

# Engaging Men and Boys in Ending Violence against Women and Girls

## Chrysalis House / Juniper House Project

### Development of an Engagement Model

Feedback from the community consultations conducted during 2013 clearly indicated a preference to focus primarily on reaching youth (teen to mid-twenties) and to create opportunities for mentorship relationships to be built and sustained.

In consulting with people who have had experience with youth mentorship programmes, these pieces of advice stood out:

1. **Address turnover issues by training adults to train youth.** Because a significant percentage of youth in education settings and other organizations leave each year as they age out of the setting, it is clear that in order to effectively engage youth in a sustainable way we need to provide train-the-trainer workshops to adult leaders who work with youth to create a pool of leaders who can continue to engage the youth over time. We do not want just a “one-shot” approach to the issue.
2. **Use activities that are experiential and fun as well as challenging.** Many activities compete for the youths’ attention. If we want to ensure active participation, the activities need to be dynamic and age-appropriate. Above all, avoid a “classroom” type experience when training.
3. **Involve youth from the beginning in planning, promoting, implementing and evaluating.** To get buy-in and to ensure that the programme will be attractive and useful to youth, their voices need to permeate the whole process.
4. **Involve local role models in the programme.** Programmes from across North America and as far away as the Coexist Kenya model advocate co-opting local role models who are respected by local youth, especially sports figures, to promote the programme and if possible participate in it.

**Access Issues:** Getting access to work with youth can be a challenge, so we recognize that it is more effective to work with existing organizations and conduits to youth than to try to create access from scratch. Accordingly, we will partner with organizations such as SchoolsPlus, Acadia University, Nova Scotia Community College, church youth ministries, organizations such as The Portal and Split Rock that work with at-risk youth, and leverage existing programs, adding training and content to focus resource on engaging young men and boys in anti-violence work.

**Multiple Points of Entry:** Given the challenges of engaging youth and engaging organizations that serve youth, it is important that we do not “put all our eggs in one basket” but approach the engagement in several environments. We plan to develop a model that can adapt to settings such as schools, youth organizations, sports teams, or church youth groups and camps.

**Adding Value and Resource:** In speaking with other Engaging Men and Boys project coordinators, and with local organizations wanting to work with youth, they often mentioned challenges with getting effective cooperation from school systems, despite initial excitement and encouragement from the school community. The reality of the school environment is that

those who work there are often taxed for time and energy. Accordingly, we need to ensure that we are adding resource and value to their community, not just expecting them to take on more work.

**Programmes, like men, need to be strong but flexible!** We recognize that organizations will want to use programs that have a track record and have been validated as effective, rather than untried new efforts, but also realize the need to adapt such programming to the local conditions and resources in rural Nova Scotia.

## **Outline of elements needed in the Model**

**Objective:** Train leaders from multiple sectors of the local community to create mentorship activities and relationships that assist young men and boys to become aware of gender-based violence and ways to work to eliminate it.

**Target Groups:** Youth 13-25 and adults who work or volunteer with youth.

**Sectors to Approach:** Junior High and High Schools through SchoolsPlus; Post-secondary institutions; Sports teams and recreation departments; Religious organizations; Youth institutions.

### **Strategy:**

- Offer training and resources to adults and youth: GBA+, Gender-Transformative Facilitation, Mentorship Development, Impact of Gender-based Violence; Bystander Intervention.
- Offer innovative opportunities for youth to work together to learn to make and disseminate creative media products such as graphic novels, community videos, social media campaigns that reach out to other youth with information about gender-based violence and how to work to eliminate it.
- Use existing conduits to the target groups. (e.g. SchoolsPlus, RCMP in the schools, Student Unions, Sports coaches, Church camps and youth groups.)
- Employ existing, tested, programmes and materials, but consult with local leaders to adapt them to local culture.

**Materials and Resources:** These will be selected and edited uniquely for each organization/target group we work with to ensure that they are relevant and effective. For each implementation, we will partner with at least one organization to combine skills and resources. Below are descriptions of five powerful programs designed to address gender-based violence. We selected these after an extensive survey of programs. They vary greatly in complexity and cost. The first two USA-based programs (MOST and MVP) would need considerable financial commitment from outside of our project to implement, but even if they are out of reach, they serve as a “gold standard” to aim towards in the work we do. The other three make materials available at no cost. The two Canadian ones are available in English and French, which would facilitate work with the Acadian community.

