



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 identify and address harmful beliefs that can lead to poor behaviour and outcomes for students. On top of the core programs listed below, we can also set up intensive programs to help staff learn new skills or deal with difficult behaviours among male students.

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. Versions of these workshops have been developed for each year level, and we also have workshops for school staff and parents.

2

School resources

Our unit 'pursuing healthier identities' is an interactive and engaging 10-week unit which looks at gender stereotypes, emotions, relationships and character strengths. The unit includes lesson plans with teacher instructions and examples, PowerPoint slides, and a student workbook. We provide training and ongoing support to ensure staff can deliver the lessons effectively.

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 50-75 minutes long, depending on the audience. Please contact us if you want to know more.

	Students	Staff	Parents	Student leaders
<p>Workshop 1. The 'Man Box'</p> <p>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, behavior, 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.</p>	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Workshop 2. Healthier Alternatives to the 'Man Box'</p> <p>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.</p>	✓	✓		
<p>Workshop 3. Taking action in the "moments that matter"</p> <p>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".</p>	✓	✓		
<p>Workshop 4: Leading change (120 mins)</p> <p>This workshop provides student leaders with the chance to understand the 'Man Box' and the pressures that boys and men face from society through the lens of student leadership. It offers student leaders an opportunity to reflect on how they can lead change within their school to break free from the 'Man Box'.</p>				✓

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...

"I enjoyed how they made you look at respectful relationships from a different perspective." - 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

"I think its great that you're teaching everyone to not to be afraid to show emotion and showing people that its okay to be yourself." - 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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