

'Raising Cain' Author to Speak

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By Elizabeth Cooney

WORCESTER - Psychologist Michael G. Thompson, best known for the book "**Raising Cain**" and the PBS documentary of the same name, will talk about the emotional life of boys at a workshop Friday.

"It's not a topic many people know a lot about," said Dr. Stephen G. Slaten, executive director of the Jewish Family Service of Worcester Inc. "A lot of people assume boys don't have much of an emotional life because they're not very forthcoming or verbal, and they don't share a lot." The Jewish Family Service is presenting the 28th annual Irving W. Jacobson Memorial Family Therapy Training Program, a daylong workshop geared to mental health professionals, teachers and parents. Dr. Thompson, a clinical consultant to the Belmont Hill School, will examine the inner and social life of boys and underachievement.

Dr. Slaten sees those themes in his practice as a clinical psychologist. He values Dr. Thompson's work identifying the causes of some of the anger and defiance boys show.

When boys appear to be aggressive, they may really be feeling hurt from the sometimes cruel world of middle school and high school. Boys are not supposed to show weakness, so they act out instead of talking about what's going on. Some boys may also feel frustrated if they struggle to sit still and listen in school, where success is measured by reading and writing skills. Underachievement can be the result.

"For a lot of boys, that's a challenge for them, and they experience a certain amount of frustration and failure for not measuring up," Dr. Slaten said. "That's really what (Dr. Thompson) is talking about. There's more to males than what you see."

'Raising Cain'

The Latest Work on the Inner and Social Lives of Boys and Boy Underachievement

Who: Dr. Michael G. Thompson

What: 28th annual Irving W. Jacobson Memorial Program

When: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday

Where: Worcester Hotel & Conference Center (formerly the Holiday Inn), 500 Lincoln St., Worcester

How much: \$85

Contact: Jewish Family Service of Worcester Inc., (508) 755-3101