

LIVERESPECT

AND HEALTHY MASCULINITY CURRICULUM

Life Skills and Well-Being for Boys and Young Men

EDUCATOR GUIDE WITH LESSON PLANS



A Program for Middle & High School Boys

A CALL TO MEN

THE NEXT GENERATION OF MANHOOD

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Opening Statement

We welcome you to **A Call To Men's updated Live Respect and Healthy Masculinity Curriculum: Life Skills and Well-Being for Boys and Young Men.**

As you move forward to implement Live Respect, we invite you to come into it with curiosity and desire to think critically. Come into it with the elasticity necessary to be a teacher and student at the same time. Use and mold it as you see fit; you know your school, team or community best. You can do all the lessons over a semester, or you can select a few and take 45 mins of a basketball practice to discuss a specific topic. It is up to you! Make it relevant, see what is happening with boys in your community and grab the lesson you think can benefit the most. From our experiences with young men, we know they are thirsty for these conversations and they want to develop meaningful connections. The rigid notions of masculinity – or, as we call it, the Man Box – come with a high price for young people. Many boys and young men have told us that they are exhausted from performing masculinity on a daily basis. They share that they feel tired of not being able to show emotions or vulnerability without being afraid of the ridicule or consequence from other young men. They tell us that they really want to be their whole self, but the rigid notions of the Man Box are destroying them. And, let's be clear, we all pay the price in our schools and communities.

You might be familiar with our first version of Live Respect, which focused solely on gender-related issues. This updated version has a link to a glossary of terms and some new exercises. Most notably, it has three new lessons on race, power and privilege. At A Call To Men, we come to the work of men's engagement with an intersectional analysis – as gender and race are intrinsically connected. We believe that you must address both issues at the same time. We invite you to use the entire curriculum with intention. For that reason, we urge you to ensure facilitators represent the makeup of the student population you seek to impact. It matters. Most importantly, it matters to your students. If you do not represent the experiences or background of your students, then go to your community and partner with an individual or organization that does. We also understand that you, your school, or your community might not feel ready to use this curriculum with the new lessons on race, power and privilege. We want to meet you where you are at in the process. It is ok to start with the lessons on gender first, and build toward doing them all. We are rooting for you and your community!

You are not alone in this process. If you need some support, A Call To Men is here to offer training to your team of facilitators.

A CALL TO MEN'S GRATITUDE

We want to honor the thousands of communities at large who have been in this journey with us as we seek to be authentic versions of ourselves and nurture our humanity. Special thank you to teachers, youth workers, advocates, coaches, faith-based leaders and survivors.

Affirmations:

As you prepare to facilitate the sessions, affirmations are a tool we invite you to use to help participants feel ready for discussion. Below is a list of affirmations to use to check in on and invite participants to be present. Before you choose one or more affirmations to try with your students, take a moment to be mindful of things that may be impacting the communities your students are a part of – try to align the affirmations with the Live Respect lesson that you are focusing on during that time. It can sometimes be hard to remain present in spaces where emotions run high. Affirmations can help get your students used to gauging their “emotions” at that moment.

- I can share my emotions - they matter.
- I can do hard things.
- I can ask for help - it doesn't make me weak.
- I can say “I love you” to myself - how I talk to myself matters.
- I can say “no” to my friends.
- I am full of potential to accomplish my goals.
- I learn from my mistakes - I choose to see them as lessons.
- It's ok for me to say “I don't know” when asked a question - I don't have to make up an answer.
- I deserve to have joy and peace.
- I am worth loving and investing in.
- I am enough - just because I was born!
- I surround myself with people who can help me succeed.
- I want to speak with kindness and respect to myself and others.
- I deserve healing - I can offer healing to me and others.
- I can start all over - it is never too late.
- I have the power to change my life for the better - ALWAYS.
- I deserve love and forgiveness.
- I believe in myself.
- I am proud of the decisions I make.
- I am capable of understanding my emotions and feelings.
- It is ok for me to forgive.
- I am capable.
- Expressing/Experiencing emotion does not make me soft.
- I am constantly growing and evolving.
- I am strong.
- I can be vulnerable.
- I can be accountable.

Congratulations!

on your efforts to help the boys in your community become influencers of healthy masculinity!

Before starting the group lessons, review the Program and Certification Process Guide to better understand the program's goals and objectives, and for tips to help guide your discussions with your group. Although we intentionally and unapologetically use these lessons under this curriculum to reach the heart of male identified youth, Live Respect lessons are great entry points for conversations with youth as well as adults of all identities and genders. We invite you to use the ideas shared here as a guide to implement as you see fit in your community. You can choose to focus on a few lessons or teach them all.

GROUP AGREEMENTS

Creating group agreements is an essential step in creating an environment for productive discussion. Use the information below at the start of Lesson 1 to establish guidelines for communication. Because the program is delivered in a group setting over twelve lessons and covers sensitive topics, it is important to establish some agreements so that everyone feels safe and respected. On chart paper, create a sign listing your group's agreements and post it in a visible location during each session.

TO START:

Ask the boys what the group needs in order for everyone to feel safe in this space. If the boys do not verbalize the following ideas, be sure to add them to the list.

- **Respect**—Treat each other and ourselves with dignity, even if we disagree. Respect each other's opinions. Do not put one another down or call each other names. Be open to new ideas.
- **Ask Questions**—Be curious.
- **Listen**—One person speaks at a time. Listen to understand.
- **Confidentiality**—Everything that is said during these conversations should stay in the room (except if it presents a safety issue or if someone feels uncomfortable.)
- **Seek Support**—Don't hesitate to talk to an adult when the need arises.
- **Be Honest**—Express yourself and discuss or respond to what you hear in our society openly and appropriately.

- **Share of Yourself**—Commit to being engaged and share your life experiences. Others can benefit by hearing from you and your thoughts.
- **Have Fun**—We're going to learn a lot from one another, and as long as we follow our agreements, we can have fun along the way.

EXPLAIN:

Over the next several weeks, we will be talking about messages that society sends us about masculinity, relationships, sex, race and privilege. There may be times when we use sensitive language or language we wouldn't normally use. This is allowed as long as we are using language to further the conversation and not to tease, harm others, or show off. It is never okay to curse at one another, or when referring to someone. At times we will discuss sensitive topics – we ask that we all be supportive and respectful of each other through the process.

Ask boys:

- Can everyone agree to this list?
- Is there anything missing or anything that you don't think is realistic?
- Anything you want to add?

Let the boys know you will keep the group agreement posted, and it can be added to at any time.

Using the Program:

LESSON TIPS

The “Barriers and Concerns” section of the Program and Certification Process Guide includes helpful tips for addressing the serious topics covered in the lessons, as well as the emotions they may bring up. We suggest that you review that section before starting the lessons with your group. Highlights are noted below. It is important to keep in mind that the program is not an indictment of masculinity. It is an invitation to promote a healthier, more respectful masculinity.

PROMOTING HONEST AND OPEN DISCUSSION:

The lessons ask boys to think and talk honestly about what they have learned about masculinity. Therefore, boys may express ideas and use language that might be deemed inappropriate in other classes or settings. It is important not to shut down these moments. Instead, use these comments and language as learning tools and opportunities to explore why they used the language, asking the other members if they have heard these words before and what they think of them. When applicable, try to connect inappropriate comments to the Man Box and male socialization to reinforce the origins of these comments. (See the Program and Certification Process Guide for information on the Man Box.)

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Due to the sensitive nature of the lessons (and depending on your school’s policy), consider having the boys agree to keep discussions within the group – except when issues of safety are involved (if someone is being hurt, is in danger, or is hurting others). That said, it is also important to remind the boys that if they ever feel uncomfortable in a situation inside or outside the classroom, they should tell you, a parent, or a trusted adult. Explain that you have a responsibility to report instances in which someone is being harmed or is harming others.

ADDRESSING HARASSMENT AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE:

Boys may say that they are not violent or abusive toward girls or women, or that men are victims of violence as well. Explain to them that violence against women is mostly committed by men, but most men are not violent. However, men are often silent about the violence and abuse that other men commit toward girls and women, which sends a message that abuse is okay. This means that all men can play a part in preventing violence and changing attitudes and behaviors. Likewise, it is important for you to identify and address statements blaming the victim. It is not the victim’s fault. Responding is important because this may be the first time boys have seen sexism and male dominance challenged in a healthy way. It is true that anyone can be the victim of abuse, including boys and men, and often their own silence is a reflection of the rigid notions we find in the Man Box.

SENSITIVITY TO PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH ABUSE:

Some boys in the group may have had personal experiences as a victim or witness to domestic violence, dating violence, and/or sexual abuse. Tell them that if they need extra support or feel upset during the discussion, they can talk with you, or speak with a counselor in your school or community.

Using the Program: Continued

Let them know that it is normal to feel emotional when discussing topics like this and that you are there to talk about these feelings. If a boy discloses that he is being abused or is in an unhealthy or unsafe situation at home or in a relationship, then follow the mandated reporting policies within your school or organization and make the appropriate referral to the school’s mental health provider or guidance counselor.

TALKING ABOUT THE LGBTQ, TRANS AND NONBINARY COMMUNITY:

This program focuses primarily on sexism, heterosexism, and misogyny and its impact on girls and women in binary, heterosexual structures – yet these behaviors are also the foundation for violence against the LGBTQ, Trans and nonbinary community. Gender-based violence disproportionately impacts women and girls, boys and men who appear feminine, girls and women who appear masculine, and non-binary folks who do not identify with a specific category of gender expression. Gender-based violence within the LGBTQ, Trans and nonbinary community also requires attention as those in the community can also be wedded to rigid notions of gender.

CHALLENGING GENDER NORMS:

Sharing your experiences and emotions and asking the boys in your group to do the same as you discuss the Man Box and gender norms is not an easy task. Challenging male dominance and stepping outside of the boxes we’ve been taught will be difficult. Keep in mind that everyone has been affected by society’s gender norms, male dominance, and sexism. This is not about blame. It’s about raising awareness, learning to address any potential negative behaviors, and acquiring the tools to develop healthy, respectful relationships and behaviors. Being open and sharing your personal stories, challenges, and inconsistencies with the Man Box or gender norms you’ve been taught will help boys relate and give them a sense of support.

