

# LIVERESPECT

AND HEALTHY MASCULINITY CURRICULUM

Life Skills and Well-Being for Boys and Young Men

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## PROGRAM AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS GUIDE



A Program for Middle & High School Boys

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A CALL TO MEN

THE NEXT GENERATION OF MANHOOD

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## Message To Coaches, Educators, And Mentors

**As a coach and mentor, you hold a unique place in young people's lives.** You are an influencer and a role model. You are a teacher. You are an example of what it means to be a leader. You are an example of what it means to be a responsible adult. Kids will remember you long after they leave you.

So what does it mean to be a man? A lot of what boys and young men learn about masculinity is based on society's expectations, stereotypes and rigid notions about gender. Many male identified youth are taught how a man should behave or act based on societal norms. Unfortunately, for some boys, this learned behavior leads to negative treatment of girls, women, and non-binary people. As a mentor and influencer in the lives of boys and young men, you have the opportunity to encourage them to become healthier versions of themselves – respectful young men who value ALL girls, women, and gender nonconforming people.

We at A Call To Men, have designed our **Live Respect** program to help mentors educate and encourage middle and high school-aged boys to examine their attitudes and beliefs about masculinity. We recognize that the underlying causes of violence and discrimination against girls and women are rooted in the ways in which women have been traditionally viewed and treated in our society.

Historically, it has been almost entirely women who have been at the forefront of addressing this issue. We think it is essential that men get involved and play a primary role in the solution.

The goal of the **Live Respect** program is to provide educators and mentors with tools to help raise awareness about gender stereotyping and discrimination, and prevent the use of violence and abuse by teaching nonviolent and respectful behavior. By implementing the lessons and modeling healthy masculinity, you can help boys better understand how to form healthy, respectful relationships. While the program is designed for use with boys, coaches, mentors, or educators of any gender can implement the lessons.

The curriculum can be used in schools, athletic programs, faith-based organizations, or anywhere you can bring boys and young men together to gather. You can follow the curriculum over 12 weeks and implement all of it, or you could select topics as you see fit for your group of boys. While we recommend delivering all 12 lessons, you know your community best, and we invite you to be flexible with the implementation process. It does not have to be offered in a rigid and linear way. We have found that in school settings, many instructors offer the sessions over 3-4 months for an hour each week – while some athletic departments use the lessons before practice for only 30 minutes over the course of a football season.



### FACTS & STATS

Research shows that men and boys who adhere to rigid, traditional notions of gender roles and masculinity are more likely to report having used violence against a partner. Gender-based violence is a big problem in the United States:

- A 2013 study of high school students found that about 1 in 5 teenage girls and 1 in 10 teenage boys who dated during the previous 12 months experienced some form of physical or sexual dating violence.<sup>1</sup>

- In 2010, approximately 1,180 women were killed by an intimate partner.<sup>2</sup> That represents an average of three lives lost every day.
- More than 1 in 3 women have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner.<sup>3</sup> Nearly half of all women have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner.<sup>3</sup>
- Women ages 18 to 34 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence.

1 <http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2173573>

2 <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ipvav9311.pdf>

3 [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf)

4 <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ipv9310.pdf>

## BREAKING AWAY FROM SOCIAL NORMS


Encouraging our boys, supporting healthy masculinity, and preventing violence and abuse can be rewarding experiences, but they can also be challenging. This program asks mentors, educators, and boys to step outside of society’s gender norms – or the “Man Box” – and think critically about serious topics such as violence, abuse, sexism, racism, privilege, and masculinity.

This program focuses primarily on sexism and male-dominating attitudes and behaviors towards girls and women, but it is important to note that heterosexism and violence against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer (LGBQ), Trans and nonbinary community are also based on ideas of male dominance and rigid notions of masculinity. Gender-based violence doesn’t just impact girls and women, but affects all people who are perceived as feminine. To that end, we see high levels of violence and discrimination against LGBQ & Trans and non-binary communities that is also fueled by the rigid notions found in the Man Box.

In preparation for discussing these topics, we strongly recommend that you completely read through this program guide, the educator guide, and the lessons before using the materials with your group. Take time to get familiar with the glossary of terms included in the curriculum guide, as well.

We invite you to reflect on the curriculum content. Ask yourself: What does this mean for me? How has this topic impacted me? What is happening in my program, school, or team that could help me connect with them more deeply? Storytelling is crucial as you grow and nurture your relationship with the boys you are working alongside. Remember that you are a teacher in this mentorship role, and you must remain humble to learn from them as well. We believe we are all teachers and students at the same time when we invest in boys and young men.

