

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: Teaching Boys in Poverty

Presenters: Jim Littlejohn and Ruby K. Payne

Hours: 45

Required eBook: *Boys in Poverty*, Ruby K. Payne and Paul D. Slocumb, Solution Tree Press, 2011

Course Overview

School dropouts cost our society hundreds of billions of dollars each year and lead to millions of young people not achieving their potential. Boys from poverty, especially from generational poverty, constitute a significant percentage of this population, often ending up in jail and/or perpetuating their poverty in future generations. From this course, participants learn how to address the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social needs of boys in poverty in their classrooms and schools to help buck these devastating trends. Presenters Jim Littlejohn and Ruby K. Payne, along with a team of workshop participants, scrutinize the effects of poverty on boys' development in each category, promoting strategies to motivate and engage these boys in their educations and keep them in school. Participants will become informed educators who can reverse these students' odds, one relationship and one instructional strategy at a time.

Presenters' Bios

Jim Littlejohn is the president of P.E.A.C.E. Skills, Inc. which provides training and consulting in conflict and anger management, classroom management, peer mediation, interpersonal relationships, brain-based learning, and school crisis management, as well as boys in poverty and crisis. Named a "Hero for Children," by the governor of South Carolina, Littlejohn has been a professional educator since 1976. He has taught at the middle school, high school, and graduate school levels, and served as department chair, athletic director, and coach. Mr. Littlejohn earned his Masters of Education from the University of South Carolina.

Ruby K. Payne is the author and coauthor of more than a dozen books, including the foundational *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. In 2011, two of her publications received a Gold Medal from Independent Publishers in the Education Category, and *Boys in Poverty: A Framework for Understanding Dropout*, around which this course was developed, received the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Association of Educational Publishers. Payne is the founder of aha! Process and an author, speaker, publisher, and career educator. She has trained hundreds of thousands of professionals who work with people from poverty. Her work represents more than 30 years of experience in public schools as a department head, principal, and central office administrator of staff development. Dr. Payne earned her doctorate in education leadership and policy from Loyola University.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, educators will know:



- The physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development of boys
- The impact of generational poverty on boys' development
- The impact of drugs, alcohol, and early sexual activity on boys
- The needs of the different boy (sensitive, gay, gifted, ADHD)
- The needs of the emerging adult

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, educators will apply the following skills:

- Counter the impact of poverty on boys' development
- Employ instructional strategies to accommodate the needs of boys from poverty through their physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development
- Develop productive and nurturing relationships with boys from poverty in school settings

Unit 1: Introduction

In this unit, presenters Littlejohn and Payne present key statistics about the costs of dropouts to society and themselves. They distinguish situational from generational poverty and alert participants to red-flag behaviors for students at risk of dropping out.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Who dropouts typically are
- Situational vs. generational poverty
- Red-flag behaviors

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Recognize red-flag behaviors in their students from the earliest grades
- Recognize the impact of poverty on students

eBook: "Introduction"

Participants read the "Introduction" in their eBooks and respond to reflection prompts.

Unit 2: The Impact of Generational Poverty on Boys

In this unit, Littlejohn, Payne, and the workshop participants explore the role of nature and nurture in the



development of boys from poverty. They illustrate their points through the story of Devin and his parents' and teachers' contributions to and reactions to his red-flag behaviors. Participants scrutinize significant risk categories and factors by school level in order to familiarize themselves with the trends that often result in boys dropping out. The authors also offer a list of resources available (or not) to students that educators need to be aware of.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What resources should be available to students (e.g., financial, language, emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical, as well as support systems, relationships and role models, and knowledge of hidden rules)
- Risk categories and factors
- Potential interventions

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Assess the resources of their students at risk for dropping out
- Construct interventions to counter the absence of key resources
- Identify their students' risk categories and factors

eBook: “The Impact of Generational Poverty on Boys”

Participants read “The Impact of Generational Poverty on Boys” in their eBooks and respond to reflection prompts.

Unit 3: The Physical Development of Boys

This unit explores the physical development of boys, how poverty affects that development, and strategies to mitigate poverty's effects. The presenters consider boys' development of motor skills and spatial ability, the impact of environmental factors and generational poverty on their physical development, particular needs boys have in relation to their physical development, and methods of supporting that physical development.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Boys' development of motor skills and spatial ability
- The impact of environmental factors and generational poverty on physical development
- Key aspects of boys' adolescent growth



- The impact of generational poverty on boys' physical development
- Supports for the physical development of boys

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Accommodate boys' development of motor skills and spatial ability in instruction and classroom management
- Employ strategies that support the physical development of boys in the classroom and school

eBook: "The Physical Development of Boys"

Participants read "The Physical Development of Boys" in their eBooks and respond to reflection prompts.

Unit 4: The Emotional Development of Boys

In this unit, the presenters and workshop participants look into how boys' emotional development differs from girls' and their resulting needs from their educators. The presenters examine boys' limited emotional literacy and ways to expand that literacy. They discuss the critical roles of anger ("the default emotion") and shame phobia in boys' emotional development. Finally, they scrutinize generational poverty's impact on boys' emotional development and ways to support that development to prevent dropout.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Aspects of brain physiology and boys' emotions
- The impact of gender conditioning on boys' emotions
- Strategies for improving boys' emotional literacy
- The role of anger and shame in boys' emotional development
- The impact of generational poverty on boys' emotional development

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Employ strategies to expand boys' emotional literacy
- Avoid shaming boys
- Modify their responses to boys' anger and aggression
- Employ strategies that support the emotional development of boys in the classroom and school



eBook: “The Emotional Development of Boys”

Participants read “The Emotional Development of Boys” in their eBooks and respond to reflection prompts.

