

conversations for grown-ups

Mothers of Sons

Julie Metzger, RN, MRN + Peter Metzger, MD

Development: Tasks of Adolescence

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- Physical: Courage
- Emotional: Control
- Social: Community
- Cognitive: Competence

Puberty for Boy Bodies

NOTES



Between the ages of 10-18 boy bodies will:

- Grow an average of 4 inches a year
- Gain 15-75 pounds
- Have testicle and penis growth
- Develop body odor and pimples
- Grow facial, underarm, and pubic hair
- Have voice changes

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REFLECTION

What was your own puberty experience like?

What physical changes did you experience?

How did your family support you during this period of your life?



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Emotional: Self-Control

Boys are looking for connection and listening.

Boys need close, supportive relationships.

Boys need to develop emotional vocabulary and read emotional responses of others

REFLECTION

*How we process emotions is different for everyone.
How did your family talk about emotions when you were growing up?
How does your family talk about emotion now?*

Independence. Dependence. Connection

NOTES



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Our children's primary learning example is through Experience and Example. Empathy offers the message that they are understood, seen, and valued.

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What we know about Emotion Coaching

Source: Gottman Institute

- Empathetic Response
- Explore Options
- Examine Consequences



An example of an empathic response from me might be:

Try this at home:

FEELINGS, ACTIONS, CONSEQUENCES

Pick a specific example. How might this conversation go at home?

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Emotion Coaching Toolkit

Source: Gottman Institute

- It is hard to come up with an Action Plan until your FEELING has been acknowledged.
- Boys who can come up with their own Action Plan are building skills – you are the coach.
- Strong decision-makers become really good at predicting the consequences of their actions.

Conversations Can Be Simple

"You've got this"

"That's rough"

"Im here for you"

"Tell me more"

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Social: Community

Behind boy's arguments and putdowns is a complicated social system in which friendships are deeply valued

SOURCE: Rachel Wiseman

NOTES



QUALITY vs. QUANTITY



A Mature Decision-Maker

SOURCE: Stanford Center for Adolescence

- A. Autonomous in a crowd
- B. Perspective of time and others
- C. Impulse Control

CRUSHES and SEXUALITY



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Cognitive Competence

NOTES



Brains are wired to:

- Seek Pleasure/Avoid Pain
- Seek Approval/Avoid Disapproval
- Seek Connection/Avoid Disconnection
- Under stress – Fight or Flight

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GROWTH MINDSET

FIXED MINDSET

Source: Carol Dweck, PdD
Stanford University

FINAL REFLECTION

"What you see with your teen is what you are likely to get. And therefore as parents, we need to reflect back to them a vision of themselves at their finest."

- Brad Sachs



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Resources for Continued Learning

The Gottman Institute: Emotion Coaching

<https://www.gottman.com/product/emotion-coaching-the-heart-of-parenting-online/>

The Social Institute

<https://thesocialinstitute.com/>

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success, Carol Dweck

<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/40745>

Harvard: Making Caring Common

<https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-families>

DHHS: The Adolescent Brain

<https://dhhs.ne.gov/MCAH/Adolescent%20Brain.pdf>

American Medical Association Boy's Guide to Becoming a Teen

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/204095.American_Medical_Association_Boy_s_Guide_to_Becoming_a_Teen?from_search=true&from_srp=true&qid=3CkfYNOOPu&rank=1

Planned Parenthood: Resources for sexuality education for youth on the autism spectrum

<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-massachusetts/education/parent-buzz-newsletter/parent-buzz-e-newsletters/sexuality-education-youth-autism-spectrum>

Young Men's Health: Boston Children's Hospital

"A Parent's Guide on Puberty for Boys with Disabilities"

<https://vkc.vumc.org/healthybodies/files/HealthyBodiesAppendix-Boys.pdf>