**Deliver:** We will consult with the organizations where we have agreed to work together to deliver a programme. Based on this we will provide training and resources drawn from our own organization and local community assets to ensure the success of the programme.

## Short List of Five Programs to Address Gender-Based Violence with Young Men and Boys

1. The Men of Strength Club – <http://www.mencanstoprape.org/>

Note that to have them come in to hold trainings in three sites would cost around \$22,000 or more ([see brochure](#)). This is not only beyond our budget, but we are not authorized to spend outside of Canada, so to implement this we would need to partner financially with venues. (The first site costs the most – additional ones at the same time are cheap.)

Men Can Stop Rape's youth development program, the Men of Strength Club, is the country's premier primary violence prevention program for mobilizing young men to prevent sexual and dating violence. The Men of Strength Club, or MOST Club, provides young men with a structured and supportive space to build individualized definitions of masculinity that promote healthy relationships.

MOST Club's 22-week curriculum aims to:

- Provide young men with a safe, supportive space to connect with male peers
- Promote an understanding of the ways in which traditional masculinity contributes to sexual assault and other forms of men's violence against women
- Expose young men to healthier, nonviolent models/visions of manhood
- Build young men's capacity to become peer leaders and allies with women
- Serve as a hub for social justice activism and nonviolence

In 2003 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identified MOST Club as among the top four gender violence prevention programs in the country and initiated a two-year study to evaluate the Club's impact. As a result of ongoing membership, MOST Club members report feeling more responsible and connected to their schools, families, and communities. The most recent evaluation findings show that the MOST Club participants made statistically significant changes during the program year.

Now in its eleventh year, MOST Club's middle school and high school curriculum are taught in over 100 schools in over 10 states: California, District of Columbia, Florida, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, New York City, North Carolina, Ohio, and South Carolina.

=====

2. Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Model (Jackson Katz) – <http://www.jacksonkatz.com/aboutmvp.html>

The Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Model is a gender violence, bullying, and school violence prevention approach that encourages young men and women from all socioeconomic, racial and ethnic backgrounds to take on leadership roles in their schools and communities. The

training is focused on an innovative "bystander" model that empowers each student to take an active role in promoting a positive school climate. The heart of the training consists of role-plays intended to allow students to construct and practice viable options in response to incidents of harassment, abuse, or violence before, during, or after the fact. Students learn that there is not simply "one way" to confront violence, but that each individual can learn valuable skills to build their personal resolve and to act when faced with difficult or threatening life situations.

The MVP Model can be utilized in numerous educational settings. The MVP playbooks and trainer's guides are customizable for diverse populations of students. Currently, materials are available for high school boys and girls. In some cases, these materials can be used with middle-school students as well. (MVP classes and workshops with middle school students are typically conducted by MVP mentors who are high school students).

Train the Trainer: MVP trainers at Northeastern University or in Jackson Katz's Long Beach, CA-based organization MVP Strategies conduct intensive, on-site two-day trainings of trainers with high school personnel, including teachers, coaches, counselors, administrators, public safety staff, parents, and others. The highly interactive trainings introduce the participants to the MVP philosophy and teaching/mentoring methods. Participants are given the opportunity to lead mock MVP playbook sessions with their fellow trainees.

=====

3. Coaching Boys into Men – <http://www.coachescorner.org/> and see <http://www.chp.edu/CHP/032612> for an evaluation.

“As schools, parents and students grapple with the problem of teen dating violence, our study findings offer hope that prevention programs can work,” said Dr. Miller. “The high school male athletes whose coaches delivered this easy-to-implement program reported more positive bystander behaviors, meaning that these boys were more likely to say or do something to stop disrespectful and harmful behaviors towards girls that they witnessed among their male peers,”

In the program, high school coaches are trained to use a “Coaches Kit,” a series of training cards that offer key strategies for opening conversations about dating violence and appropriate attitudes toward women. A key component of the 12-week curriculum is teaching young men that even as bystanders they must speak out when witnessing abuse by adults or peers.

