



Girls on the Edge: The Four Factors Driving the New Crisis for Girls: Sexual Identity, the Cyberbubble, Obsessions, Environmental Toxins

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Girls are cutting themselves with razors. Girls are convinced they're fat, and starve themselves to prove it. Other girls are so anxious about grades they can't sleep at night--at eleven years of age. What's going on? In *Girls on the Edge*, Dr. Leonard Sax provides the answers. He shares stories of girls who look confident and strong on the outside, but are fragile within. He shows why a growing proportion of teen and tween girls are confused about their sexual identity, or are obsessed with grades or Facebook. Dr. Sax provides parents with tools to help girls become confident women, along with practical tips on helping your daughter choose a sport, nurturing her spirit through female centered activities, and more. Compelling and inspiring, *Girls on the Edge* points the way to a new future for today's young women.

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From Reader Review Girls on the Edge: The Four Factors Driving the New Crisis for Girls: Sexual Identity, the Cyberbubble, Obsessions, Environmental Toxins for online ebook

Jay says

Like "Boys Adrift," this book has a lot of information that I was happy to learn, and I'm glad the author wrote a book about girls. Never having been a young girl in my years growing up, some of the ideas were very new to me. One thing that struck me -- maybe it was in "Boys Adrift," too, and I simply didn't notice -- is that he gives you a horror story, something really bad that happened, and only afterwards says "now that's a rare case, but..." It seems to me that's a propaganda trick: "If you don't follow my advice, think what horrible things can occur." I still think that a lot of the information is useful, thus the high rating, but I wish the presentation would've been a little different.

Julia says

Girls on the Edge was hard to read at times! Parenting is tough. Great read with valuable information. I was fascinated by the section on toxins. Thanks for lending it to Leanne!

Brenda says

2016 - Reread for book club.

2012 - A really, really good read. I devoured this book. I didn't realize it at the time, but I have read another of his books - 'Why Gender Matters'. I came away with an understanding of some of the problems that face girls today. What I also understood is how inspired the 'For Strength of Youth', 'Personal Progress', and the whole Young Women's program really is. It really sets girls apart and can strengthen them in this day and age. I also felt vindicated because the doctor/author said we should have our kids's phones in our room at 10:00 at night and not let them have a computer in their room but in a common area where we can keep an eye on what they are viewing.

Teri says

50% of girls in the US will hit puberty before their 10th birthday!!! REALLY?!!! I think this book is my book club pick of the year--if I had a book club. :) I'd love to sit in a coffee shop and discuss his ideas: all-girls schools, cutting, early onset of puberty, the cyberbubble and the pseudo-society of teenagers, the need for female community that spans generations, anorexia of the soul, sports that focus on what you do rather than how you look, Finnish schools that disallow formal education until age 7 vs the academic preschool push in the US, female need for spirituality . . .

"Have friends.
Not too many.
Mostly females."

"founded on good friendships with two, three, four, or, at most, five other girls and/or women. The number may include her mom and/or another relative such as an aunt or a cousin, plus one or two girls her own age, and hopefully at least one woman besides Mom who is not her own age, ideally her Mom's age or older. Those friendships can last for decades, long after the boys are forgotten." last chapter pg 211

Leslie says

Interesting book, but I didn't learn anything new. Most of it is common sense. Girls are different than boys. Right-o. Heard this many a time. But in a way he's almost reinforcing the stereotypes, even though he's meaning not too. Keep the computers out of their rooms - check. Monitor their cell phone use - check. His mean girls assessment was a little off the mark, unrealistic mainly, and truly if you've never been female, that's a hard one to really understand. But I could tell he meant well overall and that he cares about children and the dangers they face today. Which is many. And now I'm a little more frightened, for them, and for me as their parent.

Oh, and I did learn a thing or two about arm pit hair. Studies have shown that male and female offspring can identify their father's armpit hair just by smelling pieces of it. We can identify the pheromones of our parents! If we're not too grossed out in the process...I guess. So there's a fun family activity!

