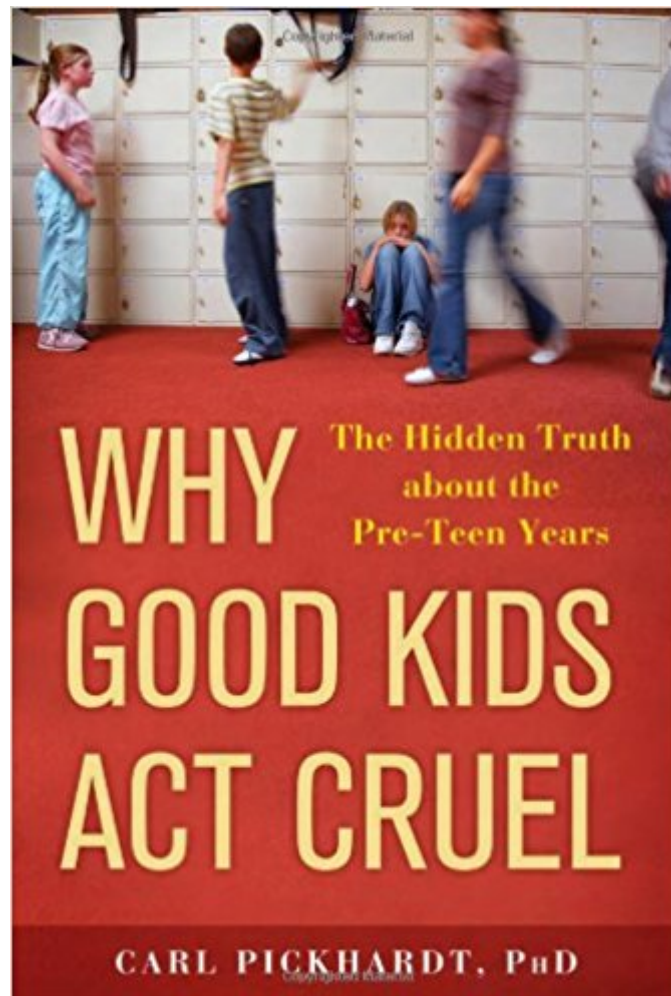




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Why Good Kids Act Cruel: The Hidden Truth About The Pre-Teen Years



Synopsis

Why do many good children treat one another so badly? This is a question parents eventually face and most start thinking about as their children prepare for high school. But the hard truth is, high school is too late. The pre-teen years are actually when it begins, when the cruelty is even worse, causing more anxiety and stress for children already facing an enormous amount of change in their lives. Early adolescence is a phase of anxiety, of uncertainty, of insecurity. To make matters worse, although all kids are going through the same transformation, none of them share what it is like, each feeling alone, isolated, and unique. The result is that even fantastic kids will do and say harmful things. *Why Good Kids Act Cruel* is the first book to give you an understanding of why cruelty happens during these years and how to help your child through these difficult times. She didn't make it; she was born with it: her nose. And in elementary school that was okay. But now in seventh grade, sometimes other girls would tease, "What's the matter Blaise, you having a bad nose day?" Looking in the mirror before school, she could see what they were making fun of. One day, a girl she had beaten out for a starting spot on the basketball team threw a nickname at her: "Snout." Some of the girl's friends picked it up, and it stuck. Blaise acted like she didn't care. But as she started to hate her nose, she started to hate herself.

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Customer Reviews

Why do so many preteens treat each other so badly? Why is intentional meanness so prevalent in the middle school years? Early adolescence, a time of major physical and psychological change, is

