

## What does men's agreement with Man Box rules mean for understanding intimate partner violence and sexual harassment?

The “Man Box” describes a set of beliefs within and across society that place pressure on men to act in a certain way. The Man Box consists of 19 “rules” that represent a rigid, outdated and often harmful template for how a “real man” should think, feel, and behave. These “rules” include statements such as “Men should use violence to get respect if necessary” and “A guy who doesn't fight back when others push him around is weak”.

The metaphor of the “Man Box” evokes the idea that this set of rules or norms is rigid and restrictive – it “boxes men in”, and creates limitations and pressures.

We surveyed men aged 18-30 years, and men aged 31-45 years about the Man Box rules, as well as whether they had ever perpetrated physical or sexual violence against an intimate partner, and, ever perpetrated sexual harassment against a woman or girl in a public place.

Our 2024 Man Box study has found that men's personal endorsement (agreement) with Man Box rules is linked to violence against intimate partners.

This fact sheet details all responses from men, both who identified as heterosexual as well as from the LGBTIQ+ community, and the association between their personal endorsement of Man Box rules and their use of intimate partner violence.<sup>1</sup> While links between Man Box rules and the perpetration of bullying have previously been documented, this is the first time that links have been shown with the perpetration of intimate partner violence.<sup>2</sup>

There is a diversity of experiences and views among men when it comes to Man Box rules. Our study divided men into five groups (Quintiles) based upon their Man Box composite score. We compare the men who least strongly agree with the Man Box rules (Quintile 1), to the men who most strongly agree (Quintile 5).

### Key findings

*Our study found that as men reported increased agreement with the Man Box rules (moving from Quintile 1 to Quintile 5), there is a consistent increase in their perpetration of intimate partner violence and sexual harassment. In fact, men in Quintile 4, the second highest quintile, reported perpetration rates around three to five times lower than Quintile 5. The graph and tables below illustrate this trend. Looking only at men aged 18-30, compared to men who least strongly endorse Man Box rules, men who most strongly endorse them are:*

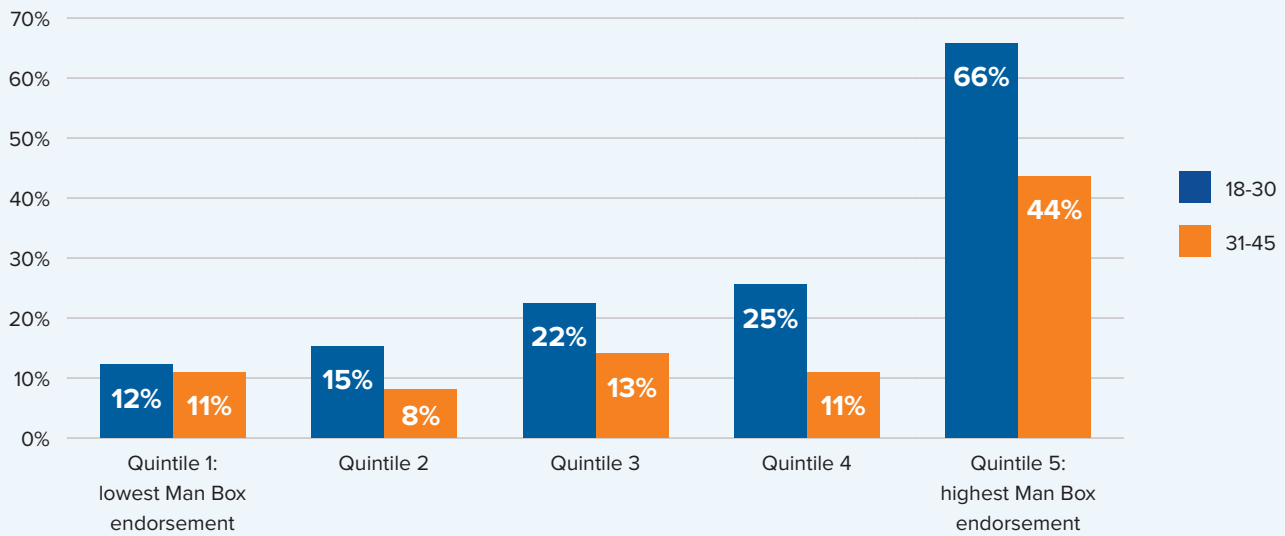
- **Almost 35 times more likely to have frequently perpetrated verbal sexual harassment** against a woman or girl in a public place
- **8 times more likely to have perpetrated sexual violence against an intimate partner** (including 33 times more likely to have used fear to coerce a partner into having sex)
- **5 times more likely to have perpetrated physical violence against an intimate partner** (including 12 times more likely to have hit a partner with a fist or something else that could hurt them).

<sup>1</sup> This factsheet does not separate responses from Men from within the LGBTIQ+ and Heterosexual men. See: “The Man Box 2024: Fact Sheet: What does men's agreement with the Man Box rules mean for understanding violence against women?” for responses specific from Heterosexual men.

<sup>2</sup> THE MEN'S PROJECT & FLOOD, M. 2018. The Man Box: a study on being a young man in Australia [Online]. Jesuit Social Services. Available: <https://jss.org.au/what-we-do/gender-justice/tmp-research/> [Accessed].

## Proportion of men who reported perpetrating intimate partner violence, by type of violence and Man Box quintile and age group

Percentage that responded “yes” when asked “Have you ever done the following things to your current or any other partner”



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Percentage that responded “yes” when asked “Have you ever done the following things to your current or any other partner”

	Quintile 1: 18-30 year-olds	Quintile 5: 18-30 year-olds	Quintile 1: 31-45 year-olds	Quintile 5: 31-45 year-olds
Physically forced a partner to have sexual intercourse with you when they did not want to?	6%	24%	2%	18%
Had sexual intercourse with a partner when they were afraid of what you might do?	1%	33%	1%	16%
Forced a partner to do something sexual that is degrading or humiliating?	5%	29%	2%	17%
Slapped or thrown something that could hurt them?	2.4%	22%	2%	17%
Pushed or shoved a partner?	6.5%	30%	7%	15%
Hit a partner with your fist or something else that could hurt them?	1.4%	24.1%	1%	12%
Kicked, dragged, or beat a partner up?	4.4%	21%	4%	10%
Choked or burned a partner on purpose?	5.2%	18%	5%	12%
<b>At least one form of sexual intimate partner violence</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>At least one form of physical intimate partner violence</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>At least one form of intimate partner violence</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>44%</b>



For more information about The Man Box 2024, and to download the full report, visit [www.themanbox.com.au](http://www.themanbox.com.au).

