



# **Raising Boys: Why Boys Are Different and How to Help Them Become Happy and Well-Balanced Men**

*Steve Biddulph, Paul Stanish (Illustrator)*

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Explores the development of boys from birth to manhood and discusses the relationship between sports and values, creating caring attitudes towards sex, and the role of community and school in raising a boy.

## **Raising Boys: Why Boys Are Different and How to Help Them Become Happy and Well-Balanced Men Details**

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## **From Reader Review Raising Boys: Why Boys Are Different and How to Help Them Become Happy and Well-Balanced Men for online ebook**

### **Melinda says**

So, I have a young son and, sometimes, he's kind of a mystery to me. With my daughter, I knew what I was getting into. Not only did I used to be a little girl, but I have several nieces who I've seen through childhood (I do also have a nephew, but he grew up far from us and we only saw him a couple of times a year). When I found this book, I thought it might shed some light on what was going on with my little guy.

And, yes, it did shed some light for me. Biddulph goes through biological, mental, social, and emotional development of boys. I will say that there wasn't anything that was surprising about the social or emotional development sections, but I did learn quite a bit about biological development of young boys--things that are demystifying my son.

Biddulph also includes a number of "Stories from the Heart" to illustrate some of his points. These vary in usefulness. Some are very enlightening, but some seem rather unneeded or incomplete. Still, I didn't feel that even the least effective of these negatively impacted my experience with this book.

I will admit that this is the first parenting book I've read that focuses on boys. I can't compare it to any other work out there. I can, however, say that this book was of value to me as a parent of a son and I would recommend it to other parents.

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### **Carlie says**

This was a pretty good book. Provocative, thoughtful, full of sound research and hitting a lot of the key points parents of boys worry about, wrestle with and argue over.

Some of the things I took away from it:

\*Its extremely important for adolescents (but perhaps especially boys) to have mentor types who are part friend, part adviser in their...besides their parents.

\*Boys needs risks...make sure there are healthy, okay, daring things to do in their lives.

\*Boys really need moms and dads but the emphasis takes turns with the parents through the stages of growth.

\*Mid-teen boys should never drive a car alone with multiple other boys in it and no adult chaperone.

\*Testosterone surges start happening before pubic hair shows up...and it changes how boys think and act.

\*Sensitive, respectful relationships with women can be taught...modeling is key, both for mom and dad.

And I'm sure there were a host of other things.....lots of good little highlight-able tidbits in here and a pretty sane attitude about why boys matter particularly although not at all more than girls. Cool info.

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### **Cara says**

It's somewhere between a 2 and 3 star book, I'm feeling generous today. It's an easy book, very simple conceptually, and I spent a lot of time frustratingly going 'girls are the same apart from lacking a penis'. However i think if it's your first child, and you're looking for a child raising book with a male slant, it's ok. I was more interested in a book which identified a child's male specific characteristics, and apart from the aforementioned penis, and a lot of either unsourced or poorly sourced research on random boy stuff, there wasn't much. But like I mentioned before, it's an ok book to add to the myriad of other childraising books that you're likely to read to ensure your parenting guilt complex is well developed early on...

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### **Lisa says**

I found this book basic and in some cases offensive. I wouldn't recommend reading it. I spoke to a few people who'd recommended it to me only to find they'd skimmed it or hadn't finished it. I've found the good reads reviews much more informative.

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### **Jessica says**

there were a couple of things that i got from the book that i thought were interesting and worth putting into practice, but for the most part i found myself questioning or doubting most of what the author said. i probably wouldn't recommend it as a must-read parenting book.

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### **Sonja says**

I got lots of great insight on this book. One big arguing point in this book is chapter 7 - Developing a Healthy Sexuality. I do NOT agree that I should be teaching my little boy how to masterbate and that I should have open conversations about his sex life whenever it starts. Omit that chapter, and I could recommend it to anyone. If you want to borrow this book, be prepared - I have marked through that chapter!!

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### **Hannah says**

"Read" probably isn't the right descriptor for this book, which I'm returning to the library mostly untouched. I checked it out only because our favorite librarian, when I checked out another parenting book, recommended this to me as a great way for mothers to learn about their boys and what makes them tick. I probably should have realized that any book subtitled "Why Boys Are Different" wouldn't be a good fit for a mom who dresses her son in his girl cousins' hand-me-down Mary Janes! (Which are way better for traction on an emergent walker than anything else he owns).

