# A mother’s plea for balanced conversations about modern masculinity



A recent social media post shared within a mothers' group highlighted a thought-provoking jumper with the slogan “Boys will be boys,” altered to read “Boys will be wonderful humans,” sparking reflections on the narratives shaping the lives of young men today. The jumper was donned by a mother of three sons who expressed a growing awareness of the contrasting messages surrounding masculinity—one side exuding hyper-misogyny and toxic masculinity, while the other often demonises male identity altogether.

In her analysis, the mother expresses concern over the online culture, where polarising viewpoints are increasingly made mainstream. She articulates that social media can often feel like a battleground of extreme positions, noting that men are portrayed in a light where they're either deemed toxic or shameful simply for their gender. This framing, she believes, creates a troubling landscape for young boys to navigate as they grow into adulthood.

Reflecting on her own teenage experiences, the writer recalls the relatively simpler nature of social interactions, comparing them to the complex digital dynamics of today. While there was still undesirable behaviour during her youth, she acknowledges that it was not as exacerbated by a constant online presence. She illustrates her journey through some challenging encounters, including instances of harassment, which have evidently shaped her view of the importance of addressing these issues.

Recollecting formative moments from her youth—behaviours presumably viewed as unacceptable, such as being stalked or spat upon—she provides a raw glimpse into the adversities faced by women and the lasting impact these events can have. Despite these negative experiences, she highlights positive memories, including friendships with trustworthy males who stood up against inappropriate behaviour and supported her and others through difficult encounters.

As a mother of three boys, her reflections shift towards her aspirations for their upbringing. She wishes to protect them from the harshness of the world while simultaneously preparing them to be compassionate, responsible individuals. She conveys a desire for them to develop empathy and courage, encouraging them to embrace their identities without feeling burdened by societal expectations or stereotypes. The aim is not merely to shield them but to cultivate a generation of boys who can positively contribute to society, embodying kindness and awareness.

This personal narrative serves to underscore the complexity of modern masculinity and the pressing need for balanced discourse around the experiences of boys and men. By fostering understanding and encouraging accountability among young males, the dialogue may shift towards building a more inclusive and compassionate future, where boys can grow into wonderful humans, as aspired in the transformed jumper slogan.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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2. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-moment-youth/202202/how-toxic-masculinity-harms-young-boys> - It analyzes how societal expectations and toxic masculinity affect young boys' development, resonating with the mother’s concerns stated in the article.
3. <https://www.ted.com/talks/benjamin_moore_what_happens_when_we_talk_about_masculinity> - This TED Talk highlights the importance of discussing masculinity in healthier ways, paralleling the reflections on modern masculinity presented in the article.
4. <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/why-are-young-boys-committing-suicide-more-often-rcna108833> - This piece covers alarming trends regarding mental health among young boys, supporting the article's notion of the challenging landscape they navigate as they grow up.
5. <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/toxic-masculinity-society-men_n_5c97f9e3e4b0f22ea23e4781> - This article discusses the societal pressures faced by men and boys, reinforcing the theme of the mother’s challenges with raising her sons in today's environment.
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7. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMieEFVX3lxTE9oYjkybm5sWUxyenprREIyaG9QVXJsUG9MRHU2cy1LeThVS0FxNGpleFB5ZDl4R0JsQ1EtZFF3a3FQOTQtV3ZjNkJNZEZLN01qd1ZlLTZfeGlDdU1TblB0Ml9MeGI5VHcwWFZSZjdMZ01YQXNBcm5rLQ?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data