also when preteens suffer harassment, stalking, intimidation, humiliation, and fear—and haven't a clue how to handle or stop this deliberate treatment. Psychologist Pickhardt identifies and examines the causes and behaviors that make up what he calls social cruelty among kids, clearly explaining that it appears in ages nine to 13 because that is when kids feel vulnerable about separating from childhood and desire more social independence. At the same time, they seek to protect their own diminishing self-worth by either derogating others' worth or going on the attack (to pre-empt getting hurt first) in order to assertively claim a place in school society. There are five major ways kids act out (teasing; exclusion; bullying; spreading rumors; and ganging up), and Pickhardt devotes one chapter to each of these, offering examples of different kinds of situations including fights and cyberbullying, dialogue for countering attacks, and encouragement for making good choices. Most importantly, there are instructions for parents, teachers, school administrators and counselors so they can effectively and consistently keep episodes of social cruelty under control. Pickhardt accurately and compassionately captures the voice and concerns of children and parents alike. This should find shelf space with Rosalind Wiseman's *Queen Bees and Wannabes* and Giannetti and Sagarese's *Cliques*. (Jan.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"Pickhardt accurately and compassionately captures the voice and concerns of children and parents alike. This should find shelf space with Rosalind Wiseman's *Queen Bees and Wannabes* and Giannetti and Sagarese's *Cliques*." - Publishers Weekly

"Why Good Kids Act Cruel is an excellent resource for adults seeking to help children get through adolescence and become healthy, socially responsible adults." - ForeWord

"Pickhardt analyzes the psychology of the behavior, ending each chapter with advice on what parents and educators can do. Heavy on the victim end, light on the perp, this is an honest and valuable book for parents." - Library Journal

I've been frustrated by the most anti-bullying education that is out there. It seems like the main message has been "don't do that". The main problem, as this book explains, is **bullying works**. Bullying solves problems. And kids are going to continue to do it as long as the problems it's fixing remain! Telling them how to recognize it and not do it only goes so far. We have to help kids actually fix the problems they have (e.g., lack of success) with real solutions (e.g., actual achievement). This book also expounds upon all the many ways bullying shows up both in boys and girls which was very interesting.

I've been a teacher and education consultant for over half a century. No problem more perplexes school counselors than informing functional, concerned parents that their son or daughter engages in bullying behaviors. Most assume bullying to indicate family dysfunction. Pickhardt's newest book knocks this notion into a cocked hat. Other works deal with bullying in schools, but nothing I've encountered comes close to presenting crucial understandings and insights in so focused, usable a fashion. Every school in the nation should have a supply on hand so that any counselor can simply quietly hand a copy to a parent who needs to be aware of what constitutes often shocking and disturbing information to them. Every school should include at least one in-service a year built around this book. David Weiner, Austin, Texas

My 7th grader was struggling with bullying in school and this book has made a world of difference. It clearly identifies the difference between harmless behavior and harmful, and provides simple, straight forward directions on how to resolve issues, both with your child and how to address teachers and the school. This book helps parents, teachers, and administration get into the minds of bullies and the bullied. A must read for all parents, teachers and school staff.

It is an absolute excellent book for not only gaining an understanding of the dark social dynamics early adolescents go by but also gaining an insight of the negative political dynamics we all deal with to a certain extent.

Gave great insight to some difficulty my daughter has been having with 2 pre teen children

This book gives a fantastic insight into the reasons behind the way that teenagers behave. A must-read for parents and teachers alike.

My kids were having some issues at school. This book helped deal with some of the issues we were experiencing.

“Why Good Children Act Cruel” is a bit disappointing. It normalizes and excuses sociopathic behavior in adolescents, while minimizing the harm done by it, which can be rather substantial. No one who has gone to schools in the past 30-40 years will find anything in here surprising or new, with the exception of the justification of sociopathic, abusive, and s***ty behavior justified under the guise of child developmental stages jargon. While claiming it

doesn't victim blame, it suggests behaviors "to make one less of a target". Also, overemphasizes the toxic relationship between peers as one adults should respect, and has parenting advice to the effect of "don't ostracize them from their peer group while you are grounding them." Quite a bit of the bullying behavior described in the book would be case for a criminal suit if an adult were to engage in such things. Slander, assault, hate crimes, and sexual assault are just some of these. Discusses bystander responsibility while leaving out that it is a philosophical/ethics debate even among adults. Reminds one of Lord of the Flies, except the adults and author are just as bad as the children they wish to portray. Offers no alternatives, and paints the picture that adolescents are evil little sociopaths. Falls short of its mark. (For full disclosure, I look back on my middle and high school years to rate this, criminal behavior excuses for adolescents do not work, and the bullying and cliqueish behaviors can result in terrible school violence and suicides. I am not a parent or teacher of this age group) Tl;dr No new information, normalizes criminal behavior in our youth, do not recommend.

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