

# BOYS LAG BEHIND

by Brian Burgess, Forefront Families LLC

Worldwide, boys are being out-paced by girls in education. Following World War 2 girls lagged way behind boys, especially in math and science. Girls were not expected to succeed in business or College. They were to find fulfillment in being a good wife, mother, a teacher, secretary, or a nurse.

The war saw mass employment of women. Surprisingly, men found a force to be reckoned with as women competed on the job market with them. It took many protests and the feminist movement to bring women's equality to the fore. In some areas of business women still do not get the opportunity that men do, but a movement to promote women's issues worked.

Now the problem is that we need a like movement to get boys back on track. There are now more women than men going to College, more women being trained as doctors, as lawyers, and the other professions. Over the last two decades according to research, boys seem to have put more stock on athletic prowess than on education. Fathers who will attend their son's athletic events, but not turn up to PTA or parent teacher nights, reinforce this. Is it hard for the son to figure where he should put his energy?

It has become 'uncool' to do well in school. It is regarded as a feminine thing to excel in class. I found as a school administrator that boys generally felt that they wanted to be a sports' professional, and that it was only girls who were studious. Boys who were brave enough to want to succeed educationally were often mocked and called 'gay' or 'girls'.

Increasing 'fatherlessness' affects boys' attitude and response to education. It was found that an encouraging father who was involved in his son's education led to his son's success. The son's school attendance was higher, and they were more likely to go to College than boys who had no father figure.

What then is the answer to turn the tide of male achievement? There is no easy solution. We have a societal problem with so much family dissolution. We cannot force fathers to stay with their family, but unless male mentors can show the way our boys will continue to suffer. As a society we have to turn the tide of boys believing that athletics is the only way to a life of success. Offers of huge amounts of money entices boys to believe that they can be just like their sports heroes.

Other nations have turned towards single-gender classrooms and single gender schools as an answer to the problem. And it is showing very positive results! Boys' and girls' brains are wired differently and they learn in different

ways. Boys are far more kinesthetic and 'hands-on' than girls. They don't sit as still. When boys are in the same class as girls, the girls will tend to be quiet and not offer opinions. I observed dominating boys throw derisive comments at girls in class. Some girls would give it right back, while others reeled and said no more.

So much energy was directed towards impressing the other gender that the learning process was impaired. In single-gender classes and schools students claim to be more focused, and academic results are positively better. Several States are experimenting with this major issue and Federal permission has been granted for school systems to carry out trials. We need to do for boys what society did for girls decades ago, to raise their educational standard. Maybe we can save our boys.

If you have any comments or questions on this subject, please do not hesitate to contact us at [sally@forefrontfamilies.org](mailto:sally@forefrontfamilies.org). We invite you to also check out our website at [www.forefrontfamilies.org](http://www.forefrontfamilies.org) and our blog site at [www.forefrontfamilies.blogspot.com](http://www.forefrontfamilies.blogspot.com) for further assistance.