Also, apparently back east a lawn *mover* is called a lawn *tractor*. Soo..I guess if you have a lawn back there you're considered a what, a farmer? Sounds like some weird back east thing to me..)

Rebecca Mckenzie says

A friend lent me this after I mentioned reading Dr. Sax's *Boys Adrift* which I thought was phenomenal! *Girls on the Edge* was very informative as well. In my review of *Boys Adrift* I wrote that parents of both boys and girls could benefit from reading it; *Girls on the Edge* is really more useful to parents of girls. I like how he conquered dilemmas facing girls of this generation through perspectives of mind, body and spirit. While boys appear to be 'adrift' nowadays, girls have become more competitive and lose sight of WHO they are and focus on WHAT they are. A healthy balance of mind/body/spirit is ideal and as a parent we owe it to our kids to help them achieve this.

Jennifer G says

I don't recommend this book. I listened to the audio version, and started off thoroughly enjoying it. The first few CDs were great and had some good insight about girls. However, the last 4 CDs or so just lost my interest. Although perhaps a girls school might be the best choice for our daughters, I am not going to go to my parent council and try to convince the principal that girls only classes should be created. I am also not going to have my daughter join a religion that I don't agree with simply because girls that belong to spiritual groups seem to do better on average than girls who don't.

Enough said?

Cory says

Oh, I love love love Leonard Sax!!! It's now my goal to meet him, although if I do I'll probably end up gushing and making a total fool of myself. He's just so brilliant!!!

Okay . . . let me get ahold of myself. This book frightened me, with all the information about environmental toxins, but it was a very interested sort of frightened. And the thing I like about Sax is that he gives solutions to the problems after frightening you with them.

Vincent says

Some of this book covers very familiar territory. BPA in plastics of all kinds are influencing our bodies in scary and unknowable ways, and sadly kids are getting more of it even than adults. In my house, I recently tossed all the crappy mismatched plastic containers used by my wife and asked her to start using only glass and ceramic for microwave warming.

This book notes that now puberty for girls at age 8 is not considered unusual, and in fact may be traceable to the drop in breast feeding among American women. More formula equals more plastic bottles and nipples. There is much more here. The author zeros in on 4 issues, including the role on texting/computers, obsessive behaviors and sexual identity's generated by the mass media - plus toxins. All of this is having an impact on girls specifically that is upsetting. The book hits many other themes: he supports single-sex classrooms, uniforms to discourage showoffs and schools where teachers spend time with students at lunch. But he also talks about sports and says parents are wise to advise their kids to stay away from gymnastics, figure skating and cheerleading - because all 3 focus on how you look, rather than what you do.

Although the writing is a bit stilted and this author comes across as fairly preachy and overbearing, he lays out some compelling evidence. Dads and moms, take note.

The Hofs says

AMAZING! I found myself wanting to high five him at the end of each chapter! He explains the issues of our culture in a way that I found very informative without freaking out the reader. As the mother of 6 daughters, I appreciate the knowledge gained but encourage practically everyone I meet to read this book because raising children isn't for the wimpy and there is valuable information in these pages! One of my top 5 books this year!

Geetha says

Girls today have far greater opportunities than their grandmothers had and therefore they have every chance for a very fulfilling life, one in which they can attain their potential. Yet, more girls are "on the edge", why? Leonard Sax explores the possible reasons why our young daughters are not as happy and adjusted as we want them to be. Could it be the early sexualisation of girls? Could it be technology which keeps them connected 24*7 to their friends preventing them from being connected to their true selves? Is it because technology like social media is forcing them to present themselves as others want to see them rather than as they are? Could it be the toxins in their food, hair products and creams? The author discusses all of these topics in detail, backed by research and then provides us with practical strategies for parenting a girl, to help

her develop into her authentic self, to become the woman she is meant to be and to be a happy, well adjusted member of her family and society.

