

Working with Men and Boys for Social Justice Assessment Tool

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Introduction

The Working with Men and Boys for Social Justice Assessment Tool aims to provide leaders, designers and facilitators of programs or initiatives for men and boys the opportunity to review, reflect on and strengthen principles of gender and social justice. The Tool comprises key aspects that support positive social change in programs designed for men and boys. The Tool's design is informed by research and practice in the areas of social justice, gender studies and the critical sociology of men and masculinities. It has been designed for work with men and boys as programs in this area do not always support social and gender justice. Many programs in this space are under-resourced and are not adequately informed by gender/social justice research and theory. The Tool is designed for work with men and boys, as this is a significant area of practice in health and well-being promotion, violence prevention and other fields.

The key areas and items in the Tool recognise that support and work with men and boys can create cultural change for gender and social justice through providing them with the knowledge and skills to engage with themselves and others in respectful and caring ways.

The Tool is relevant for work with men and boys across a wide range of fields and issues, including violence prevention, health and wellbeing, restorative justice, parenting, and other areas.

The Working with Men and Boys for Social Justice Assessment Tool is intended for use by:

- Organisations and advocates seeking to assess and improve their own work with men and boys;
- Organisations and advocates seeking to open discussion with program leaders, facilitators and participants about the strengths of their program and what they could focus on to improve their program; and
- Others seeking to assess the merits of work among men and boys.

Policymakers, funders, and other practitioners may find the Tool useful in identifying elements of good practice, although the Tool is best completed by organisations and practitioners who are themselves implementing programs.

The Working with Men and Boys for Social Justice Tool is organised as a checklist, based on 56 principles for gender/socially just practice. The 56 principles are divided into the following four areas: 1) aims and focus; 2) scale and support; 3) teaching and learning; and 4) evaluation and improvement. The number and proportion of items are described in the table below.

Checklist area	Number of items	Approximate proportion of the checklist
Aims and Focus	14	25%
Scale and support	5	9%
Teaching and learning	31	55%
Evaluation and improvement	6	11%
TOTAL	56	100%

Program score and ranking

Responses to the checklist principles are used to generate an overall score. The weighting of the items and areas is not adjusted.

The program score indicates the overall strength of the program, and also locates it in one of four categories: Beginning, Developing, Accomplished, Exemplary

Each category is explained in more detail below.

As the Tool aims to provide both reflection and recommendations, as the score is calculated, it highlights each program's strengths and possibilities for review related to each key area. Please see further below regarding the implications of program scores and rankings.

Focus

The Working with Men and Boys for Social Justice Assessment Tool is designed particularly for the assessment of face-to-face education programs, rather than online educational programs or other strategies such as social marketing and communications campaigns. Aspects of its criteria, however, can be applied to the assessment of online education programs.

Resources

The Tool is complemented by supporting resources. After completing the Tool, a resource bank with a range of helpful materials is available to support engagement and improvement of programs in the four areas of the Tool: 1) aims and focus; 2) scale and support; 3) teaching and learning; and 4) evaluation and improvement.

Assessment Tool instructions

To complete the Assessment Tool please:

1. Consider each question below.
2. Include a response to every question.
3. Choose one of the given five numbers that best fits your response (explained below). If you need to click on the question mark icon for a more detailed explanation of the question.
4. When you have completed the checklist, please click on "Submit" to generate the program's scores.
5. Consider your score in each of the four areas and overall and click on the areas of the Resource Bank to access helpful resources.
6. You will have the opportunity to print out your results at the end of the survey.

The checklist uses a sliding scale of frequency from 1 to 5:

- 1) If your program **never** does what is identified in the item, choose 1
- 2) If your program **rarely** does what is identified in the item, choose 2
- 3) If your program **sometimes** does what is identified in the item, choose 3
- 4) If your program **mostly** does what is identified in the item, choose 4
- 5) If your program **always** does what is identified in the item, choose 5

The Tool is a self-evaluation of your program. The data you provide will not be identifiable. Once you have finished the evaluation, your data will not be recorded for your later access but there is a facility at the end of the evaluation for you to print out your results. There is also a facility for you to access of pdf of the survey.

