



School Partnerships

The Men's Project's mission is for boys and men to live full lives, which will lead to safer communities and more respectful relationships. We deliver evidence-based programs for year 5-12 students that challenge the harmful norms about gender in order to improve the health, behaviour, and safety of both staff and students.

What we know

We know that adolescents often feel pressure to be a certain way. **For boys, this is often about conforming to traditional masculine stereotypes.**

The Men's Project's 'Adolescent Man Box' research demonstrates that boys feel pressure to:

- Be strong and confident
- Hide emotions and vulnerability
- Avoid behaviours traditionally considered feminine or "gay"; and
- Tease their friends, and be able to "take" being teased without being affected.

Our 'Adolescent Man Box' research also revealed that **students — boys and girls — who agree with these traditional ideas of masculinity are more likely to engage in harmful behaviours or to experience poor wellbeing, such as:**

- Perpetrating bullying
- Performing poorly in school
- Being involved in physical altercations
- Engaging in risky behaviours like using illicit drugs and drinking alcohol
- Having poor self-concept and mental health, and
- In the case of adolescent boys, engaging in sexual harassment.

We also know that many school staff **do not feel they have the knowledge, skills or confidence, when it comes to discussing and role-modelling healthier alternatives to rigid gender norms.**

What we offer

We partner with schools to support them with delivering Respectful Relationships Curriculum particularly content around Topics 7 Gender and Identity, Topic 8 Positive Gender Relations and Building Respectful Relationships Units 1 2 and 3.

Our workshops aim to build awareness, open up conversations and build skills in ways to adopt healthier habits and have healthier identities.



1

Workshops for students, staff, parents and school leaders/student representative councils

We have a range of workshops which introduce participants to the pressures boys and men can feel to behave a certain way, the impact of these, and how to move away from these harmful attitudes and behaviours.



2

School resources

Our lesson pack 'pursuing healthier identities' is an interactive and discussion based unit which looks at gender stereotypes, masculinity, healthier identities, character strengths, healthier relationships and ways to take action. The unit comes with teacher notes, PowerPoint slides and a student handouts. The lesson resources also come with staff workshop and check-ins throughout the unit.



3

Survey of student gender beliefs and related behaviours

Our 'Adolescent Man Box' survey provides information about how well your students are doing and how the pressures they feel to conform to gender stereotypes affect them. The results of the survey can then be used to make changes to the curriculum and activities to address any problems that were brought up in the survey. Students of either gender can fill out the survey, which gives information about their well-being and behaviour.

Our workshops

Workshops are 60-90 minutes long depending on the audience. Please contact us if you want to know more.

Workshop 1. The 'Man Box'

This workshop introduces participants to research on the pressures boys and men feel to behave a certain way, and the impact this has on health, behaviour, and life outcomes. This workshop also brings awareness to habits and language that perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes, and supports participants to begin to tune into the impacts of gender stereotyping in their own lives.

Workshop 2. Healthier Alternatives to the 'Man Box'

This workshop introduces participants to healthier alternatives to the 'Man Box'. Participants are encouraged to move away from rigidity and harms of the 'Man Box' by offering tips and strategies to allow them to base their attitudes and behaviours on their personal values, rather than social pressures to act a certain way.

Workshop 3. Taking action in the "moments that matter"

This workshop is designed to build participants' capacity and confidence to become positive role models. It supports them to speak up effectively and safely when they witness harmful 'Man Box' attitudes and behaviours, and offers practical tips and strategies to respond during "moments that matter".

Adolescent Man Box Pillars

The Adolescent Man Box was drawn from Oransky and Fisher's (2009) Meaning of Adolescent Masculinity Scale. This scale evaluates the set of beliefs within society that place pressure on adolescent boys to act in a certain way.



Emotional Restriction

Assumption that to be masculine, boys must be emotionally stoic and refrain from sharing their feelings with others



Constant Effort

Belief that to be masculine, one must constantly, and without interruption, maintain one's tough, confident and strong public persona



Social Teasing

Assumption that to be masculine, one must be able to both dole out and stand up to teasing and taunting in the peer context



Heterosexism

Norm that masculinity is defined in opposition to homosexuality and femininity, and that one must distance oneself from behaviours and attitudes traditionally thought as "girly" or "gay"

What participants have said about our programs...

"The man box topic has made a change to how people see each other now and also has changed the way we act and the things we say to one another by thinking before we speak." - Student

"It was truly relevant to what we observe and I found myself reflecting on my own behaviour and wanting to discuss these ideas with students." - Teacher

"The Man box impacts my thinking a lot. I took away how to be comfortable with being different." - Student

"The lesson was very detailed and well planned, the activities worked really well in engaging the class." - Teacher

"The unit talked about and informed us that it's okay to be outside the man box and be yourself, however you are." - Student

"The most helpful aspect has been how to have conversations around challenging behaviours without belittling or making students feel ashamed." - Teacher

Want more information? Contact us to set up a no-obligation conversation.

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