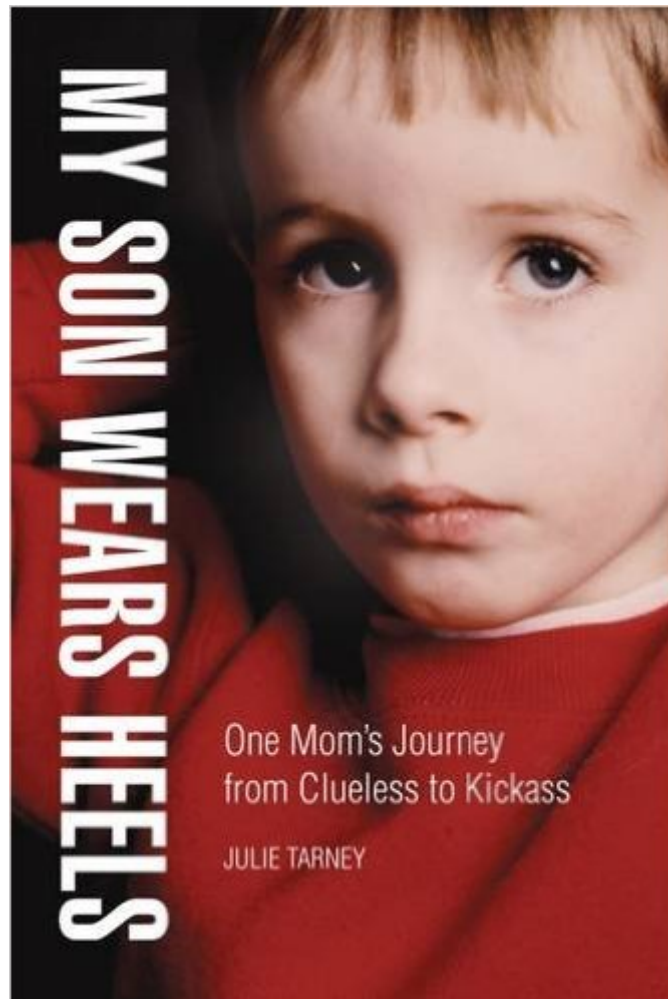


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My Son Wears Heels: One Mom's Journey From Clueless To Kickass



Synopsis

In 1992, Julie Tarney's only child, Harry, told her, "Inside my head is a girl." He was two years old. Julie had no idea what that meant. She felt disoriented. Wasn't it her role to encourage and support her child? Surely she had to set some limits to his self-expression or did she? Would he be bullied? Could she do the right thing? What was the right thing? The internet was no help, because there was no internet. And there were zero books for a mom scrambling to understand a toddler who had definite ideas about his gender, regardless of how Nature had endowed him. Terms such as transgender, gender nonconforming, and gender creative were rare or nonexistent. There were, however, mainstream experts who theorized that a "sissy" boy was the result of a domineering mother. Julie couldn't believe it. She didn't want to care what her neighbors thought, but she did care. "Domineering mother" meant controlling mother. It meant bad mother. It meant her mother. Lacking a positive role model of her own, and fearful of being judged as a mom who was making her son "too feminine," Julie embarked on an unexpected parenting path. Despite some missteps, and with no map to guide her, she learned to rely on her instincts. She listened carefully, kept an open mind, and as long as Harry was happy, she let him lead the way. Julie eventually realized that Harry knew who he was all along. Her job was simply to love and support him unconditionally, allowing him to be his authentic self. This story of a mother embracing her child's uniqueness and her own will resonate with all families.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have read and reviewed numerous books and looked at many websites of varying help or accuracy in my 15 years as an activist and advocate for gender non-conforming children of all ages. Rarely have I seen anything that better exemplifies how to help grow with them to adulthood. Julie Tarney did so beautifully before all those books and the internet were available. Julie's memoir of her experiences exposes us to her internal questioning and emotional responses to her son Harry's development. Would that all (or at least more) parents could accept their child's lead as she did! One statement on a picture Harry brought home from elementary school stands out: "Good mothers give their children paints and brushes and canvases, but let them paint their own pictures." Julie certainly did. Many of my peers put it differently: Love your child. Listen to them. And let them lead the way. From the time Harry told his mom "In my brain, I'm a girl" Ms Tarney discussed consequences of his actions "or proposed activities - then guided him to safe expressions of himself. As any mother would, Julie worried all the time for his safety; she also had concerns over being thought a "bad mother" as many psychologists and psychiatrists believed in the 1990s. Early on, Harry took control of and responsibility for his choices. In doing so, he helped his mom become a wonderful, fulfilled, and happy mother.

Both warm, funny, and very human, this book brings a rare mom and son to life. As a toddler, Harry knew who he was, and his mom, Julie, decided from the start not to try to change him. Instead, she took a quantum leap and joined Harry as his biggest champion on his uncertain journey through childhood, from playing with makeup kits to cheering him on opening night as a drag queen. I wonder if this will be a TV series....seems like a natural!

My Son Wears Heels what can I say? I laughed...I cried....I couldn't put it down. This book isn't just for parents of gender creative children. This book is for every parent. It reminds us that we are here to help our children be themselves and take on the world. We are not here to make them into what we think the world expects of them. And that is always the toughest road for a parent. Thanks for the reminder and the inspiration, Julie Tarney!!! Well done. Everyone needs a copy. I can't wait for the movie!

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