### WHAT IS...



The Man Box rigidly defines what a man is supposed to be and what he should believe. These ideas are taught to us and reinforced by society – including well-meaning friends, family, and peers. As a consequence of the Man Box, there are rules or behavior DOs and DON'Ts for boys and men (as described below):

**THE MANBOX**

POWERFUL NO EMOTIONS EXCEPT ANGER NO FEELINGS  
 DOMINATING **TOUGH** WOMEN ARE **PROPERTY**  
**NO PAIN** **STRONG** **ATHLETIC**  
 NO FEAR **NO WEAKNESS**  
**WOMEN ARE OBJECTS** **COURAGEOUS**  
 DECISION MAKER **AGGRESSIVE** **PROTECTOR**  
**IN CHARGE**

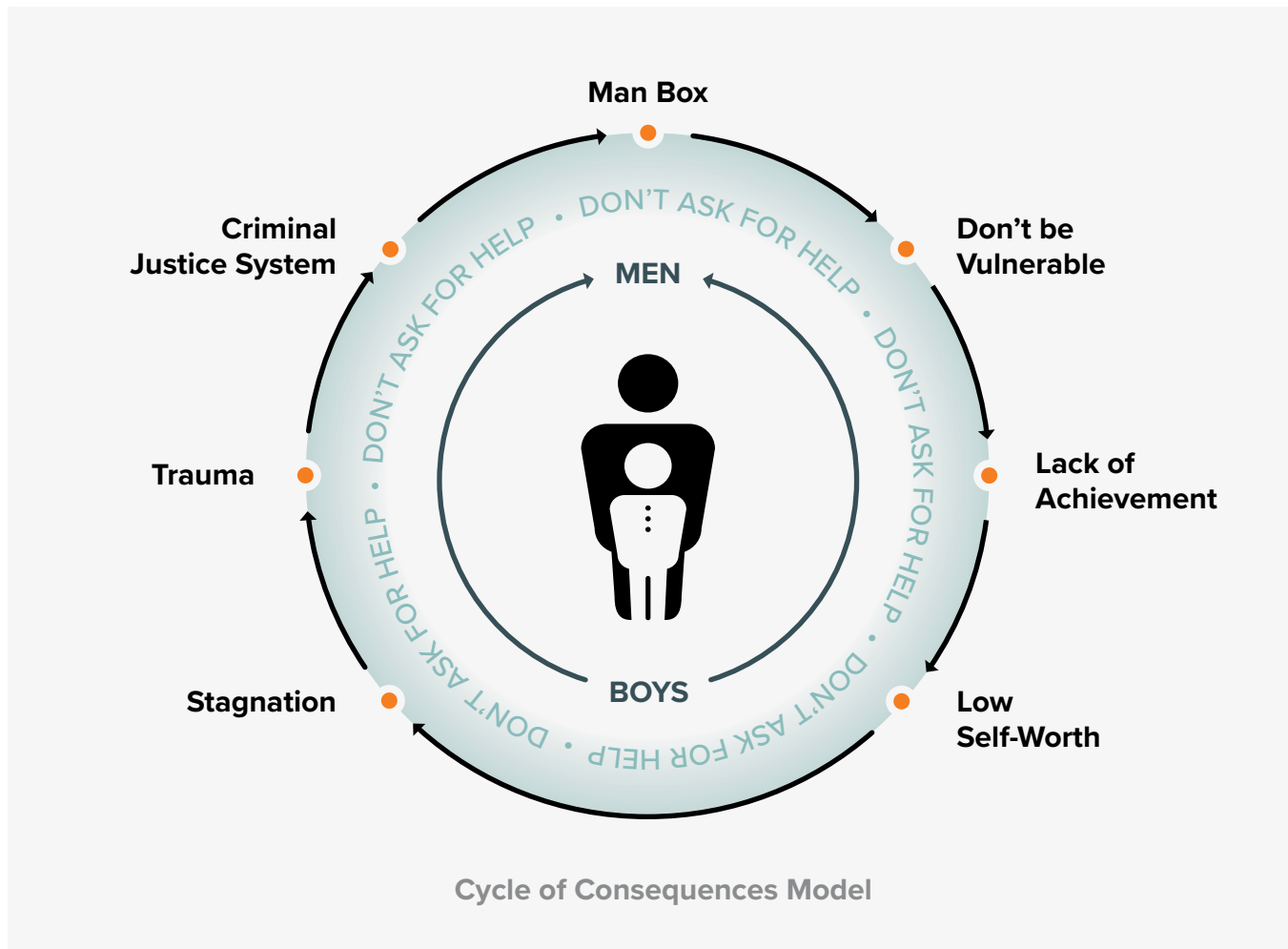
**THE MANBOX RULES**

**DON'T ASK FOR HELP** ALWAYS BE IN CONTROL **DON'T ACT LIKE A WOMAN**  
 DON'T BE TOO LOVING DON'T BE TOO VULNERABLE **WOMAN**  
 DON'T BE TOO CARING  
**DON'T BE TOO NICE OR TOO KIND**  
 DON'T SHOW WEAKNESS **ACT LIKE A MAN**  
 DON'T SHOW EMOTIONS

## CYCLE OF CONSEQUENCES

A Call To Men developed the Cycle of Consequences to help us all understand the long-term negative and costly consequences of the Man Box. We know that The Man Box can limit boys and young men from growing, feeling, and forming healthy, respectful relationships. When boys are taught not to ask for help or show their emotions – and instead are told to figure things out on their own or “man up” – they can get stuck in this cycle.

Use this program to help your group of boys find opportunities to step outside of the Man Box and break the cycle.



**A Call To Men** is a leading national violence prevention organization providing training and education for men, boys, and communities. Our aim is to shift social norms that negatively impact our culture and promote a more healthy, loving, and respectful definition of masculinity. For more information, visit [acalltomen.org](http://acalltomen.org).

## Program Introduction

### TEACHING BOYS AND YOUNG MEN ABOUT HEALTHY AND RESPECTFUL MASCULINITY

The stats on page 3 demonstrate the importance of teaching boys how to have healthy, respectful relationships. Gender-based violence and discrimination impact us all, and we all must play a part in ending it. We are all part of the solution, and men have an essential role to play. Ignoring violence sends the message that violence is okay or accepted as a normal part of life. Men who are respectful to girls and women can help prevent dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual assault by taking a stand and by looking at their own behavior. Sometimes they perpetuate unhealthy gender norms without realizing it.



#### THINK ABOUT IT

- If you see a guy hurting his wife or girlfriend, would you say or do anything?
- If you see a guy hurting a woman who is not his wife or girlfriend, would you say or do anything?
- If you see a guy hurting or verbally abusing your wife, daughter, or mother, would you say or do anything?