“STEPS TO CERTIFICATION AND TAKE ACTION CHALLENGE” FORM

On page 49 of this guide, you will find a “Steps to Certification and Take Action Challenge” form for mentors. Make copies of this template and complete the form after you finish each lesson with your group. The form includes evaluation questions to help you assess the boys’ responses to the lesson, as well as your own. It also features a challenge for you as a mentor to consider how you can use the lesson’s messages to become a more successful role model in helping the boys you work with break out of the Man Box.



LESSON 1 **THE MAN BOX**

 **GETTING STARTED**

OBJECTIVES:

- Establish a group agreement on conduct for reference throughout the program
- Gather the boys' ideas on gender roles using a pre-assessment quiz
- Identify rules society has taught us about the roles of men/ boys and girls/women

MATERIALS:

- Copies of "What Do You Think?" pre-assessment quiz
- Copies of "The Man Box" activity sheet
- Slips of paper
- A large box (large enough to tape pieces of paper on)
- Tape

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:

Remind the boys that the goal of the program is to help us all learn to have healthier, more respectful relationships. Encourage and model positive group discussion.

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Refer to pages 4 and 5 of this guide to establish the initial group agreements. Give reminders throughout the program that the goal is to share ideas in open discussions and for everyone to listen and participate respectfully.

1. To start the unit, explain to the group that the goal of the program is to help us all learn to have healthier, more respectful relationships. Encourage group discussion throughout the program.
2. Next, create group agreements and rules with the boys and discuss your expectations for the group sessions. (See pages 4 and 5 of this guide.)
3. Post the agreement in a visible location for reference throughout the program.
4. Distribute the "What Do You Think?" pre-assessment quiz. This is a tool that will help gather the boys' thoughts on the program topics and guide the lessons. This assessment is anonymous to encourage honesty. This same assessment will be used at the conclusion of the program to track progress.
5. Collect the completed pre-assessments and review the boys' responses to get a sense of their thoughts on gender norms, and keep for later use.

6. Place the empty box in the front of the room. Distribute the slips of paper and ask the boys to write down words that demonstrate what it means to be a man. These may be the same terms that they used on their drawings from the pre-assessment quiz.
7. Create your own word strip(s) defining masculinity and tape the strips to the box as an example. Some examples of words you might use include strong, tough, breadwinner, big, etc.
8. Ask volunteers to share their words with the group. As they share, have them try to explain the words and why they are associated with masculinity. When each volunteer is finished, have him tape his word strips to the outside of the box.
9. Explain that:
 - The box represents the Man Box, which is full of definitions of masculinity that can box men in and limit what they can and cannot do or feel.
 - The way we are socialized to think about gender is that there is a right way and a wrong way to be a male or a female. No one is to blame—we've all been taught this.
 - The box can negatively impact boys and men by forcing them to always be on guard and ready to "prove" their masculinity.
 - The box also teaches boys that one way to have power is to taunt other boys for being "soft" or feminine. These messages lay the foundation for male dominance and sexism, as they create associations between femininity and inferiority.
10. If there are words that represent violent behaviors or name-calling listed outside of the box, explain that these words are associated with punishments for breaking these rules. They are also reminders to all boys that they need to stay in the box in order to be safe.
11. Have the boys complete the "The Man Box" activity sheet and discuss their responses. Ask the boys if they feel the same rules apply to women.
12. Share the Man Box rules that follow to determine how many of the phrases were on their lists. Talk about any rules that they may have omitted and ask them what restrictions they create for boys and men, and what possibilities could exist without the rules.

LESSON 1: Continued

BREAK OUT OF THE BOX

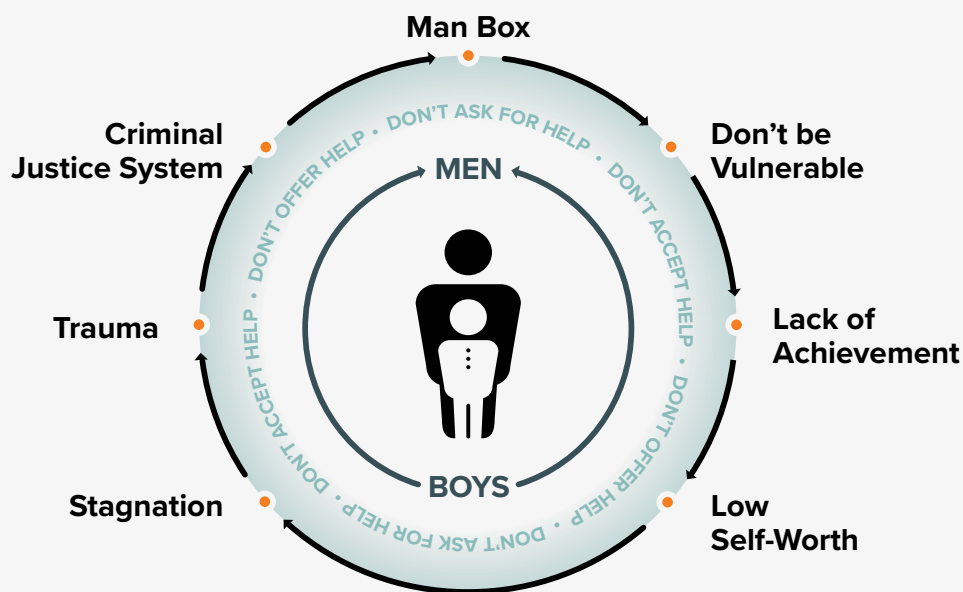
13. If they don't address the following, make sure it is included in the conversation:

- We are more likely to hurt people when we don't see them as whole people or valuable to us.
- Believing that some people are "less than" others leads us to dehumanize or objectify them—which means we see them as objects and less than human. This puts all of us at risk for violence and makes the world more dangerous for our families and friends.
- The Man Box does not allow us to be fully human. It requires boys and men to shut down parts of themselves and their emotions for fear of being insulted, teased, etc.
- The Man Box limits boys and men by pressuring them to always be on guard and ready to prove their manhood.
- It also prevents boys and men from asking for help and using the support of others to succeed.

14. Next, ask them to discuss some benefits of breaking out of the Man Box. Answers may include feeling free to share feelings, not having to defend themselves, and having more equity between men and women.

15. Introduce the "Cycle of Consequences."
 (See the Program and Certification Process Guide for additional details). Explain to the boys that the cycle represents the possible negative effects of the Man Box and its rules. The cycle is perpetuated by the notion that boys and men cannot ask for help. Boys are taught not to be vulnerable. This can create a lack of achievement if boys don't ask for help if needed. In turn, this can cause a feeling of low self-worth if someone feels stuck. That can lead to stagnation, or not having goals or a direction. In turn, that can cause trauma. The cycle then shows that some boys and men wind up in jail, addicted to drugs/alcohol, in failed relationships, with limited work opportunities, and experience depression and anxiety.

Cycle of Consequences Model



LESSON 1: Continued



BREAK OUT OF THE BOX

16. If the conversation becomes negative toward society, women, or men, or if the boys question or brag about the Man Box attributes that demonstrate a lack of respect or value, remind them that we have all been taught society's norms and the goal of the lessons you'll be doing over the next few weeks is to help raise awareness about these topics. It's important that they understand that the program is not about blaming society or bashing men. Instead, it is about becoming aware of potentially negative behaviors associated with society's gender norms, learning to think more critically about situations, and learning tools to help promote healthy, respectful relationships and behaviors that value others. How does it feel to recognize that some of the boys and men in our lives might be demonstrating some of these values and possibly hurting themselves or others? Remind them that we all want to be valued, safe, and treated with respect, and we want the same for our family and friends.



AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

Encourage the boys to observe the men around them, including themselves, and see if the Man Box holds them back. Think about what makes it difficult to venture from the Man Box to the possibility box.

One element that can prevent the move to the possibility box is fear. Acknowledge the fear and encourage the boys to discuss what they are afraid of or what might prevent them from breaking out of the box.



LESSON 1

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

DIRECTIONS

Do not put your name on this questionnaire—it should be done anonymously. Your answers will be used to help guide group conversations. Read the directions for each section below.

READ the job titles and label each according to your **first thought** about who does the job. If you think of it as a man’s job, label it “**M**.” If you consider it a woman’s job, label it “**W**.” Or use “**E**” for either. Remember to label them based on your **immediate response** to the job.

<input type="checkbox"/> TEACHER	<input type="checkbox"/> SINGER	<input type="checkbox"/> DOCTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDER	<input type="checkbox"/> ATHLETE
<input type="checkbox"/> MODEL	<input type="checkbox"/> ARTIST	<input type="checkbox"/> COACH	<input type="checkbox"/> BABYSITTER	

ANSWER the following questions by circling Yes or No or writing your answer on the lines.

- Have you ever been told to “man up” or “act like a man”?
What do these phrases mean? _____

YES **NO**
- Are there rules about who should ask whom out on a date?

YES **NO**
- Have you heard the phrase, “Who wears the pants in the family?”
What does this mean? _____

YES **NO**
- Are there rules and expectations for how boys should act and behave?

YES **NO**
- Are there rules and expectations for how girls should act and behave?

YES **NO**
- If you answered “Yes,” who makes these rules? _____

- Do you think that having different expectations of boys/men and girls/women causes problems? Why or why not? _____

DRAW a picture on the back of this sheet answering the question, “What do you think a man looks like?” Using short labels (one or two words), identify five aspects of a man in your drawing.

 **THINK ABOUT IT**

Which labels on your drawing could apply to girls & women as well?

LESSON 1

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY



DIRECTIONS

STEP 1

Think about the words that describe what it means to be a boy. Write rules associated with these words in “The Man Box” below.

Example: If “strong” is a word that describes a boy, what is a rule that might be associated with that word? “Don’t ask for help.”

Don’t ask for help.

THE MAN BOX

STEP 2

Look at the box labeled “The Possibility Box.” If the Man Box rules weren’t so strict, what would be possible? Fill in possibilities for how a man could comfortably behave if they could break out of the box (or step out of the box).

Example: Ask for help when you need it.

