

[[Adult male voices over images of young boys, then teens, then men]] Stop crying. Stop with the tears. Don't cry. Pick yourself up. Stop with the emotions. Don't be a pussy. Don't let nobody disrespect you. Be cool and be kind of a dick. Always keep your mouth shut. Nobody likes a tattletale. Bros come before hos. Don't let your woman run your life. What a fag. Get laid, do something. Be a man. Be a man. Grow some balls.

[[Joe Ehrmann]] The three most destructive words that every man receives when he was a boy is when he was told to be a man.

[[Michael Kimmer]] We've constructed an idea of masculinity in the United States that doesn't give young boys a way to feel secure in their masculinity so we make them go prove it all the time.

[[Judy Chu]] Within their peer group culture, each of them is posturing based on how the other boys are posturing. And what they're missing is what they each really want, which is just that closeness.

[[Male student 1]] In good time, guys are like really close to each other, but when things get a little bit worse, you're on your own.

[[Male student 2]] From middle school, I had four really close friends. Once I kind of went into high school, I struggle finding people I can talk to because I feel like I'm not supposed to get help.

[[Ashanti Branch]] Our kids get up every morning, they have to prepare their mask for how they're going to walk to school. A lot of our kids don't know how to take the mask off.

What is it you don't let people see. Almost 90% of you had pain and anger on the back of that paper.

[[Male student 3]] If you never cry, then you have all these feelings stuffed up inside you, and then you can't get them out.

[[Niobe Way]] They really buy into a culture that doesn't value what we've feminized. If we're in a culture that doesn't value caring, doesn't value relationships, doesn't value empathy, you are going to have boys and girls, men and women, go crazy.

[[Male student 4]] I had anger issues in high school. I felt like an outcast.

[[Male student 5]] I've been suspended at least once every year I was here.

[[Male student 6]] We would just look for trouble and just try to fight.

[[William Pollack]] Boys are more likely to act out, they're more likely to become aggressive. Most people miss that as depression, or see it as a conduct disorder, or just a bad kid.

[[Male student 7]] I felt like just giving up on life. I had suicide thoughts in my head at sixth grade.

[[Male student 8]] I've felt alone for...for a long time. And I actually thought about killing myself.

[[James Gilligan]] Whether it's homicidal violence or suicidal violence, people resort to such desperate behavior when they are feeling shamed and humiliated, or feel they would be if they didn't prove that they were real men.

[[Joseph Marshall]] If you're told from day one "Don't let nobody disrespect you" and "This is how you handle it as a man," respect is linked to violence.

[[Male student 9]] If I can man up, why step down from that, you feel me?

[[Male student 10]] It's like instinct.

[[Voiceover of aggressive adult male voices]] So man up. Man up. Man up. Man up. Grow some fucking balls. Act like a man. Be a man. Be a man. For my kids, I was going to end this hyper-masculine narrative here.