- Do you ever say any of the following statements to the boys you mentor? “You run or throw like a girl,” or “man up!”
- Do you say things to people that might be construed as reinforcing the Man Box?
- Do you speak up if boys or men around you whistle or make comments to girls or women who walk by?
- Do you feel it is okay for men and boys to show emotions?
- When asked how he would feel if his coach told him he throws like a girl, a young boy responded “It would destroy me.” What do these phrases teach boys about girls and women?

Statements and actions that belittle girls and women, even if not intentional, send messages that women have less value, women are objects, and women are the property of men. These attitudes, beliefs and biases about male dominance and patriarchy represent sexism taken to the extreme – and that sexism is at the root of violence against ALL girls and women. This program strives to raise awareness about these issues so that boys can develop healthy and respectful relationships that value ALL girls and women.

#### YOUR INFLUENCE

The teachings of the Man Box are age-old and, in many cases, globally and universally reinforced. While eliminating them from our lives is a tall order, striving to identify them in daily interactions and raising awareness about their effects on our language and actions is what we can aim for. Setting a personal example for young people and modeling more inclusive behaviors is the foundation of this program, and as a coach, teacher, parent, or spouse, your impact can be felt.

#### INTENDED AUDIENCE

The program has been designed for use with middle and high school–age boys.

#### ASSESSING APPROPRIATENESS

Due to the sensitive nature of some of the lesson topics, it’s important that you review the content to make sure it’s appropriate for your group before starting a lesson. Some of the lessons may be too mature for younger boys.

#### Please note:

Lesson 7 focuses on sexual assault and is intended for high school students.

## HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM

The **Live Respect** program includes this Program and Certification Process Guide, a separate Educator Guide With Lesson Plans, and a Glossary of Terms. There are twelve lessons to be implemented over the course of several weeks.

### Before beginning the program:

- Review the content with your administrator or supervisor to get their support.
- Assess whether parental consent is needed.
- Be aware of potential sensitivity issues within your group of boys.
- Review each lesson and activity sheet in the Educator Guide With Lesson Plans to determine whether the content is appropriate for your group.
- Determine how you will teach the lessons—for example:
  - Will you conduct the lessons on your own, or will you co-teach with colleagues? Will men, women, or a gender-expansive person co-teach?
  - How often will you meet with the boys?
  - Where will you meet?

