
Recommendation 3

By Ian Lillico

“There is a concern that both families and society may be prematurely separating boys from their mothers. Many boys and men suffer lifelong problems as they often long to return to the close nurturing relationship they had with their mother. No amount of mother nurturing is harmful for boys or makes them into weaklings or sissies.”

William Pollack in his book – “Real Boys”, speaks of the need for boys to be with their mothers for as long as possible to develop their emotional intelligence and stability. The Boy Code dictates that boys grow up too quickly and bury emotions and feelings. Adults also have beliefs that boys need to toughen up early and remove themselves from the emotional warmth of their mother so as not to make them weak. This is totally incorrect and researchers worldwide believe that this idea has contributed to our high divorce and separation rate. If boys have been prematurely separated from their mother, physically or emotionally, they go looking for another mother in their female relationships.

These first relationships, which often convert to marriage or long-term relationships, are often based on the male needing to be further mothered and emotionally developed if his real mother has not completed this. After some time this woman does her job and aids the man to come to grips with his feelings and develop his emotional intelligence. At that point he then wants a partner and this is often a different woman. Many marriage guidance counsellors believe this has contributed to the failure of many first marriages and, by acknowledging the need for close, familial nurturing by his real mother; we lessen the possibility that others will need to continue this process.

When a boy is given the impression that he should be outside playing sport and roughing with the other boys rather than being at home he begins to look towards his father for guidance. If he doesn't have a father or if his father is distant (and doesn't spend the time with him) he often faces the possibility of juvenile delinquency. He then looks for screen idols of men and believes that all men act like the ones on the movies and videos that fit the Boy Code. They usually contain violence with men who are rough and tough and who don't think before they act. The young male on the streets, then, acts out in hyper masculine or macho ways as he thinks this is what men should act like.

William Pollack believes, through extensive research, that if boys are allowed to separate at their own pace, we would not find men suffering lifelong problems in terms of their emotional instability. He claims that they long to return to the warm, comforting and safe relationship they had with their mother. Boys cannot be made weak by warm, loving relationships with either mother or father. This only makes them into loving, caring and strong young men who become fine members of our society.