I wasn't expecting this book to acknowledge our particular family structure, but I was horrified on behalf of heterosexual families everywhere that Steve Biddulph thinks dads need advice like:

-A good way to teach your son to respect women is for Dad not to smack Mom around.

-Dads should be attentive to their sons lest they turn out gay due to lack of male attention.

-Whether or not it makes them gay, lack of fatherly attention can also give boys ADD.

All that plus a generous helping of sweeping generalizations about boys backed up by minimal scientific evidence made this a very quick "read," indeed. I'm on to what I've heard is a more scientific guide, *It's A Boy!: Understanding Your Son's Development From Birth To Age 18*.

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### **Susan Wolff says**

I'm a parent educator and have read dozens of books on boys with a view to which will most help parents. Biddulph's book *Raising Boys* wins hands down because it's readable by parents who don't have a lot of education, but it's not dumbed down, he takes the best brain science, education research, and family therapy experience, to help parents get a grasp of how to understand boys. He hits the sensible midway spot between the extremes like *Sax* (it's all in the genes) and the old thinking that gender didn't really exist.

In my home country (Australia) this book is in over a million homes, and everyone uses or knows about it. You don't always have to agree, and Biddulph himself says this - he is a professor of psychology but you'd never know it, it's humble, funny, and full of very touching stories. He also gives mothers their own voice. There were places where I teared up, especially in understanding the terrible wounds to men from lack of fathering in the 20th century.

Best bits - the three stages of boyhood. Knowing that boys have to be actively taught to be gentle and helpful. Encouraging fathers to be more involved, and how rough and tumble play helps make boys better at self control. And that boys need to learn to cook !

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### **Kim says**

One word for this book: worthless. The tiny tidbits of useful information were dumbed-down to a ridiculous degree. The author used sweeping generalizations without citing any research. Example? He states that most students who do well on achievement tests do not do well in college. Um, what? Research please. His advice to parents is so broad and so common-sense it is laughable. My favorite? The best way for fathers to teach their sons to treat women well is to not hit their wives. Really? Shocking! Reading this was a complete waste of time. Good thing it only took an hour and a half.

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### **Aissa says**

Very conservative views... I stopped reading it.

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### **Natalie says**

Interesting read, most of it made a lot of sense, and I often found myself going "ohhhh" when faced with something that I hadn't realised before, that suddenly clicked into place!

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### **Devandra Bourne says**

A gentle, funny and challenging book with loads of good ideas, especially for a mum who grew up without boys in her family. Biddulph tells quite gritty stories, doesn't prescribe or have insulting tip-lists like a lot of parenting books. I completely disagree with those reviewers who dismiss it as simple- its deceptively deep, but just accessibly written. Biddulph's work is very famous here in Australia because he aims to reach those who have less education and of course DADS (LOL) and so he uses plain language. But his science is spot on (and I have a neuropsych background).

He doesn't put too much emphasis on gender differences, but he does tell you when and where they do occur. Especially those changes at four, thirteen and fourteen, which parents need to know about.

He makes some people uncomfortable with his frankness, and especially challenges dads to do a better job, but he doesn't patronize them. My husband loved the book and you could see him making an effort to do better.

Here in Australia thousands, if not tens of thousands of parents have questioned whether their boys are ready for school, and made more thoughtful choices, one way or the other, based on this book, and it has changed school practices to becoming more boy friendly.

There are thicker books, but without such practical help, and more partisan books, but Biddulph hits the spot.

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### **Kendra says**

This was a great read for me, I have read a few books about boys and not every boy is the same... so I had to find the one that fit my son. This one was perfect, it gave great insight and really helped me see how I can be a better mother to Alex. This might not be for everyone (boys are different!), but it was perfect for me.

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### **Garth Calder says**

I really enjoyed this book. Lots of practical tips that I wish more parents knew. It was also helpful in my line of work as a youth worker to thing through what helps to make better men specifically. Even if you don't agree with all the authors thought I think it's raises some good questions to be thinking about. A solid 4 stars.

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## **Beth Lequeuvre says**

Quotes like:

"Many gay or bisexual men I have spoken with say the lack of fatherly affection was part of what made male affection more important to the."

"We aren't saying here that all instances of Attention Deficit Disorder are really dad deficit disorders - but quite a lot are."

"If a mother is terribly depressed and therefore unresponsive in the first year or two of her son's life, his brain may undergo changes and become a 'sad brain'. If she is angry, hitting or hurting him, he will be confused over whether she loves him."

These caused me to very quickly realize this is definitely NOT the book for me.

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