Aims and Focus

<p>In this section we ask you to consider the aims and focus of your program. This is important because your aims and focus will inform how you understand and approach issues of social and gender justice with men and boys. We know that it is important when working with men and boys, to create and foster safe connections and respect and to build a program that responds to the needs of participants. We also know that in order for social transformation to occur, there needs to be a focus on challenging the gender and social harms that men and boys experience and perpetuate and on holding men and boys accountable for these harms.</p>					
Does your program aim to build respectful and non-violent human relations?	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program include participants and the community in the development and/or implementation of its activities?	1	2	4	4	5
Does your program build on the strengths already present in participants' lives, such as their commitments to and involvements in non-violence?	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program aim to support participants to increase their capacity to care for themselves and others physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually?	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program aim to transform rigid gender stereotypes and norms and patriarchal practices and structures? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program aim to address how constructions of masculinity constrain or harm boys and men? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program apply an intersectional lens that recognises the multiple factors and conditions that contribute to various forms of inequality? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program recognise and seek to address the different forms of inequality and harm that participants experience and perpetuate?	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program support participants to be personally accountable for their own behaviours and their behaviours towards others? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program aim to explore and increase participants' capacities to speak up and take action against harms?	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program include a focus on supporting connection, care and respect for the non-human world (e.g., animals, the natural environment)? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program employ a theory of change or logic model to account for how the program's content and processes are intended to achieve their outcomes? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program strive to maximise the safety of participants and the people in their lives? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program regularly consult current evidence (aligned with social justice) about how best to work with and engage men and boys?	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Scale and Support</p> <p>In this section, we ask you to consider the scale of, and support for, your program. It is important when working with men and boys to create change, that there are broader structures and practices that support your program.</p>					

Is your program connected with and supported by broader initiatives in your organisation or setting that aim to address similar issues or themes? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Are the aims and activities of the program supported by relevant stakeholders (including participants, families, community groups and organisations, women's and queer health services, local and govt organisations)? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does the program build and work with broader networks and alliances to promote its aims and outcomes (e.g., women's organisations or broader social justice networks)?	1	2	3	4	5
Is the program supported by adequate and sustained resourcing/funding both within and beyond the organisation within which it operates?	1	2	3	4	5
Does your program support participants by connecting with relevant social services?	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching and Learning In this section we ask you to reflect on the teaching and learning aspects of your program. This is a complex undertaking involving deep consideration of your content, the processes for teaching and learning, the structure of your sessions or activities and the quality of facilitation. When working with men and boys, it is important that the content and delivery of your program is consistent with your program's aims and focus. Having consistency and a clear purpose is important for creating a space for participants to undertake deep critical reflection and learning about their own complex felt and lived experiences of violence and oppression. These factors are crucial in holding boys and men accountable in order to support gender and social justice.					
Teaching and learning - content					
Are the content and topics covered in the program relevant and meaningful to participants (i.e., they connect with their lives)?	1	2	3	4	5
Do the content and topics support participants to explore issues of identity, connection, respect and belonging (especially through personal stories)?	1	2	3	4	5
Does the content support participants to examine issues of power, conflict and violence?	1	2	3	4	5
Does the content support participants to critically reflect on their sense of self, values, beliefs and behaviours, especially those associated with rigid gender stereotypes and harmful forms of masculinity?	1	2	3	4	5
Does the content invite participants to reflect on how their values, beliefs and behaviours may contribute to creating inequality and harm (in different contexts, e.g., the peer group, sports, work etc. and with different people, e.g., with friends, family, intimate partners, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5
Does the content and activities encourage participants to explore and practise respecting and caring for others in different contexts and	1	2	3	4	5