Ask for help when you need it.

THE POSSIBILITY BOX



THINK ABOUT IT

- What challenges, such as emotions or expectations, stand in the way of moving from “The Man Box” to “The Possibility Box”?
- What would you be afraid of? What might prevent you from breaking out of “The Man Box”?

LESSON 2 SOCIETY'S GENDER NORMS**GETTING STARTED****OBJECTIVES:**

- Examine the norms society has taught us about the roles of boys and girls
- Recognize gender binary specific terms: man/woman, boy/girl, male/female, masculine/feminine
- Define the terms “gender,” “norms,” and “nonbinary”
- Raise awareness about gender norms and their effects

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the “How Our World Works” and “Society’s Gender Norms” activity sheets

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes**TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:**

Insults received when stepping out of society’s boxes are often derogatory to women and send the message that being a woman is inferior. The LGBTQ, Trans, and Nonbinary community is often treated the same way.

Sexism, homophobia, and transphobia have taught boys to guard against being perceived as feminine or non-heterosexual. While this program focuses on sexism and stereotypes of men and women, violence against the LGBTQ, Trans and nonbinary community is also based on the concepts of male dominance and masculinity. Gender-based violence disproportionately impacts women and girls, boys and men who appear feminine, girls and women who appear masculine, and non-binary folks who do not identify with a specific category of gender expression. Address homophobic and transphobic comments that might arise so that the boys understand how these beliefs are connected to the Man Box and may escalate to violence.

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Review the group agreements with the boys and remind them that you want them to participate, feel comfortable sharing, and be respectful of each other.

**BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

1. Explain to the group that these lessons aim to help us learn to have healthier, more respectful relationships. Encourage group discussion during the lesson.
2. Distribute the “How Our World Works” activity sheet.
3. Read the passage aloud as the boys follow along.
4. Ask the boys to underline gender-specific terms (men/women, boy/girl, male/female, him/her, nonbinary) during or after the reading.
5. After reading, pose the following questions for discussion:
 - According to this reading, is the group in control men or women?
 - How do you know?
 - What would it be like to grow up in this world as a boy or girl?
 - How are women restricted in this world? How are men restricted?
 - Would you rather be a boy or girl in this world? Why?
 - Does this world reflect our world? Why or why not?
6. Ask the boys to reread the passage, changing the underlined words to their gender counterparts. For example, change “man” to “woman.”
7. Through group discussion, review the boys’ initial responses to the questions in number 5 and see if the answers change once the gender changes.
8. Write “gender” on the board or chart paper and ask the boys, the following questions for discussion:
 - What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you see the word “gender”?
 - Is gender the same as biological sex?
9. Explain that gender is not about being biologically male or female. Gender is about our society’s traits and behaviors associated with masculinity and femininity.
10. Write “socialization” on the board or chart paper and ask the boys if they have heard of this word. Ask them to share possible definitions for the word.
11. Explain that socialization is the process by which we learn the norms, values, and ideals in our society.
12. Write “gender norms” on the board or chart paper and ask the following questions for discussion:
 - What did your socialization teach you about gender?
 - Did you learn that we are born behaving in certain ways or are taught to behave in certain ways?
 - Can it be both sometimes? How so?

LESSON 2: Continued**SOCIETY'S GENDER NORMS****BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

13. Explain that gender norms are about how we learn from a young age what society considers appropriate – ways that boys and girls are supposed to talk, walk, sit, stand, have fun, behave in relationships, etc. How have these changed? Be prepared to give simple examples: “In the past, feminine-identified people were expected to wear skirts to school. Pants weren’t an option.”
14. Distribute copies of the “Society’s Gender Norms” activity sheet and ask the boys to complete it.
15. When they are finished, discuss answers to the “Think About It!” questions:
 - What names are boys or men called if they step out of the box or deviate from society’s gender norms?
 - What might happen to boys who step out of the box or deviate from society’s gender norms?
 - What names are girls called if they don’t follow society’s gender norms?
 - What might happen to girls or women who don’t follow society’s gender norms?
16. Explain that insults received when stepping out of society’s boxes are often derogatory to women, and send the message that being a woman is inferior. The LGBTQ, Trans, and nonbinary community is often treated the same way. Sexism, homophobia, and transphobia have taught boys to guard against being perceived as feminine or non-heterosexual.
17. If the group questions the history of gender norms and why they became common, explain that it goes back to a system in which women were the property of men. While this was a long time ago, the beliefs associated with this system – which gives power and privilege to males over girls and women and considers male traits superior to those of girls and women – form the foundation of the Man Box and gender rules in our society. Remind the boys that the goal of the lessons is to focus on today and now, not to rehash history.
18. The group may also ask, “What’s the problem with gender norms?” Have the boys consider who benefits from the rules. Remind the boys that gender rules can create power issues, which can lead to negative or degrading treatment of women and girls. The rules can also prevent boys and girls from being all they can be or all they want to be. Again, remind them that talking about the norms is not about blame. It is about exploring the rules and their potential consequences, so we can think critically about power and help reduce violence and disrespect.

**AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION**

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

“

I will be
more aware of
society’s boxes.

Over the next week, ask the boys to observe how boys and girls are treated when they step out of society’s boxes. Encourage them to try not to participate in making negative comments about, or punishing anyone for, stepping outside of society’s boxes or not following society’s gender norms. If it’s safe, they can go a step further by speaking out when they notice others punishing someone or speaking negatively about people for not conforming to gender norms. Choosing not to support negative behavior, asking a friend to stop acting in a negative way, or offering a kind word to someone who is being criticized are supportive tactics.

LESSON 2

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

DIRECTIONS

Read the passage below and highlight or underline the gender-specific terms (men/women, boy/girl, male/female, him/her, etc.) in the passage. The first paragraph is done for you as an example.

When you turn on the television and hear about world leaders, you mainly see the pictures and names of women. Men and women are different, with men being understood as naturally more nurturing and sweet, while women are thought of as naturally more direct and strong. When a baby is born, it is common for men to stay home and take care of the baby.

Because men are seen as more vulnerable than women, they are often encouraged to do quieter activities, like playing with dolls and cooking. On the other hand, women are encouraged to be active, strong, and athletic from a young age. If women play with dolls or back down from a fight, they are often teased for acting like “little boys.”

Professional women athletes can make millions of dollars and many little girls dream about going pro. Fans watch women play basketball, football, and baseball—and almost every woman in society owns a piece of clothing with her favorite woman athlete’s name on it.

When both men and women speak, they often use the word “womankind” to describe human beings. Books, plays, movies, and religions refer to life as the story of “womankind” and to God as “she.”

In school, children have been taught about the brave women heroes throughout history who have shaped society. Schools teach that the “founding mothers” and all the women leaders after them have created the laws and institutions that exist in society.

When men get married, the tradition is that their last name becomes that of their new wife. Children’s fairy tales often tell the story of a young boy searching for his princess to save him. Most movies, commercials, videos, and magazines are made by and for women, and the roles for men often require them to wear hardly any clothing and act silly. Media that is made for men often focuses on how they can please or attract a woman.

When men walk down the street, it is not unusual for groups of women to stare at their bodies and comment on how they look. Most men say that they feel uncomfortable when this happens, but women often tell them that it is just a compliment.

Many people say this is just how girls act, and that boys should expect it. If a woman doesn’t act this way, both men and women often immediately question her sexual orientation or tease her about being “gay.”

**THINK ABOUT IT**

- Would you rather be a boy or girl in this world? Why?
- Does the world depicted in this passage reflect our world?
- What if the roles of boys and girls in this world were reversed?
- Change the gender-specific words you underlined to their counterparts. For example, “women” becomes “men,” etc., and then reread the passage. Which version—the original or the one with the gender references flipped—is more like the society we live in?
- Where do you hear references to gender-specific roles in your daily life?

LESSON 2

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

SOCIETY'S GENDER NORMS

DIRECTIONS

In the chart below, describe society's gender norms about how boys or men and girls or women should act or behave. **Remember: This may not be what you believe—it's about what society has taught us.**

	BOYS	GIRLS
How are you supposed to behave in sports?		
How are you supposed to behave in business?		
How are you supposed to behave on a date?		
What kinds of emotions are you supposed to have?		
How are you expected to express your emotions?		
What type of childhood toys are you expected to play with?		
What type of activities are you expected to participate in?		
How are you expected to look and dress?		
How are you supposed to act sexually?		
Who are you expected to be attracted to?		



THINK ABOUT IT

- What names are boys called if they step out of the box or deviate from society's gender norms?
- What might happen to boys who step out of the box or deviate from society's gender norms?
- What names are girls called if they don't follow society's gender norms?
- What might happen to girls who don't follow society's gender norms?

LESSON 3 MAN BOX TEACHINGS



GETTING STARTED

OBJECTIVES:

- Review the terms “gender” and “gender norms”
- Examine the norms society has taught us about the roles of boys and girls
- Recall times when boys were socialized to behave like men and determine what that means
- Encourage boys to understand gender stereotypes and the limitations the Man Box imposes

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the “Man Box Teachings” activity sheet

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:

For this activity, reiterate the importance of the group agreements. Boys should only share what they are comfortable sharing. Remind them that if they ever feel like they are in an unsafe situation, they should speak to you or another trusted adult. Also, remind them that if anyone is in an unsafe or harmful situation, you will need to report it according to your school’s policies.

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Review the group agreements. Give reminders throughout the program that the goal is to share ideas in an open discussion. Everyone can listen and participate respectfully.



