



# Promises Kept: Raising Black Boys to Succeed in School and in Life

*Dr. Joe Brewster, Michele Stephenson, Hilary Beard*

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As seen on PBS's *POV*

*An unprecedented guide to helping black boys achieve success at every stage of their lives—at home, at school, and in the world*

Regardless of how wealthy or poor their parents are, all black boys must confront and surmount the “achievement gap”: a divide that shows up not only in our sons’ test scores, but in their social and emotional development, their physical well-being, and their outlook on life. As children, they score as high on cognitive tests as their peers, but at some point, the gap emerges. Why?

This is the question Joe Brewster, M.D., and Michèle Stephenson asked when their own son, Idris, began struggling in a new school. As they filmed his experiences for their award-winning documentary *American Promise*, they met an array of researchers who had not only identified the reasons for the gap, but had come up with practical, innovative solutions to close it. In *Promises Kept*, they explain

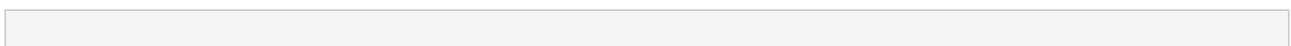
- how to influence your son’s brain *before* he’s even born
- how to tell the difference between *authoritarian* and *authoritative* discipline—and why it matters
- how to create an educational program for your son that matches his needs
- how to prepare him for explicit and implicit racism in school and in the wider world
- how to help your child develop resilience, self-discipline, emotional intelligence, and a positive outlook that will last a lifetime

Filled with innovative research, practical strategies, and the voices of parents and children who are grappling with these issues firsthand, *Promises Kept* will challenge your assumptions and inspire you to make sure your child isn’t lost in the gap.

## **Praise for *Promises Kept***

“The authors offer a plethora of information and advice geared toward the specific developmental needs of black boys. . . . Thorough and detailed, this guidebook is also a call to action. As Brewster sees it, when people of color remain complacent, they not only break a tacit promise to future generations to achieve social equity, they also imperil the futures of both the nation and the planet. A practical and impassioned parenting guide.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“A penetrating look at the standard practices, at school and at home, that contribute to the achievement gap between the races and the sexes that seems to put black boys at a disadvantage. [Brewster and Stephenson] debunk myths and offer ten parenting and education strategies to improve the prospects for black boys to help them overcome racial stereotypes and low expectations. . . . This is a practical and insightful look at the particular challenges of raising black males.”—*Booklist*



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