitzgerald, 1992; Rochlen, McKelley, & Pituch, 2006). Titles like "Exploring Your Masculine Problems" may be immediately rejected, whereas "Maximizing Your Potential in Careers and in Relationships" could catch a boy's curiosity and attention. The initial programming should emphasize needed life skills, criteria of positive masculinity, and an affirmation of boys' positive potential. With initial success, the areas of boys' vulnerability could be introduced in the context of the boy's strengths and empowerment. Both process-oriented and outcome evaluations are critical to assess how and whether the programming had positive impact over time.

Conclusions

The call to action for preventing boys' problems focuses on developing psychoeducational programming. Programs on male gender roles and life skills can provide boys with knowledge and tools to prevent and solve problems that inevitably arise throughout adolescence. Creative programs can be developed that first emphasize life skills and positive growth and development. Subsequent programs can introduce more direct information about masculinity and gender roles. With thorough preparation and extensive evaluations, programming for boys could significantly add to school curricula and improve boys' transitions to manhood. The crisis of being a boy in today's society is real and needs proactive attention by professional educators. Our call to action is an invitation for educators to get involved in this important work.

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