### When implementing the lessons:

- Present the lessons in order.
- Prepare the materials you’ll need and make copies of the handouts and activity sheets for the boys before you meet.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

### Through interactive lessons, the program is designed to:

- Promote thoughtful conversation about healthy and respectful masculinity and create a culture that values ALL girls and women.
- Encourage critical thinking about societal beliefs regarding gender.
- Raise awareness about domestic abuse, dating violence, bullying, sexual assault and harassment, and gender-based violence.
- Inspire boys and coaches, educators, and mentors to redefine masculinity and focus on developing healthy, respectful relationships and behaviors.

## PARENTAL PERMISSION

Since the program covers a range of personal and emotional topics, your school or organization may require that you inform parents about the program and get parental permission before starting. Page 10 of this guide includes a sample opt-out form that you might copy and send home or customize for your purposes.

## CERTIFICATION

Page 11 of this guide includes a certificate of completion. After you implement each lesson, fill out the reproducible “Steps to Certification and Take Action Challenge” form from the Educator Guide With Lesson Plans. Once you’ve finished all lessons and filled out an evaluation form for each one, complete the certificate and share it with your administration.

We’d also like to hear from you. Email your certificate to us at [liverespect@acalltomen.org](mailto:liverespect@acalltomen.org) and let us know what you thought about the program.

### “ What Coaches Have to Say About **BREAKING OUT OF THE MAN BOX**

I will ensure that the young men I coach will be both respectful and caring of all people. I will also develop a coaching philosophy and stick to it while holding my players accountable to me and themselves.

I am definitely challenged to alter some of the language that I use with my players and boys. I will educate and challenge my male circles to do the same.

## Program Content



### ABOUT THE EDUCATOR GUIDE WITH LESSON PLANS

This guide includes instructions for implementing program lessons, reproducible activity sheets, and handouts. The lessons have been developed to build upon each other and should be implemented in the order presented. In addition to the lesson plans, the guide also includes tips for using the program and suggestions for establishing a group agreement to help ensure honest, respectful dialogue.

### LESSON PLAN FORMAT

Each lesson plan features four sections: Getting Started, Break Out of the Box, Think About It, and Affirmation & Reflection.



#### GETTING STARTED:

This section includes lesson objectives, materials needed for the lesson, a time recommendation, and tips to help educators facilitate the lesson. This section also identifies the activity sheets that the boys will complete during the lesson. Prior to teaching each lesson, review the “Tips for Educators” that are specific to the content of that particular lesson. Also, be sure you have your materials prepared beforehand and post the group agreement at the beginning of each lesson.



#### BREAK OUT OF THE BOX:

This section includes step-by-step directions on how to implement the lesson and use the reproducible activity sheets. It features discussion prompts, questions to pose to the group, facts to share, and supporting information for educators.



#### AFFIRMATION & REFLECTION:

This final section gives a message with an affirmation for you to write on the board or chart paper and a task for the boys to consider until the next lesson.



#### THINK ABOUT IT

This section offers scenarios and questions about how we can think more critically about how this content informs our daily lives.

### TIME REQUIRED

90 minutes is recommended for Lesson 1 to give you time to establish the group agreement, introduce the program, and then implement the activities. For Lessons 2 through 12, each lesson is designed to take approximately 45-60 minutes. These are guidelines. Adjust these time frames as needed for your group.

### GROUP AGREEMENTS

Prior to starting the lessons, establish group agreements to ensure that all boys feel comfortable participating in the lessons and that they demonstrate respect. The educator guide includes suggestions for the agreement.

### PRE- & POST-ASSESSMENT QUIZ

Conduct the pre- and post-curriculum implementation survey provided by A Call To Men.

### ACTIVITY SHEETS AND HANDOUTS

Each activity is a one-page reproducible handout. You will need a copy for each boy in your group. Activity sheets include directions, an activity, and a “Think About It!” section to help the boys make a connection between the activity and real-world situations.



