Book shows ways to freedom from restrictive 'boy code'

Alice McCarthy has asked James H. McCarthy, an editor and computer expert, to review an important book, 'Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhoud' by William Pollack (Rondom House 1998). Alice McCarthy highly recommends his book to her readers. "It's like "Reviving Ophelia," Oh great, I thought. A copy cat book. Now I tget to learn how boys are as misunderstood and neglected as girls. I hoped my voice over the phone didn't reveal my thoughts about reviewing 'Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood."

roviewing "Roal Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyshood."

Real Boys sat a few days on my kitchen table. The wide, bright eyes and open face of the young boy on the cover turned in that abort time from vulnerable and inviting to a hard stare of challenge. My resistance green. Finally, reluctantly, I started reading. I found I am very familiar with what William Pollack calls the "Boy Code." I want to be caring and sensitive and empathetic — to hug the "new masculinity". — but I don't want to talk about it. Real men don't talk about it. Real men don't talk about "growing."

I mention my own resistance to "Real Boys." my own experience of the Boy. The work of the Boys. The started Boys carries the voice and experience and the story of what it's like to grow up a boy. Mothers, fathers, and teachers need this book as much as boys do.

William Pollack, Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist and codirector of the Center for Men at the Harvard Medical School, and an assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at the Harvard Medical School.

"Real Boys' is based on nearly 20 years of clinical experience with boys as well as on his recent study "Listening to Boys Voices."

Pollack's thesis is plain. Boys even those who seem "fine," are

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in trouble Boys
struggle, often
disastroucly,
under he
weight of outdated gender
sterroty pos.
Boys are pushed
and pulled into
conforming, on
the one hand, to
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to the hand, to the set what it means to be a man, and on the man, and on the mask of being "real" men!

Follack is a skilled and gifted clinician: Part 1, "Real Bysy," dismantles the commonplace myths of boyhood. Part II, 'Cometing to Boys," is a "haw to" section, Here Follack tells how thelp boys break free from the Boy Code stratigacket. Any parent or teacher will benefit from the practical advice in this section.

the practical advice in this section.

Part III, "When the Bough Breaks," deals with the most serious consequences of the Boy Gode: depression, violence, and the impact of divorce on boys.

Pollack ends the book on a helpful, hopeful note, sharing in Part IV, "Staying Connected: Real Boys, Real Men," a revised code for boys to live by.

Ironically, mothers may find this book more immediately helpful than fathers. It is mothers who face the horrible Catch-22 of being responsible for their son's emotional growth and yet mandated by society to keep pushing their son away and out into the world.

The common model for raising boys is a negative one. Boys are taught, above all, not to be like girls. The shaming playground taunts and canche fury are just symptoms of how most of us believe boys should be.

Real Boys is a positive alternative for families, communities, and boys themselves, to grawing

M Above all, 'Real Boys' carries the voice and experience and the story of what it's like to grow up a boy. Mothers, fathers and teachmuch as boys do.

up — and living — under the Boy Code. Share this book with a boy, however old he is.

Alice McCarthy adds: Rend what William Pollack says about his book in "Raising and Loving Boys." March 1999, Working Mother magazine. As Pollack says, Despite the messages you might receive about 'letting go' of your son, not 'babying' him, you simply can never show him too much love or empathy. Don't cut off your affection and support to let him 'stand on his own'.

Alice McCarthy has raised four sons. She hopes her love has suntained each as two of them parent their own children, and as they work in their important carcers: a surgeon, a plant carcers: a surgeon, a plant carcers: a surgeon, a plant geneticist, writers, and editors, including Jim McCarthy.

Jim McCarthy is a freelance writer from Chicago living on California's central coast, home to the mythical city, "Silicon Valley."

Birmingham resident Alice R. McCarthy, Ph.D., is a nationally known parent educator, writer, and editor. She is the mother of five children and grandmother to eight children. To leave a message for McCarthy, from a touchtone phone, call (1734) 953-2047, mailbox 1894, or write they at The Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, M. 48009.

Alice McCarthy's book 'Héalthy Tens,' second edition, has been reprinted. Send \$9.20 (includes shipping and handling) to Bridge Communications Inc., 1450 Pilgrim Road, Birmingham, Michigan, 48009.



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Group seeks youth to honor for AIDS service

The National AIDS Fund will select and honor twenty young people from across the nation for their community service work in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Thomas F. Metzger, communi-cations officer, National AIDS Fund, recently announced that the National AIDS Fund Caring Counts Program is being sup-ported by the Metropolitan Life Foundation to select and honor

Award recipients will be honored in the Caring Counts Awards Program Publication, receive a plaque, a cash award of \$200, a \$50 GAP gift certificate, and an all-expense-paid trip for the award recipient and a parent or legal guardian to Washington, D.C., for a national recognition event and skills building seminars from June 24-27. They may also be offered additional publicity opportunities.

Youth between the ages of 12 and 18 on June 24 are invited to apply.

Application forms can be downloaded from tmetzger@aidsfund.org, or mailed to a young person by contacting Tom Metzger at the National AIDS Fund (202)408-4848.

Responses must be received by Friday, April 30.

