



NURTURING OUR *BOY CHILDREN*

1. Show them **LOVE** -hug them, play with them, talk with them (not *at* them); make time for them even though you may have a daily routine or work schedule that is punishing.
2. Encourage them to talk and to share their feelings.
3. Talk about feelings: use feeling words so you send the signal that their own feelings and the feelings of others (their peers, elders, classmates, girls) are to be respected.
4. Do not ever say: **Boys don't cry**. Let them cry when there is need to. In those times, provide comfort. Show understanding and empathy. DO NOT shame them when they cry. They need to find healthy outlets for emotions. Bottled up emotions will explode one day into behaviours we would rather not witness.
5. Make every effort to develop the quality of EMPATHY in our boys so that they will develop the habit of standing in another's shoes, seeing with another person's eyes, hearing with another person's ears and understanding with another person's heart. The heart, let me say, plays an important role in understanding. We understand not only with our logical faculties.
6. Encourage them to make decisions based on consulting head, heart and hand: Is it right? Is it necessary? Is it kind?
7. Make every effort to build a positive sense of self. We were not born with SELF. Parents are primarily responsible for this. Nurture of SELF (self-esteem, a positive image of self, positive perception of self, self-confidence) is a primary responsibility of the home. **This is their foundation for satisfying relationships in every sphere of their life.**
8. Fathers need to bond with their sons- find time to do things together (play cricket, fly kites, build a puzzle, read them a story, go with them to the movies (the



occasional boys' *lime*). Your boys must not FEAR you or cower and hide in a corner when you come home.

9. Stop criticizing and over criticizing your boys. Yes, boys will be boys, and you need to be patient and understanding in treating with misdemeanours and mischief. Work out consequences together with them.
10. Let them play.
11. Know who their friends are.
12. *Communicate, communicate, communicate*. This helps to keep the lines of communication open.
13. As parents, be positive role models. A father particularly and other male relatives need to model the behaviours they want to nurture in their sons and other boys in their family.
14. Develop a sense of responsibility from a tender age: give them age -appropriate chores; responsibility empowers children.
15. Give praise when they *get it right*; genuinely acknowledge their efforts. Be specific about what you are praising them for. When they do not *get it right*, encourage them and support them.
16. DO NOT beat your sons. Do not ring their ear etc. Do not embarrass and humiliate them. Do not be cruel to them. We can be cruel verbally, in our body language, in our neglect of them and when we repeatedly ignore their cries for attention. This is where they learn violence from; they **will** practise what they see. Other people will pay later on for their unresolved issues. They will take it out on the innocent and unsuspecting.
17. Do not bully your boys. As parents, we are sometimes unaware that we are engaging in bullying behaviours.
18. Show your boys **unconditional** love. They may not be the sportsman you expected them to be; they may not show promise of academic brilliance. Every boy has his niche. Develop interests and talents they are showing and help them find their niche.



19. Teach them to say “sorry.” This does not negatively affect masculinity. Indeed, it enhances it.
20. Talk to them about how they should treat a girl. Where there are sisters in the home, nurture in them responsibility for protecting them, caring for them and respecting them so that they begin to understand how women should be treated.
21. Mothers must develop strong bonds with their boys.
22. Be a dynamic, **authoritative** parent; avoid **AUTHORITARIANISM**.
23. Nurture positive values **largely through your example**.
24. Teach your boys to pray so that when life throws up challenges, they know where to turn for help. Great strength lies within. Develop in them the habit of connecting with a Power greater than themselves by whatever name they know that POWER to be.
25. Nurture patience, kindness, self -control, perseverance and RESILIENCE in our boys. The home is the training ground for what we wish to nurture in our boys.

“Only an honourable man treats women with honour and integrity and only a vile and dishonourable man humiliates and degrades women”. Prophet Muhammad

*“ From ancient times, the feminine aspect of the Divine has been worshipped in various ways. The Veda declares that where women are honoured and esteemed, **there**, with all its potency. Divinity is present. Sathya Sai Baba*

“Do not beat a woman even with a flower.” Prophet Muhammad.