BREAK OUT OF THE BOX

1. Write “gender norms” on the board or chart paper and use the following questions to review Lesson 2:
 - Have you tried to be more aware of society’s gender norms?
 - What have you noticed about yourself and the Man Box?
 - What have you noticed about other young men and the Man Box?
 - Have you recognized evidence of gender norms?
 - When it was safe, have you spoken out when you noticed others punishing someone or speaking negatively about people for not conforming to society’s gender norms?
2. Share a story from your childhood that demonstrates the Man Box, or an incident in which you learned gender stereotypes. For example, maybe you were told not to cry or to act tough in a difficult situation. Describe for the boys what happened, what you learned about masculinity, who taught you, and how you responded to the lesson. How were some of your behaviors decided for you by gender norms? Discuss the gender-based social rules that support you and those that do not.
3. Ask for volunteers to share their own masculinity stories in which they learned about the Man Box and its rules.
 - Review the rules from page 6 to remind the boys.
4. Distribute the “Man Box Teachings” activity sheet.
5. Help the boys complete the chart and practice their skits. If they cannot think of examples, brainstorm as a group.
6. Write “gender norms” on the board or chart paper and use the following questions to recap Lesson 3:
 - Is the subject of this skit familiar to you?
 - Is this something you think can change, will change, or needs to change?
 - How hard would it be for you to make this change in your life? Why?
 - If you could change this Man Box rule, what behavior could you exhibit instead?
7. If the group needs help with these questions, look back at the Man Box on page 6 and ask them if they feel restricted by the rules. Do they feel comfortable showing emotion, asking for help, saying when they’re scared, letting others see them being kind, etc.? Do they fear they may be judged negatively if they do any of these things? Explain that stepping out of the box and being true to yourself doesn’t mean you’re not strong or confident. It takes courage to step away from society’s gender norms and stereotypes. That’s a positive trait.

LESSON 3: Continued

MAN BOX TEACHINGS



AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

“

I was taught gender norms, which means I can unlearn it and teach myself to be free.

Ask the boys to choose one Man Box rule they would like to get rid of for themselves. Encourage them to try to stop following that rule for at least one week. Suggest that they have a defined behavior in mind to exhibit in place of the rule they are giving up. Remind them that it takes a lot of courage to break out of the Man Box. The Man Box was created long before they were born, and it was taught to everyone by society. No one is at fault for this, but collectively, we can help change it.

LESSON 3 **REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY** **MAN BOX TEACHINGS**

DIRECTIONS

Complete the chart below with something you have experienced that taught you about the Man Box – the rules about what it means to be a boy according to society’s gender norms.

	WHAT HAPPENED?	WHAT DID IT TEACH YOU ABOUT THE MAN BOX?	HOW DID YOU RESPOND?
An experience from when you were a young child			
Another experience from when you were a young child			
A recent experience (In the past two years)			
Another recent experience (In the past two years)			

TEAM UP WITH ONE OR TWO OTHER BOYS IN THE GROUP

Act out a skit depicting a scenario from your list. First, act out the skit as it happened, and then create an alternate ending in which you break out of the Man Box. Act out your skit again with the alternate ending.



THINK ABOUT IT

What would you do differently if there were no Man Box?

LESSON 4 THE MEDIA CONNECTION**GETTING STARTED****OBJECTIVES:**

- Identify media messages about gender norms and sexuality
- Define the term “objectification”
- Examine the concept of objectification in media—print ads and song lyrics
- Help raise boys’ awareness and sensitivity to negative portrayals of women

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the “Media vs. Reality” activity sheet
- Three or more images from magazine ads
- Examples of song lyrics reflecting Man Box stereotypes
- Magazines
- Tape or glue

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes**TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:**

The purpose of this activity is to think about the messages within the media and whether they impact how people think, act, and feel.

Exploring the media is not meant as an attack on men. Men are not doing anything wrong by listening to music or buying magazines that demonstrate Man Box stereotypes. The purpose is to help boys see the invisible boxes that shape behavior, so they can make informed decisions. As boys socialize in our culture, they have been taught to expect objectification, humiliation, and dehumanization of girls and women. It is not something that they should feel ashamed of, – instead, it’s something for them to notice, think about critically, and find ways to not objectify girls and women.

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Review the agreements before starting the lesson.

**BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

1. Remind the boys that, in the last session, they looked at personal experiences that exposed them to and reinforced lessons about the Man Box. Explain that it’s not just people who train boys and girls in gender norms – it’s the media, as well.
2. Ask them to share forms of media that state how men and women should behave and/or be treated. Examples include: television shows, commercials, movies, music, video games, comic books, advertisements, magazines, toys, clothing, etc.
3. Ask the boys if they have heard the term “objectification.” What does it mean? Share the following definition: seeing or treating someone as an object rather than a person.
4. Show them sample ads you selected. Use the following questions for discussion:
 - Are these ads putting boys and girls in gender socialization boxes? Why or why not?
 - Are there examples of objectification in these ads?
5. Explain that some of the ways people are objectified are by only showing parts of their bodies, using their bodies as objects, presenting their bodies in an unrealistic way, or presenting their bodies as things to be used with little regard for their humanity or personality.
6. Ask the boys why these types of images are so common and what messages they are sending about boys and girls. Explain to the group that women have also been socialized to think that their value lies in their sexuality, attractiveness, and ability to attract men, and there is an industry that exists to keep them focused on their appearance. Studies show that the sexualization and objectification of girls in the media can lead to many negative emotional, physical, sexual, and psychological health consequences for girls – including eating disorders, depression, and low self-esteem.

LESSON 4: Continued THE MEDIA CONNECTION**BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

7. To further explore the concept, share lyrics from popular songs you or the boys found that also demonstrate objectification. The lyrics might reflect the violent treatment of women, a man's control over a woman, homophobic connotations belittling feminine traits, or demeaning treatment that indicates women have less value. As an alternative, ask the boys for a list of their favorite songs and have them evaluate the lyrics to determine if they include any gender stereotypes.
8. Once the boys have a good grasp on the concept of objectification, pass out magazines and the "Media vs. Reality" activity sheet. Have each boy find an image that objectifies women, tear it out of the magazine, and attach it to the activity sheet. Then have them answer the questions on the sheet. Next, have the boys share their images and their thoughts about the images.
9. Explain to the group that when boys see images like this on a regular basis, they learn to accept that women are objects. When young men and boys view women as objects, they perpetuate the ideals of the Man Box. This attitude and view of women can lead to violence as men learn to think of women as inferior.
10. The group may challenge this activity by saying that the women in the images are actresses or models, are choosing to be objectified, and are being paid. Explain that these are valid comments since, more often than not, these are the roles available to women. However, explain that the media can desensitize us and make it hard for boys and girls to differentiate between reality and fantasy. For boys, the images support the notion that girls, in general, are objects rather than humans. On the flip side, girls – who are taught by society that their goal is to attract men – can be criticized for mimicking the media. What is okay for the media is not always okay for the general population of women.

**AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION**

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

“

I can see beyond objectification and view girls and women as human beings who are valued and respected.

Ask the boys to spend the week observing their thoughts about the girls and women they encounter. Encourage them to identify what they like about these girls and women as people. Ask them to be conscious of images around them that fit into the Man Box and promote rigid gender norms.

LESSON 4

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

MEDIA VS. REALITY

DIRECTIONS

Research and find an image from an ad that demonstrates objectification. Attach this sheet to your image and answer the following questions.

1. What's happening in the image you selected?

2. Does the image reflect real life? Why or why not?

3. What does this image want me to believe about women and men?

4. Does the image objectify women and men? Why or why not?

5. If the image objectifies women, how might it be changed to show the woman as a human being rather than as an object?



THINK ABOUT IT

- What happens when you see images like this every day? Does it have an impact?
- Do these images reinforce the ideas in the Man Box? How?
- Might the messages within these ads contribute to a violent culture?

LESSON 5 UNDERSTANDING OBJECTIFICATION

 **GETTING STARTED**

OBJECTIVES:

- Review the definition of “objectification”
- Contrast the difference between objects and people
- Help prevent boys from viewing girls and women as objects

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the “Object vs. Person” activity sheet

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:

Advertising images bombard boys and girls with stereotypes and put pressure on people to look, act, and think certain ways.

They can support the idea that women are only important as seen through the eyes of men. They can also send confusing messages by presenting “ideal” women, but when girls try to look like this in real life, they can be called names. Girls are told they are supposed to be sexy and attractive. The objectification within the ads teaches us to view women as “sex objects.” Objects don’t have feelings or families, and they are not human. Once we start to relate to a group of people as “sex objects,” we view them as less real and less valuable than full humans. This makes committing violence against them more possible.

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Review the agreements before starting the lesson.

 **BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

1. Ask the boys to review what they learned and discussed about objectification during the last class.
2. Draw two boxes on the board. Write “object” on top of one of the boxes and “person” on top of the other box and use the following questions for discussion:
 - What are the most important things about a person?
 - What are the most important things about an object?
4. As the boys respond, ask them to consider whether these conversations categorize girls and women as people or as objects. Follow up with these questions for discussion:
 - Which girls and/or women do you avoid objectifying in your life?
 - Why don’t you objectify these particular girls or women?

As they talk, write their words in the appropriate boxes on the board. Boys might respond that personality, kindness, friendship, intelligence, and respect are important traits for a person, while worth and looks are important for objects—objects don’t have feelings or families.

Boys will likely reply that they avoid talking about their mothers, sisters, and women relatives as objects because they view them and value them differently from other girls and women, especially girls and women they don’t know.

3. Next, ask the boys:
 - When you talk about girls with your friends, what do you talk about?

When talking about girls, boys might say they discuss personality, kindness, and looks. Remind the boys that attraction is normal, but it is important to be respectful.

5. Distribute the “Object vs. Person” activity sheet and have the boys work together to complete it. Walk around the room and listen in. Consider having the boys present their debates.
6. Wrap up by asking the boys what they learned from each other during their objectification debates and their responses to the questions on the activity sheet. Encourage the boys to think about the importance of valuing all girls and women as they do their women family members so that they have one set of standards.

LESSON 5: Continued

UNDERSTANDING OBJECTIFICATION



AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

“

Objectification of girls and women is all around me, but I can interrupt that thinking in my own life.

Ask the boys to try to interrupt themselves from objectifying girls or women in their everyday lives. Guide them to notice how girls or women are being objectified in the media and around them. Encourage them to do something different than usual when they find themselves in a situation in which girls or women are being objectified. If boys feel that girls like to be treated like objects, remind them that all girls should be respected and valued regardless of how they look or act.

LESSON 5

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

OBJECT VS PERSON

DIRECTIONS

Sometimes we view people we don't know differently than people we know. This can impact the way we treat them or act toward them. In the spaces below, describe how you might treat a girl whom you think of as cute and might objectify, and a woman relative whom you respect as a human. Is there a difference?

