

The Way of Boys

Raising Healthy Boys in an Age of Unfair Expectations, Diagnoses, and Pills

Are Psychiatric Labels and Pills the Only Answer?

- Boys are 3x more likely to be treated for ADHD than girls, and the number of diagnoses has nearly quadrupled over a recent 10-year period.
- There has been a 600% increase in the prescribing of anti-psychotic drugs to children and teens, once again, mostly boys.
- Despite the worrisome side effects of these drugs (many of which are untested and unapproved for use in young children), medical practices continue to diagnose young boys and prescribe medication in less than 15 minutes.
- School-wise, boys receive the majority of special education services and are diagnosed with learning disabilities far more often than girls.
- Those receiving special education may be the lucky ones. Preschool boys are expelled 4.5x more often than girls, and at rates exceeding any other group of American children (including high school).

What Parents Haven't Been Told

No one is telling parents **why young boys have more struggles early on**, how their development is different than girls, and how these natural differences make early school experiences challenging.

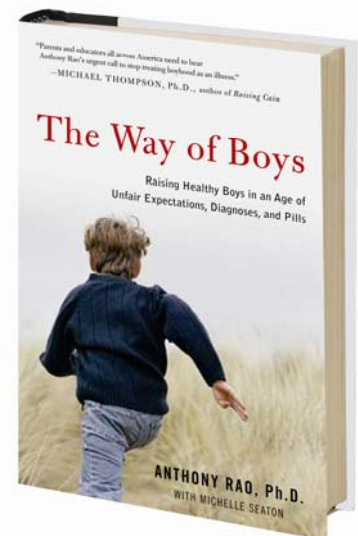
No one is telling parents that **many boys diagnosed with ADHD show a reversal of symptoms** when they are given more outdoor time to exercise, play freely, and explore.

No one is explaining to parents that **most boys outgrow a diagnosis of ADHD**. New brain imaging research confirms that these kids are not abnormal, only delayed in certain skills by a few years. They turn out healthy and capable, like everyone else.

No one is telling parents that **up to 20%, maybe more, of diagnoses made by professionals for behavior problems in young boys aren't accurate**. Diagnosing very young boys with disorders is often unreliable and tells us very little about how they will turn out years down the line.

No one is explaining to parents that **medications can't cure developmental problems**, and they can't do something that a person can't ultimately do on their own. Once medications stop, any gains a child has made are often lost. By contrast, teaching a boy self-management skills, and promoting better parent and teacher practices, fuel a child's long-term development.

No one is telling parents that **most of the medications used to treat ADHD work on everyone to increase focus and goal setting**. While helpful for some kids who struggle, their helpfulness is not proof that a child has a disorder. The effects of smart behavior management, positive academic support, and regular exercise offer more than pills—and offer real solutions that promote success for the longer term.



“Parents and educators all across America need to hear Anthony Rao’s urgent call to stop treating boyhood as an illness. *The Way of Boys* is wise and believable; it restores our faith in normal boy development (with all its ups and downs). Dr. Rao’s perspective, experience and humor will be of enormous help to any parent whose son is struggling with school or his family.”

—Michael Thompson, Ph.D., author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys*

- It’s time for a national discussion to stop medicating so many of our youngest boys.
- It’s time we paused and took a measured, smarter approach to dealing with the struggles facing young boyhood, and raising kids healthy and whole.
- It’s time we pushed back on increasing competition and high expectations that force boys to have to behave like little adults.
- It’s time we helped boys reclaim their childhood.
- It’s time we simplified our lives, and stopped rushing to costly medical appointments and pharmacies to fix our challenges.

What *The Way of Boys* Will Do For Parents

Once they appreciate the real differences in how young boys develop, **parents will better understand why their son is struggling** in school, getting singled out for evaluation, and possibly heading on the path to a psychiatric diagnosis.

Parents will better understand why many boys experience a range of problems as part of their early development, such as showing poor attention or fidgetiness during class, acting aggressively on the playground, or being shy in new social situations. **Parents will have the information they need to prevent them getting caught up in trends of fast diagnosing and quick pills** to handle their son’s normal, although sometime rocky, early years of development.

Parents can learn how other parents have successfully used common sense and helpful behavior management to move their boys forward, from being stuck and frustrated, onto a better developmental path. They’ll learn how to know the difference between serious problems and normal developmental glitches. **In clear, simple language, parents will understand what symptoms and diagnoses mean, and when medication is absolutely necessary.** You’ll learn if its time to get an evaluation, how to secure a qualified child health professional, how to deal with concerns at school, handle parent-teacher conferences more positively, and handle problems with play dates.

Parents can also learn **what their son will be like when he’s grown up.** *The Way of Boys* provides a rare opportunity to hear the stories and experiences of struggling young boys now grown up, their views of what worked, and didn’t work, as parents, teachers, and therapists tried to help.

With more than 20 years of clinical experience helping parents raise boys, and instructing hundreds of professionals in child development and behavior therapy, **Dr. Anthony Rao provides insight into the lives of real moms and dads struggling to understand the unique, wonderful nature of their sons, and practical solutions for the way forward.**

