

Boyhood Index United States

Adjectives most commonly used by 8- to 15-year-old boys to describe themselves:

helpful, kind, smart, outgoing

Adjectives they used to describe a “good man”:

helpful, nice, caring

Percentage of parents of boys who think boys feel comfortable sharing:

When they feel happy: 87

When they feel love: 54

When they feel weak: 28

Proportion of boys aged 14 to 19 who say society expects them to be aggressive or violent when they feel angry:

2 in 5

Who say they feel pressure to be strong:

3 in 4

Proportion of US adults who feel boys should be encouraged more to talk about their feelings when they're sad or upset:

3 in 5

The most important thing boys say they want from their parents:

willingness to listen and understand

Most promising message from interviews with 10- to 19-year-old boys:

“Don't be afraid to be yourself.”

Proportion of boys in one study whose father shares difficult feelings:

1 in 16

Most common fear keeping boys from sharing feelings with their friends:

“It'll be used against me.”

Percentage of 10- to 19-year-old boys who feel pressure:

To play sports: 61

To be physically strong: 72

Average proportion of all high school athletes who will experience a concussion in their sports seasons:

1 in 5

In a study of 7- to 8-year-old boys playing youth tackle football, average number of head impacts per player in a single season:
107

Concussion rates for boys aged 5 to 14 in youth football:
5% each season

Percentage of bachelor's degrees awarded to:
Male students: 42
Female students: 58

Percentage of bachelor's degrees in STEM fields awarded to:
Male students: 64
Female students: 36

Proportion of California children aged 12 to 17 in one study who identify as gender-nonconforming: 1 in 4

Rate of these children experiencing psychological distress compared to those who do not share this identity: twice as likely

Number of leading roles for LGBTQIA+ characters or characters with disabilities in the top 25 Nielsen-rated television shows for boys aged 7 to 13:
0

Percentage of ninth-grade boys in the United States who'd ever had sexual intercourse:
In 2005: 39
In 2015: 27

In a different study, percentage of boys who'd had sex before 13 years old who said they had "mixed feelings" about it: 45

Percentage of boys who hear other boys making sexual comments or jokes about girls:
At least once a week: 62
At least once a day: 36

Percentage of Black boys among male preschoolers:
19

Among male preschoolers receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions:
45

Percentage of US neighborhoods in which Black boys and white boys who grew up next to each other in homes of similar income have similar wealth as adults:

1

In which Black boys fare worse as adults than white boys:

99

Estimated percentage of neighborhoods in which this is also true for girls:

0

The sons of Black families from the top 1% of income earners have about the same chance of being incarcerated on a given day as the sons of white families earning:
\$36,000 per year

Chance of a son of a Black family earning \$36,000 per year being incarcerated compared to a white family with the same income:
over 3 times as likely

Beyond teaching style or academic outcomes, the two highest priorities expressed by Black boys about their teachers:
care and being seen beyond stereotypes of Black masculinity

Percentage of US teens aged 13 to 17 who have a smartphone or access to one:

95

Who say that social media has a mostly positive effect on people their own age:

31

Minimum estimated amount that could be saved by the US economy per year if harmful masculine norms ceased to exist among young men:
\$15,771,790,000

Minimum number of countries with a gross domestic product lower than this figure:

70

View of a "good man" offered by a recently interviewed 16-year-old male:

"A good man will always show their love. Because if others don't show love, then you don't feel like they love you. Or they don't care about you."

Resources for the Boyhood Index

“good man”

PerryUndem. (2019). Informing a campaign on healthy masculinity: Report on insights from in-depth interviews with boys ages 8-16. PerryUndem Research/Communications.

feel comfortable

Barker, G., Heilman, B., & Reichert, M. (2020). Staying at home with our sons: Fostering healthy masculinity in challenging times. Promundo-US & Kering Foundation.

<https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Fostering-Healthy-Masculinity-in-Challenging-Times.pdf>

society expects them

Plan International. (2018, September 12). The state of gender equality for U.S. adolescents: Full research findings from a national survey. <https://www.planusa.org/docs/state-of-gender-equality-2018.pdf> <https://www.planusa.org/>