A girl on the street or at school you think is cute

Your mother, sister, grandmother or other female-identified relative

FIND A PARTNER AND DEBATE THIS STATEMENT:

If a guy objectifies girls or women, it has a big impact on girls and women – as well as on the boys and men who objectify them. Discuss impact with your partner with the questions below.

 **THINK ABOUT IT**

- Notice how girls or women are being objectified in the media and in the world around you.
- Do you treat women in the two groups differently? If so, why do you think that is?
- What can you do to treat all women with value and respect?
- How can you stop yourself from objectifying girls or women in your everyday life?
- What can you do differently when you find yourself in a situation in which girls or women are being objectified?

LESSON 6 UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**GETTING STARTED****OBJECTIVES:**

- Define the term “sexual harassment”
- Identify examples of sexual harassment in daily routines
- Encourage boys to identify respectful ways to interact with women and girls in real-life scenarios

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the “Sexual Harassment” and “Respectful Behavior” activity sheets
- Copies of the “Myths and Facts About Sexual Harassment” and “Breaking Out of the Man Box” handouts

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes**TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:**

At the end of this lesson, you will distribute the “Breaking Out of the Man Box” handout. This will be used again in Lesson 9. Ask the boys to read through the sheet. Encourage them to create a safe space in their immediate environment by taking a stand against sexual harassment. The resource sheet provides subtle and nonaggressive ways to support people who are being bullied or harassed. Your boys might argue that girls enjoy the attention or sexual harassment they receive. Explain to them that all genders are affected by the rigid teachings of the Man Box, and girls can also be socialized to not recognize sexual harassment, to be afraid to share how they really feel, and even devalue themselves

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Review the agreements before starting the lesson.

**BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

1. Explain that when you objectify people, you treat them with disrespect and exhibit a disregard for their humanity. One way that people are treated with disrespect and disregard is through sexual harassment.
2. Ask the boys to define sexual harassment based on what they see and hear on the streets or in school hallways, and write these words on the board. Once you have a good definition on the board, read the following definition aloud: Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual attention, requests for sexual activity, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that makes a person feel threatened, uncomfortable, or unsafe. Sexual harassment can be physical, like grabbing, pinching, or touching someone. Or it can be verbal, like name-calling or starting rumors, making jokes, or propositioning someone. It can also happen online—not just in person.
3. Pass out the “Sexual Harassment” activity sheet. Allow the boys to get into groups to fill out the sheet. Ask them to discuss each of the four categories of sexual harassment and provide examples of sexual harassment they have witnessed, heard about, or even engaged in themselves.
4. After they have filled in the boxes, review their responses and use the following questions to lead a discussion:
 - How do you think the person being harassed feels?
 - Why is harassment considered violence?
 - Is this harassment the type of behavior that happens between two equals, or is one person taking a dominant and controlling role over another? (Emphasize the statement about gender-based violence from the activity sheet.)
 - Does it make a difference if it happens to someone you know or someone you don’t know? Why?

LESSON 6: Continued**UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL HARRASSMENT****BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

5. If boys don't make the connection themselves, explain that the Man Box characterizes men as being aggressive, dominant, and unfeeling, and supports the view that women are objects or the property of men. This dehumanizes girls and women and creates a culture where harassment or violence occurs and often goes unreported. It is important to emphasize that it's not the victim's fault—no one deserves to be harassed or attacked, regardless of what they are wearing or what their reputations are. Refer back to the discussion in the previous lesson to reinforce the importance of having one set of standards that values all women – whether they are family, friends, or people you don't know.
6. Next, review the “Myths and Facts About Sexual Harassment” handout with the boys. Explain that sexual harassment is a way of taking control of and harming another person through bullying and aggressive behavior. Explain that control is a way of avoiding being vulnerable.
7. Distribute the “Respectful Behavior” activity sheet. As a group, review the boys' responses to the activity and “Think About It!” questions.

**AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION**

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

“

I can help the girls and women in my life feel safe and respected.

Pass out the “Breaking Out of the Man Box” handout. Ask the boys to read through the sheet. Encourage them to try to make their immediate environment safer by taking a stand against sexual harassment. For some, this may mean not participating in sexual harassment; for others, this may mean speaking up when they witness sexual harassment. The handout provides subtle and nonaggressive ways to support people who are being bullied or harassed. Remind the boys that personal safety is important—they should get help if a situation is unsafe.

LESSON 6

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

DIRECTIONS

In the boxes, write examples of each of the categories of sexual harassment that you’ve observed in reality or on TV. What was the outcome? How did the victim respond? Or how do you think the victim would respond? Write these answers under “Outcome.” Use the definition of sexual harassment below when writing the examples.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual attention, requests for sexual activity, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that makes a person feel **threatened, uncomfortable, or unsafe**.

Sexual harassment is also a form of **gender-based violence**—violence or the threat of violence against someone based on their gender or sex. It includes any act or threat that inflicts physical, sexual, or psychological harm on someone because of gender.

Physical Contact:	Outcome:
Sexual Comments:	Outcome:
Sexual Propositions:	Outcome:
Unwanted Communication:	Outcome:



THINK ABOUT IT

- What is the connection between the Man Box and sexual harassment?
- How could breaking out of the Man Box help prevent sexual harassment?

LESSON 6 **REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY** **RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR**

DIRECTIONS

Fill in the blank boxes below with respectful ways of handling the following situations.

SCENARIO	RESPECTFUL RESPONSE
<p>You see an attractive person on the street or at school and you want to say hello.</p>	
<p>You have a friend you want to ask out on a date.</p>	
<p>You are at the park with a bunch of your friends and one of them whistles and makes comments as someone attractive walks by.</p>	
<p>You are in class with someone you have asked out and who has already said no.</p>	



THINK ABOUT IT

- Do any of the scenarios reflect unwelcome behavior that could make the person feel harassed, offended, humiliated, or intimidated?
- Do your responses demonstrate respect for the people involved?
- Do you see behaviors in your responses that are unwanted or unwelcome?
- Are any of the behaviors of a sexual nature?
- Do you think any of your responses could make the person feel harassed, offended, humiliated, or intimidated?
- Would you like it if you were subjected to that behavior?

LESSON 6

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

MYTH

Girls “ask” to be sexually harassed by the way they dress.

FACT

Both boys and girls often dress in ways that are stylish and that they think might impress or attract other people. But this is no excuse for harassment, intimidation, or disrespect. All people should be treated with respect and dignity – regardless of what they are wearing. This myth is an example of victim blaming. Victim blaming is when the victim is held partially responsible for the mistreatment committed against them. It is a harmful response that puts the focus on the victim rather than the person engaging in sexual harassment.

MYTH

Sexual harassment is just “boys being boys.”

FACT

Making someone feel uncomfortable or threatened is not something that boys “naturally” do—it is something they are taught to do by the Man Box. It is a learned behavior that can be unlearned.

MYTH

Sexual harassment is not a big deal—some people are just too sensitive.

FACT

Sexual harassment is not about someone being too sensitive or not knowing how to take a joke. It is a form of bullying that can interfere with the victim’s physical and psychological health. Sexual harassment can lead to many negative consequences for victims, such as missing school, academic decline, suicidal thoughts, and self-harming behaviors.

MYTH

Sexual harassment only happens in the workplace.

FACT

Sexual harassment can happen anywhere—at work, at home, on the street, or in school. Sexual harassment can happen to anyone regardless of age, sex, nationality, or race. Sexual harassment is prohibited in school environments under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

MYTH

It’s just flirting!

FACT

Flirting and sexual harassment are not the same thing. Flirting is an activity that both people participate in and consent to. Sexual harassment is not about trying to get to know someone. It is about using power to make someone feel threatened, uncomfortable, or unsafe.

MYTH

Girls like to be sexually harassed.

FACT

Sexual harassment is not fun or enjoyable for the victim. It makes the person feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or threatened.

MYTH

Males can’t be sexually harassed.

FACT

Anyone can experience sexual harassment.

LESSON 6 & 9

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

BREAKING OUT OF THE MAN BOX

The following tips can help you break out of the Man Box and prevent sexual harassment.



SAY SOMETHING

When you see or hear Man Box behavior, you can say things like:

- “Hey, that wasn’t an okay thing to say or do.”
- “I don’t think you should say or do those kinds of things.”
- “No, that’s not cool.”

You can also ask questions like these:

- “Why would you say or do those kinds of things?”
- “How come you said that?”
- “Do you know that is a form of violence?”

STAND UP

If you see someone being bullied, harassed, or treated in a disrespectful manner—and if it is safe for you to do so—you can step in on behalf of that person by:

- Trying to interrupt the situation by asking the person who is doing the bullying or harassing for the time or directions. Sometimes, just changing their focus can stop what is happening in the moment.
- Offering the person being bullied or harassed support by apologizing for how others are behaving and asking what you can do to support them.
- Calling someone who can help in the moment.
- Telling the person causing harm to stop.
- Getting help from coaches, counselors, or teachers at your school.

RAISE AWARENESS

You can raise awareness against sexual harassment and gender-based violence in your school by:

- Starting a school committee or club.
- Organizing a poster, T-shirt design, or PSA video contest.
- Coordinating an assembly or school-wide campaign to raise awareness about gender-based violence.
- Organizing an assembly that teaches others tips for healthy, respectful masculinity.
- Inviting teachers and administrators to meetings about violence in the school.
- Participating in Denim Day, a national sexual violence prevention and education campaign (denimdayinfo.org).

LESSON 7 UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL ASSAULT



GETTING STARTED

OBJECTIVES:

- Define the terms “sexual assault,” “consent,” and “coercion”
- Help boys understand what sexual assault is

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the “Myths and Facts About Sexual Assault” handout
- Copies of the “Consent, Coercion, or Nonconsent?” activity sheet

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:

Consent is a skill that is best taught from an early age in all settings: in the playground, at school, and in everyday interactions. Given some of the subject matter, you have a responsibility to make sure this age is appropriate for your group. Don’t forget that you know the boys best. You can adjust the content and make it age-appropriate as you see fit.