Among the study’s top findings:

- CBIM participants were significantly more likely to report intervening to stop disrespectful or harmful behaviors among their peers;
- CBIM participants were slightly more likely to recognize abusive behaviors than a control group of teens who did not participate in the program; and,

- Participants also reported less verbal and emotional abuse against a female partner after participating in the CBIM program.

“This study indicates that it is possible to prevent violence before it happens,” said Futures Without Violence Founder and President Esta Soler. “Coaches can be excellent role models who can positively shape young athletes’ attitudes about women and girls and healthy relationships.” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N8N5emwY-wE>

=====

4. Canadian Content and lower cost are offered by the White Ribbon program, "It Starts With You" (See <http://www.itstartswithyou.ca/> for details.) They have resources for fathers, educators, coaches and leaders and more. A version français is available at <http://commenceavectoi.ca/accueil/>. See also <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cvD3zydc08>

**It starts with you. It stays with him.** is an online-based, social media campaign developed by the [White Ribbon Canada](#) and [Le Centre ontarien de prévention des agressions](#) to inspire men to promote healthy, equal relationships with the boys in their lives. Helping young people achieve consent, set boundaries, value people of all genders and use respectful communication in all their relationships is something we can all do.

An evaluation of the It Starts With You Campaign conducted in 2009 found that 82% of men felt better prepared to positively influence the boys in their lives about healthy equal relationships and gender equality after having visited the campaign website. In addition, 84% of the respondents stated that they increased their knowledge about the organizations and resources that can help them to further promote healthy, equal relationships and gender equality with children and youth (University of Calgary Shift Report, 2012).

To date, 85,248 youth 8-17 years of age have benefited from receiving information, participating in classroom discussions, school and community events supported by the It Starts With You campaign. The campaign website has received 60,667 visits, and 2,928 educators have been trained through the campaign’s e-learning modules. It Starts With You has reached an estimated 1,501,371 people around the province. The campaign has received significant exposure both locally and internationally, including being highlighted by the United Nations’ SAY NO UNiTE to End Violence Against Women Campaign on several occasions over the past three years. (White Ribbon Campaign Ontario Women’s Directorate Interim Report, 2014).

=====

5. A resource developed in the Maritimes by Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre is available in [English](#) et [en français](#) at no cost at [http://fsacc.ca/Man\\_to\\_man.html](http://fsacc.ca/Man_to_man.html)

## **Man to Man**

### **A Tool-kit for Delivering Workshops to Men and Boys about Reducing Sexual Assault**

The Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre believes that part of the solution to eradicating sexual violence is through education and awareness: sexual violence is not a women's issue, it is a societal one.

Many people have come to the conclusion that there is an identified need for sexual assault prevention programs that focus on men (see Berkowitz, 2002). Man to Man was developed in response to this need.

The Tool Kit seeks to:

1. Emphasize men's responsibility for preventing sexual assault
2. Provide information about the definitions and severity of the problem
3. Promote an understanding of consent and emphasize that sexual activity is a choice.
4. Distinguish between claims of "miscommunication" vs. the tactics of abuse and coercion.
5. Promote an understanding of the range of coercive behaviours that men are socialized to employ
6. Explore relevant aspects of male gender socialization and the role of sexism in facilitating sexual assault
7. Challenge sexual assault myths and reduce victim blaming
8. Acknowledge male victimization
9. Reduce enabling behaviour and increase bystander interventions among men
10. Explore opportunities for men to take social action to raise other men's awareness about the problem of sexual assault

Adapted from *Fostering Men's Responsibility for Preventing Sexual Assault*. (Berkowitz, 2002)

=====

There are other interesting Canadian resources on mentoring, such as

<http://albertamentors.ca/>

=====

In addition to these models, here are some background materials on mentorship generally:

[Download United-Way Youth-mentoring\\_pg21.pdf](#)

[Download Fact-sheet youth-mentoring.pdf](#)

and there is an interesting presentation at

[Development and evaluation of mentoring programs for youth. Prof. David DuBois. June 2013](#)

from [Coordinadora Mentoría per a la Inclusió](#) that can assist in evaluation design.

