

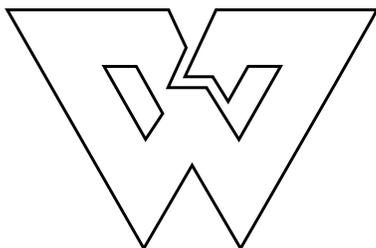
# HOW TO PROMOTE HEALTHY MASCULINITY

10 tips for promoting healthier masculinities among boys and young men:

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Take the White Ribbon pledge, or sign up for our newsletter to receive more information and stay in touch.

[boysdontcry.ca](http://boysdontcry.ca)



white ribbon

### 1. MODEL A FULL RANGE OF HEALTHY EMOTIONS.

For boys, it's especially important to see you express a multitude of feelings, including sadness, loss, frustration, delight and happiness.

### 2. EXPRESS AND IDENTIFY YOUR OWN FEELINGS.

Children can understand more easily when you give a reason for your reaction, e.g. "I'm crying because I'm sad and upset," "I feel frustrated because I can't find my book," "This thunderstorm scares me."

### 3. DISCUSS GENDER STEREOTYPES AND THEIR IMPACTS.

Explain to boys that not sharing our feelings may make us feel depressed, and that not talking about why we're angry or upset may lead us to use violence.

### 4. DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN PHYSICAL STRENGTH AND STRENGTH OF CHARACTER.

Boys need to hear that expressing feelings and emotions is very healthy, and that being strong is as much about being gentle, respectful and kind as it is about muscles.

### 5. ENCOURAGE AND CELEBRATE SELF-EXPRESSION.

Let boys know it's okay to step outside the "man box" and take on behaviours and choices associated with any gender.

### 6. CELEBRATE HEALTHY MASCULINITIES.

A healthy masculinity is one that's devoid of stereotypes; promotes kindness, empathy and peaceful interactions; and empowers boys to be confident in their true selves.

### 7. CONSIDER POSITIVE DISCIPLINE OVER PUNITIVE DISCIPLINE.

Controlling a child's behaviour with corporal or punitive discipline practices lead to poor modelling and undeveloped skills in getting along with others. Consider more positive alternatives to gain a child's cooperation, such as logical consequences, time outs, acknowledging desirable behaviours and reinforcing forgiveness of wrongs.

### 8. MODEL AND TEACH BOYS ABOUT CONSENT.

It's never too early to talk about consent in broader terms using everyday examples (ask permission to borrow a toy; ask first before giving your friend a hug.) In later years, talk about it as a foundation for healthy and respectful relationships.

### 9. HELP BOYS UNDERSTAND GENDER AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY.

Teach boys that some boys grow up to be attracted to other boys, some girls are attracted to girls, and some young people don't want to identify as a boy or girl.

### 10. EDUCATE BOYS ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY.

Help them learn the definition and value of allyship, and the importance of speaking out against gender-based violence, racism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.