

Why the Boys Made Good

Years ago, a professor gave a group of graduate students this assignment: Go to an impoverished area of town. Take 200 boys, between the ages of 12 and 16, and investigate their backgrounds and environment. Then predict their chances for the future. The students, after consulting social statistics, talking to the boys, and compiling much data, concluded that 90 percent of the boys would spend some time in jail.

After 25 years had passed, another group of graduate students was given the job of testing the prediction. They went back to the same area. Some of the boys – by then men – were still there; a few had died, some had moved away. But they got in touch with 180 of the original 200. They found that only four of the group had ever been sent to jail.

Why was it that these people, who had lived in a breeding place of crime, had such a surprisingly good record? The researchers were continually told: “Well, there was a teacher ...” They pressed further and found that in 75 percent of the cases, it was the same woman. The researchers went to this teacher, now living in a home for retired teachers. How had she exerted this remarkable influence over that group of children? Could she give any reason why these people should have remembered her?

“No,” she said. “No, I really couldn’t.” And then thinking back over the years, she said musingly, more to herself than to her questioners: “I loved those boys ...”

And that makes a difference. Everyone wants to be loved. The popular saying, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care,” is wise and right on point.

In the work of Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, love must be the foundation for all that we do – for our residents, for their families, for each other.

– Beecher Hunter