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Review the agreements before starting the lesson, and remind boys that the stories shared during discussions are for the group only.



BREAK OUT OF THE BOX

1. Ask the boys to summarize what they learned during the previous class about sexual harassment. Make sure they identify different types of sexual harassment, including physical touch, sexual comments, sexual propositions, and unwanted communication.
2. Ask the group to define sexual assault and write the words they use on the board. Once you have a good definition on the board, read the following definition aloud: Sexual assault occurs when someone touches any part of another person’s body in a sexual way, even through clothes, without that person’s consent. Sexual assault can be committed against someone by a stranger, an acquaintance, a friend, a romantic partner, or a family member. Sexual assault is an act of aggression and power.
3. Pass out the “Myths and Facts About Sexual Assault” handout. Ask the boys to read it to themselves. Then ask volunteers to read facts that they thought were surprising. Use the following questions for discussion:
 - How many of you did not know the facts?
 - Do you agree with the facts?
4. Explain that healthy sex and sexual interactions only happen with the consent of both partners. Ask for a definition of “consent.” Then write the following definition on the board: Consent is clear permission between intimate partners that what they are doing is okay and safe. To consent to something—like being sexual—means you confidently agree to do it based on your own free will without any pressure or influence, including alcohol.
5. Ask the boys which of the words in the definition are absolutely necessary in understanding the definition. They should identify such words as “clear permission”; “confidently agree”; “free will”; and “without any pressure or influence.” If those words are not identified, make sure you identify them and review how those words relate to consent.
6. Explain that the word “no” isn’t the only way that an intimate partner might show he or she does not consent. They could also use body language and words of hesitation and avoidance. It is a myth that it’s okay if the person doesn’t say no. Their words and body language should be giving clear permission, or clearly saying yes.

LESSON 7: Continued**UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL ASSAULT****BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

7. Emphasize also that “no” does not mean try harder, or that the person is playing “hard to get.”
 8. Ask the boys:
 - After someone has demonstrated nonconsent and a person attempts to manipulate or persuade the other person to change their mind, or inspire fear, what is that called? (After giving the boys an opportunity to answer, write “coercion” on the board.)
 9. To wrap up, pass out the “Consent, Coercion, or Non-consent?” activity sheet. Ask the boys to read the statements and descriptions and determine if each phrase demonstrates consent, coercion, or nonconsent and write it under the appropriate header. Once they’re done, review each phrase and ask volunteers to explain why they put it under the category that they did. Correct any misconceptions the boys may have.
- Answers:**
- Consent: “Let’s do it”; “Yes”; “I want to”
 - Coercion: “You shouldn’t have come here if you didn’t want to”; Asking three or four times in a row; “You did it before, so you should do it again”; “Just do it for me”
 - Nonconsent: “No”; “Maybe we shouldn’t”; “I already said no”; Stiff body language; Frowning; Silence; “I’m not ready”; “Maybe we should stop”; “Can we slow this down?”; “I’m so happy you’re here”
10. As a group, discuss the boys’ responses to the “Think About It!” question and their observations on how men or boys treat women and girls. Boys might be confused about how they can help prevent violence against women and girls or how this is their issue. Explain that by valuing women and girls – as well as by speaking up against violence when the boys feel it is safe – they have the chance to be leaders against gender-based violence and set an example for their peers.

**AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION**

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

“

**I respect the feelings
and free will of others.**

Encourage the boys to look out for ways they, or the boys or men around them, may be ignoring expressions of nonconsent from girls and/or women. Encourage them to speak up and say something like: “She said no.” or “She looks uncomfortable, stop harassing her.”

LESSON 6

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault occurs when someone touches any part of another person’s body in a sexual way, even through clothes, without that person’s consent. Sexual assault can be committed against someone by a stranger, an acquaintance, a friend, a romantic partner, or a family member. Sexual assault is an act of aggression and power.

MYTH

Sometimes girls ask to be sexually assaulted because of the way they dress or act.

FACT

No one asks to be assaulted. Everyone has the right to dress and act how they want to dress and not experience violence. This myth is an example of blaming the victim.

MYTH

Usually sexual violence is committed by someone who is a stranger to the victim.

FACT

Most sexual assault victims know the person who assaulted them. About 78 percent of female-identified victims said the sexual assault involved a family member, intimate partner, friend, or acquaintance.¹

MYTH

Once someone starts to engage in sexual activity, they cannot change their mind.

FACT

Everyone has a right to change their mind during any moment of a sexual experience. A person’s body belongs to that person only. Saying “yes” to one form of sexual activity does not mean saying “yes” to another.

MYTH

Rape is just “rough” sex.

FACT

Rape is a violent assault that is acted out sexually, which affects an individual’s sense of safety and control.

MYTH

Sometimes “no” means “yes.”

FACT

If someone says “no,” that means they do not consent to sexual activity. If you are not sure whether someone wants to engage in sexual activity, ask – and respect their answer. “No” does not mean “try harder.”

MYTH

Girls are quick to claim sexual assault or rape.

FACT

Sexual assault and rape are underreported. It is estimated that about 65 percent of sexual assaults and rapes are not reported.²

MYTH

It is only sexual assault if the victim was threatened with a weapon or has visible injuries.

FACT

Sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient. The force may include weapons or intimidation, drugs, alcohol, or any other tool that diminishes the person’s judgment.

MYTH

Men can’t be sexually assaulted.

FACT

Men can be sexually assaulted regardless of their size, strength, appearance, and sexual orientation.

Reference: 1. www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=4594 • 2. www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv13.pdf

LESSON 7

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

CONSENT, COERCION, OR NON CONSENT?

DIRECTIONS

Read each sentence or description listed. Does it demonstrate consent, coercion, or nonconsent?
Write the words under the appropriate header below.

“Can we slow this down?” “You shouldn’t have come here if you didn’t want to.” **Stiff body language**

“Maybe we should stop.” **“I want to.”** “Maybe we shouldn’t.”

Asking three or four times in a row **“Yes.”** **Frowning**

“I already said no.” “Just do it for me.” **“I’m so happy you’re here.”**

“Let’s do it.” **Silence** **“I’m not ready.”**

“You did it before, so you should do it again.”

CONSENT	COERSION	NONCONSENT
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

 **THINK ABOUT IT**

How are people around you ignoring expressions of nonconsent?

LESSON 8 INTERRUPT THE CYCLE



GETTING STARTED

OBJECTIVES:

- Summarize the lessons of the program to date
- Introduce the concept of domestic violence
- Contrast the terms “dating” and “domestic violence”
- Encourage boys to develop tools to help interrupt the cycle of gender-based violence and harassment

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the “Interrupt the Cycle” activity sheet

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes

TIPS FOR COACHES:

- Before facilitating this lesson, think about one way that you can help boys raise awareness about and help prevent gender-based violence and Man Box behaviors in your school and/or community. Let the boys know that while the group meetings may be stopping, they can continue to work on being healthy and supporting one another. As you will be asking them to come up with ideas to continue the work, it is important that you first reflect on what is realistic and possible. It is also important that at the end of this lesson, boys who are interested in developing the project or idea have arranged another time to meet.

- Support the boys if they are hesitant about stepping outside of the Man Box. Remember that standing up to sexism and male dominance is not something that men in our society are supported for doing, and that they might be teased, harassed, ostracized, called names, etc. Discuss with the boys that just as they may have felt defensive when talking about these issues, other people may also have strong reactions and try to keep the boys in the box and perpetuate gender norms. Remind the boys that safety should always be their first priority and guiding principle.
- Remind the boys that just as they didn’t create the Man Box and male dominance, they also can’t stop it alone. Support them in trying to step outside of the box and encouraging their peers to do the same so that they develop healthy, respectful relationships.

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Review the group agreements before starting the lesson, and encourage boys to share their opinions and to be respectful of each other.



BREAK OUT OF THE BOX

1. Engage in conversation and ask the boys to summarize what they have learned during the program. Use the following questions for discussion:

- What is one of the most meaningful things you have learned?
- What will you do differently moving forward?
- How will you try to live free of the negative aspects of the Man Box?

2. Explain that as boys who have been educated on issues of gender norms and gender-based violence, they can set a good example for others.

They now know facts and information that their peers may not be aware of. They are in the unique position of being interrupters of situations of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and gender-based violence.

3. Explain that most boys and men are not abusers. They are good people who want to have healthy relationships. However, many times boys and men witness or are aware of incidents of harassment, assault, and violence. Speaking out against violence can help send the message that it’s not okay.

LESSON 8: Continued**INTERRUPT THE CYCLE****BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

4. Explain that dating violence happens between people who are dating, but do not live together, and domestic violence happens between people who live together. Issues of sexual harassment and assault occur in dating and domestic violence situations, but they tend to happen over longer periods of time and can escalate in severity.
5. Discuss the concept that dating violence has traditionally been seen as a women's problem to solve, even though women are not the ones who display the violent behavior – men are. Therefore, boys and young men have the responsibility to help stop the behavior.
6. Write the following words on the board: physical, emotional or mental, verbal, sexual, financial, digital.
7. Using “physical” as an example, ask boys to provide an example of physical harassment, assault, or violence that they have witnessed, heard about, or participated in. Then ask them to consider ways they can flip the script on that scenario.
8. Distribute the “Interrupt the Cycle” activity sheet and separate the boys into groups. Encourage them to come up with ways they can interrupt the cycle for each of the six categories listed above. Boys will brainstorm how they can respond if they observe inappropriate behavior or hear demeaning comments against girls and women. When the boys are done, ask for volunteers to share their responses so that the boys can learn tools that will help them.

**AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION**

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

“

The cycle of harassment, assault, and violence against women stops with me.

Ask boys to spend the week looking for ways to safely interrupt cycles of harassment, assault, and violence. Remind them that it is not always safe to enter certain situations; however, they can make a tremendous difference in just shifting their behaviors or the language they use with their peers. Encourage them to have at least one conversation with a peer that shifts an assumption about male dominance.

LESSON 8 **REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY** **INTERRUPT THE CYCLE**

DIRECTIONS

Use the scenarios below to demonstrate ways you can safely interrupt instances of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or gender-based violence that you might witness.