**LESSON PLANS AND ACTIVITY SHEETS**

<b>1</b>	<b>The Man Box</b> Also includes the Group Agreement	“What Do You Think?” quiz (pre-assessment) “The Man Box” activity
<b>2</b>	<b>Society’s Gender Norms</b>	“How Our World Views Gender Norms”
<b>3</b>	<b>Man Box Teachings</b>	“Man Box Teachings” activity
<b>4</b>	<b>The Media Connection</b>	“Media vs. Reality” activity
<b>5</b>	<b>Understanding Objectification</b>	“Object vs. Person” activity
<b>6</b>	<b>Understanding Sexual Harassment</b>	“Sexual Harassment” activity “Respectful Behavior” activity “Myths and Facts About Sexual Harassment” handout
<b>7</b>	<b>Understanding Sexual Assault</b> Also Includes the Group Agreement	“Consent, Coercion, or Nonconsent?” activity “Myths and Facts About Sexual Assault” handout
<b>8</b>	<b>Interrupting the Cycle</b>	“Interrupt the Cycle” activity
<b>9</b>	<b>Healthy Masculinity, Healthy Relationships</b>	“Man File” template “What Do You Think?” quiz (post-assessment)
<b>10</b>	<b>History And Race in the United States</b>	Historical timeline activity “Envision Your Future” activity sheet
<b>11</b>	<b>What’s Up with Privilege</b>	Privilege Walk Exercise
<b>12</b>	<b>Aspiring Allyship: What Does This All Mean For Me</b>	Aspiring Allyship Definitions Sheet

**STEPS TO CERTIFICATION AND TAKE ACTION CHALLENGE FORM**

Make copies of the form for mentors found on page 49 of the Educator Guide With Lesson Plans. Complete it after each lesson to assess the lesson and determine how you can incorporate the messages into your life to become an even better role model.



## Barriers And Concerns

You may have concerns about launching this program and engaging boys in open and honest discussions about masculinity. Below are some suggestions and tips to help you address these concerns. It is important to keep in mind that this program is not an indictment of masculinity, but rather offers love and appreciation for masculinity. It is an invitation to promote a healthier, more respectful masculinity.

### **BEING TRANSPARENT—YOU AND THEM**

Opening up to share your experiences and emotions as you discuss the Man Box and gender socialization – and asking the boys in your group to do the same – is not an easy task. Keep in mind that everyone has been affected by society’s gender norms, male dominance, racism, and sexism. Being transparent by sharing your personal stories, challenges, and inconsistencies with the Man Box or gender norms will help boys relate. For example, if applicable, let them know that it’s hard for you to cry or ask for help. Maybe you have told your sons to stop crying and toughen up, but comfort and console your daughters when they cry. As you move through the lessons in the program, be sure to explore and reflect on your own attitudes and potential biases continually. Remember, this is not about blame. It’s about raising awareness, learning to address any potential negative behaviors, and acquiring tools to develop healthy, respectful relationships and behaviors.

### **FOSTERING OPEN AND HONEST DISCUSSION**

It is important that boys are engaged and thinking critically about the content of the curriculum. Focus on the discussion as you go through the lessons. As you start to challenge traditional notions of masculinity, boys will need support from their mentors and peers. Therefore, it is essential to create a culture of honesty, respect, and encouragement in which they can think critically, share,

and develop. Emphasize the importance of respecting differences in opinion, listening to one another, not putting one another down or calling each other names, and being open to new ideas.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Due to the sensitive nature of the lesson topics (and if your school’s policy supports it) consider encouraging the boys to keep discussions within the group. Explain that your conversations, except when issues of safety are involved (if someone is being hurt, is in danger, or is hurting others), should be kept within the group. Remind the boys, however, that if they ever feel uncomfortable in a situation inside or outside of the classroom, they should tell you, a parent, or a trusted adult. Also, explain that you have a responsibility to report instances in which someone is being harmed or is harming others.

### **USE OF INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE**

This program asks 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. For example, if a participant refers to a person using derogatory language or expresses an opinion that is considered “locker room talk,” ask the boy why he chose to use that language and where he learned his ideas. Then ask the rest of the boys if they have heard this before and what they think. When applicable, try to connect inappropriate comments to the Man Box and male socialization to reinforce where these issues originate. If you are allowing cursing or using “real” language, make sure to emphasize this is only allowed in demonstrating Man Box thinking and that it is never okay to curse at one another or when talking about others.

## Barriers And Concerns *continued*

### ADDRESSING DEFENSIVE BEHAVIOR

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Boys may have defensive reactions to some of the lessons and topics. They may say that they are not abusive or violent toward girls or women, or they may comment that men are victims of violence as well. Explain to them that violence against women is mostly committed by men, but that most men are not violent. However, men are too-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 Man Box attitudes and behaviors.