Unit 5: The Cognitive Development of Boys

In this unit, the focus shifts to boys’ cognitive development, addressing such issues as the cognitive differences between boys and girls, differences in language acquisition, and the role of relationships in cognition. Participants will study the effects of generational poverty on boys’ cognitive development, as well as means to support their cognitive growth.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The basic organization of the brain
- Windows of opportunity for children’s cognitive growth
- Cognitive differences between boys and girls
- The impact of relationships on cognition
- The impact of physical activity on cognition
- The impact of generational poverty on boys’ cognitive development

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Teach to the cognitive differences between boys and girls
- Incorporate physical activity into learning
- Develop relationships with students that affect cognition
- Employ strategies to support boys’ cognitive development

eBook: “The Cognitive Development of Boys”

Participants read “The Cognitive Development of Boys” in their eBooks and respond to reflection prompts.

Unit 6: The Social Development of Boys

In this unit, the presenters pursue the subject of the social development of boys, considering patterns of socialization and their effects on role and gender identity and the influence of media on socialization. The unit culminates in a close look at the impact of generational poverty on boys’ social development and strategies for the classroom and school for supporting that development.



Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Patterns of socialization and their effects on boys' social development
- Role vs. gender identity
- How boys' social development plays out in their relationships
- The impact of media on socialization
- Generational poverty's effects on boys' social development

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Contribute to the productive socialization of boys from poverty
- Facilitate strong role and gender identities in boys from poverty
- Counter the effects of media on socialization
- Employ strategies to support boys' social development

eBook: "The Social Development of Boys"

Participants read "The Social Development of Boys" in their eBooks and respond to reflection prompts.

Unit 7: The Impact of Drugs, Alcohol, and Early Sexual Activity on Boys

In this unit, the presenters and workshop participants delve into the destructive impact of drugs, alcohol, and early sexual activity on boys both in and out of school. They examine the ways in which generational poverty exacerbates boys' problems with substances and premature sexual activity.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The impact of drugs, alcohol, and early sexual activity on boys
- How generational poverty exacerbates substance abuse and premature sexual activity
- Means to protect boys from these influences

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skill:

- Develop and employ strategies that help protect boys from substance abuse and the impact of



early sexual activity

eBook: “The Impact of Drugs, Alcohol, and Early Sexual Activity on Boys”

Participants read “The Impact of Drugs, Alcohol, and Early Sexual Activity on Boys” in their eBooks and respond to reflection prompts.

Unit 8: The Different Boy: Sensitive, Gay, Gifted, ADHD

This unit focuses on the particular experience of boys who are sensitive, gay, gifted, and/or have been diagnosed with ADHD/ADD who also come from generational poverty. Their struggle toward manhood, the presenters argue, is further complicated by their status as “different.” They present characterizations of these boys, in addition to strategies for supporting them.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Issues that different boys experience in their growth as men
- The impact of generational poverty on sensitive, gay, gifted, and/or boys diagnosed with ADHD/ADD

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Identify the needs of different boys
- Employ strategies to support different boys and prevent dropout

eBook: “The Different Boy: Sensitive, Gay, Gifted, ADHD”

Participants read “The Different Boy: Sensitive, Gay, Gifted, ADHD” in their eBooks and respond to reflection prompts.

Unit 9: Emerging Adulthood

In this unit, the presenters acknowledge emerging adulthood as a developmental period that needs educators’ attention. Post-adolescence finds boys still developing even while they are faced with adult responsibilities. The presenters detail some of the challenges these boys encounter and strategies to support them in their continued growth.



Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The needs of emerging adults
- The impact of family expectations
- Means to support boys in emerging adulthood

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Begin to meet the needs of boys emerging into adults
- Strategies to support emerging adult boys in and out of school

eBook: “Emerging Adulthood”

Participants read “Emerging Adulthood” in their eBooks and respond to the reflection prompts that follow.

Methods of Instruction

- Videos (presentations consisting of lecture, interviews, and classroom footage)
- Text (units based on required reading)
- Reflection questions (open-ended questions at intervals throughout the video presentations where participants are asked to reflect on the course content, their own practice, and their intentions for their practice)
- Quizzes (selected-response quizzes to assess understanding of the video presentations and eBook content)

Plagiarism Policy

KDS recognizes plagiarism as a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else’s work as one’s own and includes failing to cite sources for others’ ideas, copying material from books or the Internet (including lesson plans and rubrics), and handing in work written by someone other than the participant. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and may have additional consequences. For more information about plagiarism and guidelines for appropriate citation, consult plagiarism.org.

Passing Requirements:

In order to complete the requirements of the course, the participant must complete all course work (e.g., reflections, quizzes, and any midterm and/or final), including watching all videos and participating in all discussion forums. We do not award partial credit.

- Quizzes 40% of total grade
- Reflection Questions 60% of total grade



KDS Self-Assessment Rubric:

	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory
Quizzes	100% Correct	80% Correct	60% Correct	0-40% Correct

	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory
Reflection Questions	Participant provides rich detail from the content of the course in his or her responses Participant makes his or her responses to the questions personally meaningful	Participant includes appropriate content from the course in his or her responses Participant makes thoughtful comments in direct response to the questions	Participant includes some content from the course, usually appropriate, in his or her responses Participant answers the questions directly, not always fully	Participant includes no content from the course in his or her responses Participant does not address the questions posed