SITUATION	I COULD RESPOND BY...
<p>Physical: A guy shoves a girl into a locker.</p>	
<p>Emotional or mental: A guy is very controlling and tells his girlfriend what to wear and who she can and can't hang out with.</p>	
<p>Verbal: A guy says negative things about and to his girlfriend constantly. He calls her names and threatens her.</p>	
<p>Sexual: A guy touches a girl after she tells him to stop.</p>	
<p>Financial: A guy controls what his partner spends money on.</p>	
<p>Digital: A guy reads his partner's emails and texts, and posts pictures of her online.</p>	

LESSON 9 HEALTHY MASCULINITY, HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**GETTING STARTED****OBJECTIVES:**

- Review the principles of the Man Box
- Encourage boys to create tools they can use to break out of the Man Box and develop healthy, respectful relationships

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the “Man File” template
- Copies of the “What Do You Think?” assessment quiz
- Copies of the “Breaking Out of the Man Box” handout
- File folders
- Glue or tape, scissors

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes**TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:**

At the end of this lesson, you will distribute the “Breaking Out of the Man Box” handout, which was used in Lesson 6. Ask the boys to read through this sheet again. The handout provides subtle and nonaggressive ways to support people who are being bullied or harassed. Brainstorm additional ways boys might take a stand against sexual harassment. Remind the boys of the importance of personal safety in these situations.

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Review the agreements before starting the lesson.

**BREAK OUT OF THE BOX**

1. Ask the boys to state what they learned about the Man Box and what aspects of it they think are harmful to them. Review the information from Lesson 1 if needed.
 - non-threatening behaviors
 - respect
 - trust and support
 - honesty and accountability
 - economic responsibility
2. Write “healthy masculinity” on the board. Ask for volunteers to provide words they think of when they hear this phrase. Here are some suggestions to get them started:
 - believes in equality and treats all people with respect
 - isn’t afraid to show emotions, including sadness, fear, and joy
 - stands up for equality in a nonviolent way
 - is kind, nice, and caring
 - is strong—emotionally, mentally, socially
 - does not dominate, control, or intimidate others
 - listens to others
 - learns from others
 - uses his power to change society and support others
3. Write “healthy relationships” on the board or chart paper. Ask for volunteers to provide words they think of when they hear this phrase. Here are some suggestions to get them started:
 - negotiation and fairness
4. Pass out large, colorful file folders, pens or markers, and two copies of the “Man File” template to the group. Explain that they will now replace their Man Box with a Man File. Explain that file folders are places where information is put in and taken out as time passes. A Man File is a personal set of guidelines that is consistently revised as each individual man learns and grows.
5. Have each boy open his file folder and write “healthy masculinity” on the top left side of the folder, and “healthy relationships” on the top right side of the folder.
6. They will then cut out the images and glue or tape one underneath “healthy masculinity,” and the other underneath “healthy relationships.” Ask the boys to brainstorm words that will guide their healthy masculinity and healthy relationships, and write them in the corresponding outline.

LESSON 9: Continued

HEALTHY MASCULINITY, HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



BREAK OUT OF THE BOX

7. When the Man Files are complete, have the boys share them with the larger group. Use the following question for discussion:

- What do you think will be most challenging about using the Man Files?

Remind the boys that issues with the harmful stereotypes of masculinity did not start with them and will not stop with them alone. Many of us can experience negative reactions from others when we intentionally step outside of the Man Box. Boys have an opportunity to live more authentically and build healthier relationships. Encourage them to connect with a friend and/or talk to a receptive adult, and to stay focused on their goal of having healthy relationships.

8. Speak with the boys about organizing a group to act as peer leaders to help raise awareness among other boys in the school or community about healthy, respectful masculinity.

Or consider coordinating a T-shirt campaign to encourage respectful relationships and the prevention of gender-based violence. The boys could work in teams to create T-shirt design options that reflect what they've learned and what they would like to see change in their community.

9. To wrap up, have the boys complete the "What Do You Think?" quiz and allow them to reflect on what they've learned. Review their forms and compare them to the quizzes from Lesson 1 to see if the boys' views have changed.

10. Check in with the boys periodically after completing the program to see how they are doing and if they have questions.



AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.



I make respectful choices about how I treat myself and others.

Ask the boys to consider how they will keep growing and learning. Will they gather in a group, seek out a mentor, or reread their Man File on a regular basis? Emphasize that behaviors that are learned can be unlearned. Remind them that their presence demonstrating healthy manhood and healthy relationships will make positive ripples in their community that reach out into the larger world.

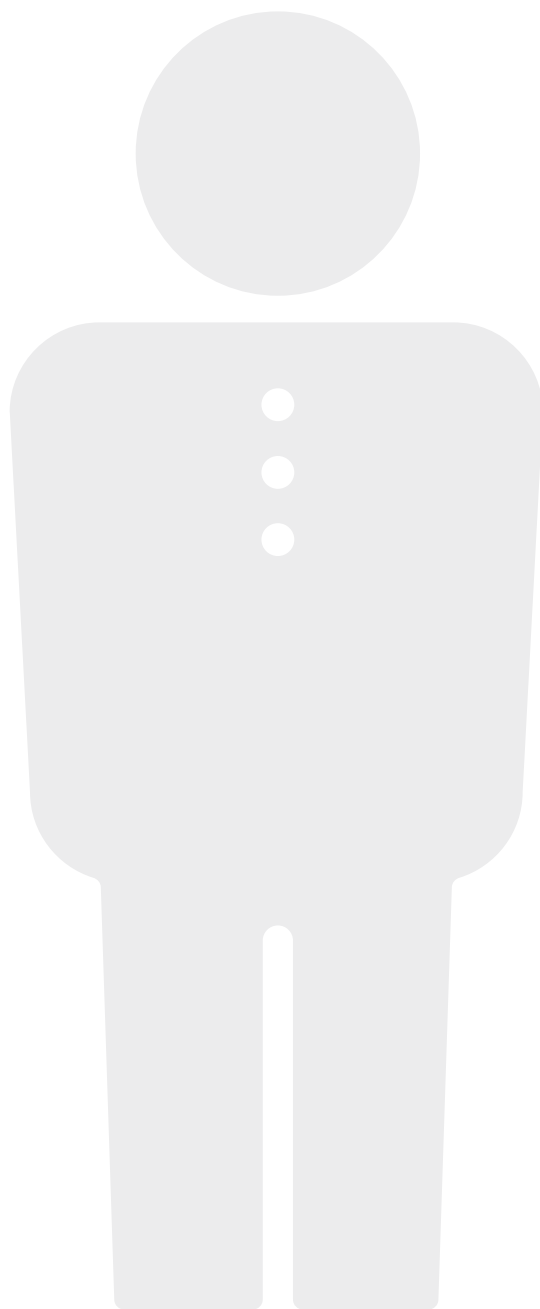
LESSON 9

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

MAN FILE

DIRECTIONS

Make two copies of the outline below and glue them to the inside of a file folder, putting one on each side. Write “healthy masculinity” on the left side of the folder above the image. Write “healthy relationships” above the other image on the right side. Inside each shape, write words or phrases that will help guide you in being a respectful man.



LESSON 10**HISTORY & RACE IN THE UNITED STATES****GETTING STARTED****OBJECTIVES:**

- Examine what we have been taught about history
- Identify what is missing from those teachings
- Define the terms “colonization,” “race,” “ethnicity,” “racism,” “equality,” “erasure,” and “equity”
- Raise awareness of how we are taught to view major events in United States history

MATERIALS:

- Long roll of paper (approximately 2’ wide x 6’ long)
- Scissors
- Tape
- Markers

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes - 1 hour

TIPS FOR EDUCATORS:

It is commonly accepted that standard social studies textbooks are “whitewashed” to present a more sanitized version of United States history. The majority of textbooks do not include the concepts of racism, inequality, or conquest.

Understanding our history is critical to ensure society learns, grows, and creates a future that is equitable for all people. When students learn about the enslavement of Black people or the erasure of Indigenous people in the United States, they can understand how groups of people have been viewed and systematically oppressed over time and how that has affected their status today. Those views and systems have long-term implications. There is a well-known researcher named Beverly Daniel Tatum, who has written about the ways the unjust structure of racial hierarchy in American society is normalized and transmitted to children from birth. She explains that in the same way people who live in highly polluted areas cannot avoid becoming “smog breathers,” Americans immersed in racist structures cannot help but become “racism breathers.” Without opportunities to unlearn these teachings, these messages become absorbed and negatively affect society.

GROUP AGREEMENTS:

Review the group agreements before starting the lesson.

**FACTS & STATS**

- A 2020 survey commissioned by the National 4-H Council polled 1,000 youth between the ages of 13-19 nationwide, and found that teens are feeling angry, overwhelmed, and stressed about the current state of social unrest in the country.
- Two-thirds of teens say they need people to hear their voices about racism.

Source: <https://4-h.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Racial-Injustice-Survey-Infographic.pdf>

Definitions

RACE:

A term used to describe people by their skin color, and other physical and biological traits. Race is typically visible to others.

RACISM:

When a group of people is discriminated against, treated unfairly, and sometimes violently because of their race.

COLONIZATION:

A process where a system of power like a country or government dominates another country, or land and the people within it.

EQUITY:

The idea that all people should have the same rights, resources, opportunities, protections, and respect.

EQUALITY:

The state of being equal; having the same rights, social status, etc.

ERASURE:

The process of forcing people from diverse cultures to adopt Western culture and attire, to speak the English language, convert to Christianity, and stop using birth names.

MARGINS OF THE MARGINS:

A term coined and used by A Call To Men that holds us accountable and honors the complexities of those who experience multiple forms of oppression. Our work requires that we center the margins of the margins so we can all benefit and attain collective liberation.

MARGINALIZATION:

In relation to race and culture, it is the experience of persons who do not speak the majority group's language, cannot find work or gain access to social services, and therefore, cannot become full and equal participating members of society. Refers also to the process of being "left out" of, or silenced in, a social group.

