

I Have 3 Boys — and No, I Don't 'Need' a Girl

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When my husband, Brandon, and I heard “It’s a boy!” for the third time, we weren’t surprised. Brandon is one of seven boys. But I was shocked by the almost condolence-like congratulations we received from friends and family.

When they found out I was expecting, two friends said, “Oh, I hope it’s a girl!” And a third, who incidentally is a mom of two boys, said, “We might have tried for a third if we were guaranteed a girl.” Even the receptionist at my doctor’s office proclaimed, “I had two boys, too, but we tried again five years later, and I got my girl,” as if the boys were game-show condolence prizes.

While I would be lying if I said there wasn’t a hint of disappointment when I learned I was carrying yet another Y chromosome, the truth is, over time, I grew increasingly grateful for my all-boy brood.

I wanted to be a “boy mom” dating back to, well, before I started dating. Sure, testosterone has maddening effects: Boys don’t sit still. Or listen. Or respond. I feel like I’m talking to myself 90% of the time. Even when my husband is home.

But before you start your virtual tomato-hurling about gender stereotypes, know this: I grew up in a house with three girls and I’m raising three boys. My boys don’t always fit the typical gender mold. One twin consistently selected pink sippy cups when he was a toddler, the

other had an affinity for heart-shaped pink glitter glasses that made him look like a pint-sized Elton John. And the singleton? When he nails a front kick in karate and his sensei holds his hand up for a high-five, my youngest goes in for a kiss.

I will say, the perks of being a “boy mom,” at least in my house, are many. Here are just a few:

They’re fun!

My boys’ relentless commitment to rough-and-tumble fun is inspiring. They are spirited, curious, and fearless – and that’s the perfect balance for my type-A, workaholic brain. Plus, their toys are more my speed. As a girl, I shunned Barbies and tea parties, preferring to climb up trees and get dirty.

They’re simple

In a world that is becoming increasingly complicated, boys, in general, are simple. That’s a coup for any mom, particularly when you’re outnumbered two to one. If my boys eat, sleep, poop, and find some source of pleasure (Legos, Nerf guns, or Hot Wheels), they’re happy.

They fight fair – or at least fast

Unlike girls, at least the ones I grew up with, who make you guess why they’re angry and use the “silent treatment” to get under your skin, boys often say it straight or throw a punch. (Please note: I’m NOT condoning this!) The bonus: Their fights last a few minutes, not entire lifetimes.

You get to raise good men

It’s super loud in my house — and smelly, too. One of my sons climbed into my lap as I typed this, said “I love you, Mama,” then gave me a big kiss while he farted in my lap. Still, it’s nice knowing I have three little men who want to kiss up to their mom. They help me cook, wash the cars, and feed the dog.

It won’t be long before I will look up to my boys, rather than down. While I’m not looking forward to that day, I recognize that one of the reasons I wanted to have boys is because I want to raise good men. I want them to treat everyone as equals and to respect those around them.

Sure, I’ll miss having a daughter to “say yes to the dress” and to help through pregnancy — if that was what she would have wanted — but I’ll enjoy coaching my sons through how to make life better for the people they love. They already pull dandelions and flowers for me at every opportunity. And when I need a girl fix, without the sometimes fraught mother-daughter dynamic, I will turn to my three beautiful nieces.

I’m not missing out on anything and I wouldn’t have it any other way.