

High Risk Males | Ed Maynard, Ph.D

Introduction: Our television, radio and print media continue to report the events that teenage males have perpetuated. The road accidents, drug use, violence and crime are a constant reminder that a number of our youth are in danger to themselves and the community. The word of God has warned us that: "There will be terrible times in the last days." We are witnessing an aspect of these "terrible days" among our youth. It is our God-given responsibility to prevent and restore our youth from this terrible scourge.

I. Definition and examples of risk factors

- A. Definition: "A clearly defined behavior, either environmental or genetic, that is associated with an increased possibility that a disorder will develop in an individual"
- B. Risk factors: The major one is poor family management. The exposure to risk factors plus an absence of parental supervision will lead to risky behavior on the part of teens. These risk factors are seldom individualized, they are instead clusters.
 1. Fascination with firearms & a tendency to use them; housed by single mothers (unable to control the teen); have observed aggression & violence at home; poor intellectual capacity & academic performance (school becomes an outgrowth of the home); expose to early sexuality; parents with emotional or psychological problems; abused by parents

II. Characteristics of teens at risk

- A. Antisocial behavior
- B. Availability of firearms
- C. Violent home life
- D. School failure
- E. Bullying and being bullied
- F. Poverty
- G. Early exposure to sexual activity
- H. Dysfunctional parents
- I. Parental abuse
- J. Negative attitudes toward school: they don't have a sense of social convention that the school requires. They school requires that the student follow the rules.
- K. Rural to urban move: in the rural they knew everyone in the community. They could not misbehave because people held them accountable. In the city, they are lost in the mix. The child that might know better "English" than the parents. The parents have no clue of what is going on
- L. Sexual abuse

III. Peer influence

- A. Gang involvement: they want to "fit in"
- B. Drug use: peer influence. They look to the gang as a sort of "family" We long to be with another and be accepted.
- C. Rejection by peers:

IV. Community factors

- A. Availability of illegal substances
- B. Availability of firearms
- C. High crime area
- D. Lack of community organization
- E. Crime as adaptive

V. Results of high risk behavior

- A. Statistics on high risk behavior: every 30 second, a baby is born into poverty
- B. Example of high risk behavior: testosterone in either a positive/negative output

- C. Prevention of high risk behavior: high risk males may have never attached to or bonded with a parent.

VI. The nature of the problem

- A. Being male
- B. Violence: he lives in poverty – watches tv and realizes that he doesn't have what other people have. "What hurt me most about not having a father, was that I saw other people with fathers"; He is forced to listen to a woman (his mother)
- C. "Modeling" of negative behavior
- D. Anger and "displaced aggression"; people then begin to act out aggressively.
- E. Poor refusal skills; they don't know how to refuse things that are wrong
- F. Drug use
- G. Poor school performance
- H. Fatherless boys
- I. High risk community
- J. High school violence
- K. Poor school adjustment

VII. Intervention with high risk teens

- A. Prevention
 1. Parent education
 2. Relationship with parents
 3. Early identification of high risk behaviors
- B. Models of intervention
 1. The "DeSisto Glow"
 2. Walter Reed school
 3. Corrective emotional experience

Conclusion: The problem of high risk behavior among teenage males is a serious one. The interventions created to address it are producing some positive results. These need to be publicized and replicated cross this country. The most effective of these measures is early prevention. The testimony of the Lord Jesus must be perpetuated and our youth are the ones to do it. Paul tells Timothy: "You then my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will be able to teach others." (II Timothy 2:2)

Soul Care Notes:

Genesis 22:1-11
Proverbs 22:6
Ephesians 6:4
II Timothy 2:2
Proverbs 22:15
Judges 13:8
I Samuel 3:13
I Corinthians 4:15
I John 2:13
Matthew 19:14
Ephesians 6:1
Proverbs 19:18

Study Questions:

1. What are some of the main causes of high risk behavior among male teens?
2. Explain the function of the "Corrective Emotional Experience."
3. Why is negative attitude toward school related to high risk behavior?
4. Define and discuss the role of "displaced aggression."
5. Why are fatherless boys more at risk for dysfunctional behavior?
6. What appears to be motivating factors in the Columbine High School murders?
7. Discuss the proverb: "It is better to train a boy than to repair a man."