LESSON 10

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

THE TIMELINE

DIRECTIONS

1. Hang a long roll of paper where students can access it.
2. Share a visual of what 5th graders typically learn in a United States History class.
3. Distribute the “Common Historical Events” activity sheet and have students cut out each event.
4. Ask boys to post historical events in the order they learned about them.
5. After events are posted, ask boys to sit quietly and reflect on the timeline.
 - a. Tell me what you know about these events?
 - b. What events are missing?
 - c. Are there historical events that you learned about from your family or community that you don’t see here?
 - d. Are there any personal events you consider historical?
 - e. Why do you think history matters?
 - f. What does it mean when some things are left out - or removed - from history?
6. Distribute the “Envision Your Future” activity sheet and prompt the students to envision the future they want to create.
 - a. What hopes do you have for your future?
 - b. What hopes do you have for your family?
 - c. What hopes do you have for your community?
 - d. What can you do now to ensure your future?



THINK ABOUT IT

- What holidays on the calendar present a partial view of historical events?
- In celebrating holidays like Cinco de Mayo or Halloween, how are negative stereotypes unintentionally reinforced?
- When you look at these holidays and historical events, who is seen and who remains unseen?



AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.



Racism is more prominent than youth may think; microaggressions are unfortunately common in school and workplaces. We must make the effort to highlight the injustices marginalized groups face to avoid further generations from facing the same discrimination.

- Jasmin L.

Black, Indigenous and youth of color are impacted in traumatic ways when they experience discrimination and racism. Approaching the topic of racism is one step to create communities where the health and well-being of those in the margins is front and centered. Our collective care and safety is connected to each other. How can you practice centering the voices of those that reside on the margins of the margins?

LESSON 10

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

COMMON HISTORICAL EVENTS

DIRECTIONS

Cut out each historical event. On another sheet of paper, draw a timeline and paste these historical events in order. After pasting, ask yourself:

- What events are missing?
- Are there historical events that you learned about from class, your family, community, or recent history that you don't see?
- Are there any personal events you consider historical?

Now it's time to add to the timeline! Using colored pencils, add in the missing historical events from your class, family, community, or recent history.

COLONIZATION OF AMERICA & CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS (1492-1763)	PILGRIMS ARRIVE AT PLYMOUTH (1620)
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE & THOMAS JEFFERSON (1776)	ENSLAVEMENT OF BLACK PEOPLE (1776-1865)
LEWIS & CLARK (1805)	UNDERGROUND RAILROAD (1860-1865)
EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION (1863)	CIVIL WAR & ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1861-1865)
SPANISH AMERICAN WAR (1898)	GREAT DEPRESSION (1929-1939) & WWII (1939-1945)
ROSA PARKS (1955)	CIVIL RIGHTS & MARTIN LUTHER KING (1950-1960)

LESSON 10

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

ENVISION YOUR FUTURE EXERCISE

Facilitator: Historical facts are more than what’s written in books. Those facts can be limiting based on the perceptions of who wrote them - who was included and who wasn’t included. This exercise gives us the ability to recognize we are the originators of our own history, which also means we are the builders of our future.

This exercise has two parts. The first part involves written expression. The second part includes a whole group discussion.

DIRECTIONS

Read each of the following questions. Write your answers in the space(s) provided.

1. What hopes do you have for the future?

2. What hopes do you have for your family?

3. What hopes do you have for your community?

Facilitator, engage them in sharing some of their answers with the large group. Once you hear some of their offerings, ask the following question to the **entire group**:

4. What must we do together to ensure the future we want to create?

LESSON 11 WHAT'S UP WITH PRIVILEGE?

 **GETTING STARTED**

OBJECTIVES:

- Define the terms “privilege” and “intersectionality”
- Understand how people can have race or gender privilege
- Raise awareness of privilege and how it impacts individual outcomes

MATERIALS:

- Access to an area where students can stand at arm’s length apart

TIME REQUIRED: 60 minutes

TIPS FOR EDUCATORS:

This exercise was adapted from Peggy McIntosh’s concept of White Privilege. It is designed to raise awareness of various forms of privilege and to help students understand how race, class, gender, and other demographic variables shape individuals and outcomes. It increases appreciation for diverse individual experiences.

The facilitator should give the participants a content warning, noting that it can provoke strong feelings and emotions.

Definitions

PRIVILEGE:

An advantage someone is born with that they didn’t do anything to earn.

INTERSECTIONALITY:

Examines how multiple oppressed identities interact to create overlapping and compounding systems of disadvantage.

LESSON 11

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

PRIVILEGE WALK EXERCISE

DIRECTIONS

Everyone will stand in a horizontal line. As the facilitator reads a statement or question, the participant will step forward or step back if it applies to them. If anyone feels too uncomfortable to take a step, they have the option to remain still.

The facilitator calls out the following statements.

1. If you are right-handed, take one step forward.
2. If your sex or race is widely represented in the U.S. Congress, take one step forward.
3. If you have difficulty finding hair products, or a hairstylist/barber in your current community, take one step back.
4. If one or both of your parents graduated from college, take one step forward.
5. If you ever attended a private school or summer camp, take one step forward.
6. If your parents told you that you were beautiful, smart, or successful, take one step forward.
7. If you knew since you were a child that it was expected of you to go to college, take one step forward.
8. If you have immediate family members who are doctors, lawyers, or work in any degree-required profession, take one step forward.
9. If you studied the history and culture of your ethnic ancestors in elementary and secondary school, take one step forward.
10. If you or your family never had to move due to financial inabilities, take one step forward.
11. If you almost always see members of your race, sexual orientation, religion, and class widely represented on television, in the newspaper, and in the media in a POSITIVE manner, take one step forward.
12. If you almost always feel comfortable with people knowing your sexual orientation, take one step forward.
13. If you feel certain that you will not be followed, harassed, or watched under close surveillance while shopping, take one step forward.
14. If walking alone at night, you never have to worry about anyone feeling threatened because of your presence, take one step forward.
15. If you are going to be the first person in your immediate family to graduate from college, take one step back.
16. If you started school speaking a language other than English, take one step back.

**THINK ABOUT IT**

- What did you learn from this exercise?
- Were you surprised by anything?
- How did you feel when you took a step forward or a step back?
- How did it feel to be in the front or the back of the room?
- Was there a time when you wanted to be moving forward?
- How have you gotten a step ahead in life based on your privilege?
- How can you apply this to your daily life?

**AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION**

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

LESSON 12**ASPIRING ALLYSHIP: WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN FOR ME?****GETTING STARTED****OBJECTIVES:**

- Define the terms “allyship,” “co-conspirator,” “bystander,” “upstander,” and “solidarity”
- Examine your role and responsibility in interrupting racism and anti-blackness
- Identify where you have influence and develop your voice
- Understand and practice proactive engagement, solidarity, and aspiring allyship

MATERIALS:

- Infographic on allyship
- A Call To Men resource list

TIME REQUIRED: 45 minutes**TIPS FOR EDUCATORS:**

Aspiring allyship is a practice. There is no graduation—no certificate of completion. It’s a commitment to never look away from what you now know. It’s a promise to remain teachable. It’s a vow to invite leadership from Black, brown, and Indigenous folks. It’s a pledge to bring others into this work. It requires constant self-reflection, acknowledgment of your mistakes, and a deep desire to keep pushing forward – even when it’s uncomfortable. Brené Brown recently said: “I’m here to get it right, not to be right.” That’s the perfect mantra for aspiring allyship.

In this exercise, we want young leaders to feel that their contributions to helping create a more equitable society are needed and valued. We also want them to feel empowered to use their influence and platform to promote healthy manhood and advance equity.

Definitions

ALLYSHIP:

The practice of emphasizing social justice, inclusion, and human rights by members of an ingroup to advance the interests of an oppressed group or those who reside in the margins of the margins

BYSTANDER:

A person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part

UPSTANDER:

A person who speaks or acts in support of an individual or cause, particularly someone who intervenes on behalf of a person being attacked or bullied

SOLIDARITY:

Unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support within a group

LESSON 12

REPRODUCIBLE ACTIVITY

ASPIRING ALLYSHIP: WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN FOR ME?

GROUP CONVERSATION

- Allyship: What does it mean to practice versus perform it?
- Where do you have privilege?
- How can you use your privilege to amplify the voices of those in the margins of the margins?
- Where do you have influence? With friends? With family?
- Where do you have a platform?
- How am I developing my voice and using it?
- In what ways is it uncomfortable? Why?

WHAT CAN I DO?

1. Unlearn and reeducate
2. Call in people in your life
3. Do something that no one will ever know
4. Have difficult conversation in your own community
5. Acknowledge, sit down and examine your own racism



THINK ABOUT IT

- Identify five ways I can practice aspiring allyship every day.
- Identify five ways I can invite others to practice being an aspiring ally.
- How would you call someone **out**? How could you call them **in** instead?



AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION

Share an affirmation from your list. Weave it into the conversation you had with them during this lesson plan.

FOR MENTORS ONLY

Congratulations!

Congratulations on your efforts to help the boys you mentor become influencers for healthy masculinity.

To complete the certification process, make copies of this evaluation form and fill it out after you finish each lesson. Also, complete the “Take Action Challenge” to determine what you can do as a coach and educator to help shift social norms that define masculinity and create a world where girls and women and those on the margins of the margins are safe and valued.

HOW DID IT GO?

1. Circle the number of the lesson you implemented:

Lesson 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

2. How did the boys respond to the lesson? For example, were they engaged and involved in discussions?

3. How would you rate the success of this lesson?

Very successful Successful Unsuccessful

If UNSUCCESSFUL, why do you think that was the case?

4. How were the lesson objectives met?

5. What challenges did you experience with this lesson?

6. What did you discover during this lesson?

TAKE ACTION CHALLENGE



Think about the lesson’s messages about healthy masculinity. How can you incorporate these messages into your own life to be a better role model? To the right, describe how you will take action to break out of the Man Box.



Envision the world you want for your daughters, girls, and other young folks in your life. How would boys and men act and behave in that world? Join us in creating a world where all boys and men are loving and respectful, and ALL women and girls and those in the margins of the margins are valued and safe.

A CALL TO MEN

LIVERESPECT

A Program for Middle & High School Boys



A CALL TO MEN

THE NEXT GENERATION OF MANHOOD