I was surprised when this book was suggested for our book club. I started reading it with a great deal of skepticism as it was different from the kind of books we normally read - typically literary fiction. However I enjoyed the book and would go so far as to say that it is a Must Read for parents of daughters and anyone (grandparents, uncles, aunts, and teachers) who has the opportunity to participate in the raising of a girl. The book also gets the reader thinking about current culture and lifestyle. Are we forming real relationships? Are we living authentic lives? Has our life become a performance meant always to please and stay popular? Have we lost that sense of community in which a young girl forged relationships with so many people of varying ages? This is a very good book. I highly recommend it.

Laurel says

I had already read *Boys Adrift* and so I thought it was a good idea to read the girls book. :) I thought it was a worth while read. I especially liked the info about developing bone density.

Susanhayeshotmail.com says

I had to return this to the library before I had the chance to review it but as I said, wish I had just bought it to start with. Very intriguing and somewhat disturbing. I was hooked when he started describing a phenomena I've observed but not known how to describe, girls being, for lack of any better phrase, sexualized before they have even come close to figuring out who they are, their personal identity. He raises questions about the early onset of puberty, the ways girls learn differently from boys, how much gender behavior is nurture vs nature (you know the test where boys and girls are given the same toys to play with - boys spend most of their time playing with the trucks, girls will split their time between the trucks and dolls, weighted a bit more towards the dolls - they conducted it with monkeys and were shocked to find the results were very nearly the same), social media, healthy and mental health issues, lot of things to think about. It was hard not to mark up the pages. Hard. I highly recommend this to anyone with daughters, anyone who cares about girls and young women. I will almost certainly buy a copy, just so I can mark it up to my hearts content. Perhaps I will then expand upon this brief and poorly written review. But then again, so many books, so little time...the struggle is real.

Sara says

Since reading “Queen Bees and Wannabes,” which eventually inspired the movie “Mean Girls,” I have been particularly fascinated with the culture of teen girls, and how it doesn’t really end once the high schoolers go off to college. In this particular book, physician and psychologist Leonard Sax, who previously penned a similar book about boys, examines what he believes are four factors impacting the current society in which girls are growing up. These are sexual identity, the cyberbubble, obsessions, and environmental toxins. He dedicates a chapter to each, as well as drawing connections between the various factors. One issue addressed in the sexuality chapter which I have not seen mentioned often in other texts is the increasing “cool” factor of bisexuality and lesbianism. In his chapter on technology, Sax points to sleep deprivation as a factor in the overdiagnosis and medicating of ADHD. In the final chapters, Sax also addresses the importance of feeding the mind, body, and soul of young women, making some interesting points about the differences in physical

education, academic education, and religious education for boys and girls.

Though this book does not present a particularly comprehensive look at the adolescence of girls (as evidenced by the title itself), it does make good points about the four titular issues, some of which have yet to be addressed in depth in other materials. An excellent addition to popular literature regarding psychology and development in young women.

Deb says

A new kind of help for a new kind of crisis

While the technology of today offers countless advances in how we live our daily lives, it also results in never-before-encountered challenges and stressors that threaten the livelihood and futures of young women. In his book *_Girls On the Edge_*, Leonard Sax identifies the four key factors that are creating what he terms the "new crisis for girls." These factors include:

1. Sexual identity--young girls are acting sexual before they even are sexual, and despite their appearances, are more confused and insecure than ever before
2. The cyberbubble--being constantly connected online has resulted in girls disconnecting from their true selves and in-person relationships
3. Obsessions--the fixations that result in attempts to cope with overwhelming anxiety and depression and fill the black hole that resides where identity and self-esteem should be
4. Environmental toxins--endocrine disruptors found in the environment that result in an earlier onset of puberty, which, in turn, causes increased risk for depression, anxiety and substance abuse

If you're the parent of an adolescent girl, this book may be a lifesaver. A true eye opener, it is filled with a plethora of insight and information. But more importantly, it serves as a heart-opening guide for guide how we can provide young women the nourishment and the nurturing they crave, and the identities and the joy they deserve.