### VICTIM BLAMING

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Be prepared for boys to say things such as “girls ask for harassment by the way they dress” and “I know plenty of girls who like that attention.” It becomes very important to identify and address that these statements are blaming the victim and not taking responsibility for abusive behaviors. It is not the victim’s fault. Responding is important because, for many boys, this may be the first time they have seen sexism and male dominance challenged in a healthy way.

### SENSITIVITY TO PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH ABUSE

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Some boys in the group may have had personal experience as a victim or a witness to domestic or dating violence, or sexual assault. Make sure to let them know 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. You may also want to provide the boys with a list of local support services so they can access help confidentially. 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, 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.

### LGBQ, TRANS AND NONBINARY COMMUNITY

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As stated earlier, gender-based violence doesn’t just impact girls and women, but also boys who are perceived as not “masculine” enough or girls who are considered to be “too masculine.” It is important to address heterosexist, homophobic, and transphobic statements that boys may make and explain that these beliefs are part of the Man Box and may escalate to violence or abuse.

### SETTING AN EXAMPLE

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Throughout the program, your willingness to challenge the Man Box and speak out against the abuse of girls and women will have an impact on the boys. Challenging male dominance and stepping outside of the boxes that we have been trained not to see are difficult. Boys need role models and support in learning new ways of thinking and behaving. Therefore, take the time to think about the messages you were taught about gender socialization, masculinity, and the prejudices and privileges that you may have internalized. Modeling transparency and vulnerability throughout this journey will help provide the boys with an example and the foundation to help them become respectful men who value ALL girls and women.



If you have any questions about **A Call To Men** or **Live Respect**, feel free to contact us at [liverespect@acalltomen.org](mailto:liverespect@acalltomen.org).



# Live Respect Permission Slip

## A NOTE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS FROM FACILITATOR

Below is a sample Parent/Guardian Opt-Out Form that you may adapt if needed for distribution to students' families.

 CUT OR FOLD HERE BEFORE REPRODUCING

## A NOTE FROM YOUR SON'S TEACHER OR COACH

Please review this Opt-Out Form from your son's teacher or coach and return it if applicable. Thank you.

Our group will soon begin a unit of study to raise awareness about gender norms and violence prevention and encourage boys to develop healthy masculinity and respectful relationships. Through the **Live Respect** program – designed by the nonprofit organization **A Call To Men** – boys and young men will engage in discussions about serious topics – including society's gender norms and stereotypes and the impact of these norms, such as the objectification, sexual harassment, and assault of girls and women. The goal of the program is to encourage healthy, respectful behavior that values girls and women.

**If you wish to opt out of having your child/dependent participate in the **Live Respect** program and lessons about healthy masculinity and respectful relationships, please read on, check the box, and complete the information below.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher/Coach Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### PARENT/GUARDIAN OPT-OUT FORM FOR LIVE RESPECT PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

On behalf of my son, I choose to have him opt out of the lessons related to the Live Respect program and do not grant permission for him to participate in this learning unit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's/Guardian's Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's/Guardian's Signature



# LIVERESPECT

## AND HEALTHY MASCULINITY CURRICULUM

### CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION



This is to certify that I have completed \_\_\_\_\_ lessons of the **Live Respect** program with \_\_\_\_\_ boys who I coach, mentor, or teach.

I have also completed the “Steps to Certification and Take Action Challenge” evaluation form for each lesson.

To help the boys I mentor become respectful men, I support the Live Respect pledge to help shift social norms that define manhood and create a world where girls and women are valued and safe.

#### **Live Respect Pledge**

- I pledge to treat people with dignity and respect.
- I pledge not to physically, emotionally, or verbally abuse anyone.
- I pledge never to blame someone for being abused.
- I pledge to challenge myself and others not to use language or expressions that denigrate girls and women. “You throw like a girl,” “man up,” and other disparaging comments have no place on the field, in the classroom, or at home.
- I pledge to use my position as a role model and leader to help boys, young men, family members, and friends understand that domestic violence and sexual assault are never acceptable and that manhood and strength are not defined by violence and domination.
- I pledge to use my voice to speak out against violence and abuse – even when it is more comfortable to be silent.
- I pledge to help create a community that no longer tolerates discrimination, gender-based violence, or sexual assault.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





As we increase and promote healthy and respectful masculinity, we decrease and prevent multiple forms of discrimination, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, bullying, homophobia, and gun violence.

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**A CALL TO MEN**

# LIVERESPECT

A Program for Middle & High School Boys



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**A CALL TO MEN**

THE NEXT GENERATION OF MANHOOD

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