## Selected Model

In examining the short list above, we selected the Man to Man model for the following reasons:

1. The toolkit was locally (and recently) developed, and is relevant to Canadian context.\
2. It is evidence-based with detailed references to supporting documents.
3. Program developers are close by and available to lead trainings and give advice.
4. The cost of implementing the program is low, and materials are available electronically at no cost to those who may need copies for their organization.
5. It is a toolkit, rather than a curriculum, and as such is incredibly flexible to be applied in a wide range of organizations and age ranges.
6. The resources include three levels of delivery: a) train-the-trainer so that organizations can propagate the training internally to new staff; b) facilitator training so that staff and volunteers can enhance their ability to deliver programme effectively; and c) the workshop manual, including ten modules on a wide range of issues.
7. Despite being developed to address sexual violence specifically, the toolkit's contents can be readily applied to domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence.
8. The ten modules include background reading, references, ice-breakers and energizers, activities and materials lists, and handouts, making it easy for youth leaders to quickly design and implement classes or workshops.

Modules:

1. Sexual Violence
2. Gender Stereotypes
3. Media and Pornography
4. Sexuality, Consent and Coercion
5. Expressing Emotions
6. Self-Esteem and Self-Worth
7. Healthy Relationships
8. Powerful Alternatives
9. Activism
10. Creating Closure

The model was piloted with a variety of groups:

1. Baptist Youth Group (teens) Mixed gender
2. Grade 5 Elementary Class (mostly 10-yr-olds) Mixed gender
3. Grades 9-12 High School Workshops (3). Mixed gender
4. Grades 11/12 Sociology class
5. Adult men's group. (ages 40-70) Men only
6. First Nations women's association meetings (2) Mostly women

There was a wide range of acceptance of the ideas and challenges presented, and an appreciation of the direct simplicity and power of the exercises.

The model was then delivered to many groups of youth leaders, including a train-the-trainer with 47 participants, four facilitator trainings, a customized training for RCMP, various talks and presentations, and incorporated into creative media leadership training workshops.

## Challenges

We found it very difficult to gain access to youth to involve them in developing and implementing the program. Schools, church groups and other youth groups are understandable cautious about contact with adults from outside their organizations. It takes a long time to develop the trust relationships required, and we did not have the staff time or sufficient project length to enable that, given all the other pulls on our resources. As such, we relied on the feedback from the pilot presentations we did with youth to inform our work. There were similar issues in having the time and connections to engage local youth role models.

## A Stage Model of Engagement

As we engaged men and boys we began to become aware of the stages of engagement that they needed to go through for effective change to occur. Often there is a rush to expecting men and boys to take immediate action to end violence, but this is often premature.

We identified four stages of engagement, and noted that we have to present exercises from the toolkit that address each one in order, so that effective engagement can be developed.

1. First, men and boys needed to be sensitized to the issues. Since men inhabit the top of the pyramid in the sexism oppression-liberation dynamic, they do not need to know what is happening to the people at the bottom in order to cope with day to day life. Learning about the lived experience of women and girls often comes as a shock to men and boys.
2. Second, men and boys need to become motivated to make changes, and to understand that this is also a men's issue. Often men back away from what they see as a "women's issue" or are afraid that they will not be welcome in the work.
3. Third, men and boys need to understand how they can take action that will make a difference. The issue often seems overwhelming, and there is a sense of helplessness at the enormity of the problem. Men need to be introduced to the bystander involvement principle and see how they can start to effect cultural change in their own lives at work, school, home and play.
4. Lastly, it is difficult and unsustainable to do this work in isolation, so men and boys need to strategize how to build allies and create networks of support for the men and boys doing this work.

We called these four stages: sensitization; motivation, action, and partnership.

In order to make these stages and their processes easily graspable by the men and boys we worked with, we "translated" them into plain language in the form of four questions that men will ask, and that trainers and advocates will need to be able to answer:

1. What are the issues? [Sensitization]
2. Why should I care? (What does this have to do with me?) [Motivation]
3. What can I do? [Action]
4. Who will help? [Partnership]

In designing workshops for engaging men and boys, it is crucial to be aware of these stages of engagement, and work with the participants at the level that they are. Trying to skip a step or move forward too quickly may end up disengaging instead!

In training the facilitators, we led them through exercises that addressed each these four stages, and demonstrated how each stage opens up the ability to engage the next one.