

Connecting With Boys

- Boys do not identify and express feelings as quickly as girls. They might not be clear right away as to what they feel. Allow boys time to finish a situation then talk about it afterward.
- Watch for subtle openings to more emotional content.
- Use self-disclosure, non threatening topics to establish trust.
- Be patient. Stay centered.
- Learn about youth culture and, in particular, young men's culture. Read, ask questions, listen.
- Women, watch your tendency to pursue. Allow your boy space.
- Men, watch your tendency to get disconnected. Get involved and stay involved in your boys' daily lives.
- Honor a boy's need for silence.
- Timing is everything. Ask, step away, give them time to come to you. Allow boys to walk away then return.
- Allow boys to express with movement and activity. Talk 'shoulder to shoulder' with them.
- Boys are shame phobic. Find places to talk that are 'shame free'.
- Allow boys to talk about feelings indirectly. Use metaphor, stories, and share your personal examples when relevant.
- REALLY LISTEN!