different relationships (e.g., in their peer group, on the sports field, in their family or with their intimate partner)?					
Does the content support participants to deeply reflect on and examine a range of emotions (including critical examination of personal experiences and challenges where strong emotions arise such as anger, anxiety and shame)?	1	2	3	4	5
Is the content trauma-informed and mindful of possible impacts on participants? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Is the content focused on building awareness about different forms of inequality (e.g., associated with gender, sexuality, class, race, and ability diversity)? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does the content support participants' positive self-growth and positive connections with others, not just other men?	1	2	3	4	5
Does the content support participants to see themselves as connected to and caring for all living things? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does the content support action that is focused on social change (such as work in the community or other advocacy)? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Does the content support participants to explore and accept personal accountability for how their attitudes and behaviours harm others?	1	2	3	4	5
Is the content informed by reputable resources and trialled with others before being used?	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching and learning - processes					
Do teaching and learning processes and activities support a sense of safety, connection, inclusion, respect and openness?	1	2	3	4	5
Are teaching and learning processes and activities interactive and participatory?	1	2	3	4	5
Do teaching and learning processes and activities engage participants in group/small group discussion and critical thinking that is focused on developing and practising empathy, listening and care?	1	2	3	4	5
Are teaching and learning processes and activities flexible and varied to support and connect with the different abilities and needs of participants?	1	2	3	4	5
Are teaching and learning processes and activities designed to support and address the emotional discomfort of this work? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching and learning - structure					
Does the program involve sufficient time with participants to foster social change (e.g., at least four sessions or eight hours of direct contact in close proximity)?	1	2	3	4	5

Does the program have clear and where possible evidence-based rationales for the composition of its groups (e.g., single-gender, mixed-gender, ethnicity, race, religion, age etc.), including an understanding of their advantages and disadvantages?	1	2	3	4	5
Does the program have processes in place to provide post-program support for participants?	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching and learning - facilitators					
Do facilitators have relevant expertise and skills consistent with the aims of the program (e.g., good interpersonal and active listening skills, capacity to facilitate group discussion, to be open with others, to encourage and support conversation, do they believe in the program's aims and approaches?)	1	2	3	4	5
Are facilitators able to adapt content and materials to support the different needs of participants (e.g., groups with English as a second language)?	1	2	3	4	5
Are facilitators able to guide discussion, pose open-ended questions and invite feedback in constructive and inclusive ways?	1	2	3	4	5
Are facilitators able to work with (rather than ignore or suppress) challenging conversations or points of view and respond to questions in constructive and inclusive ways? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Are facilitators able to engage participants in building solidarity to mobilise positive change? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Do facilitators engage in ongoing critical reflection about their own experiences and relations to gender and other intersections of identity, power, privilege and oppression (including identifying and questioning their own biases)?	1	2	3	4	5
Do facilitators recognise the emotional discomfort involved in social change work and are they skilled and trained in being able to respond to issues associated with this discomfort (e.g., disclosures, collusion and resistance)? EXPLANATION PROVIDED	1	2	3	4	5
Do facilitators receive ongoing training, support and supervision to deliver the program well?	1	2	3	4	5
Does the program have clear rationales for its selection of facilitators (e.g., their gender, age, ethnicity, race, peer or professional status, experience etc.), including an understanding of their advantages and disadvantages?	1	2	3	4	5
Evaluation and Improvement					
In this section we ask you to consider how you are evaluating your program towards improvement. This requires thinking about who you are accountable to and how, and what kinds of evidence you gather to assess how well your program is achieving its aims.					
Does the program engage in multiple forms of internal accountability that involve sharing its findings and learnings in order to progress the work and improve quality (e.g., among participants, facilitators, managers, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5

Does the program engage in multiple forms of external or public accountability that involves sharing its findings and learnings with others in the field in order to progress the work, improve quality and build on current evidence (e.g., funding bodies, community groups including women's groups)?	1	2	3	4	5
Does the program gather and learn from feedback on participants' and facilitators' experiences and views of the program (e.g., through qualitative and quantitative evaluation data)?	1	2	3	4	5
Does the program compare data gathered from the participants before and after the program to assess change?	1	2	3	4	5
Is the program revised in response to new evidence, research or changes in the issues it addresses?	1	2	3	4	5
If applicable, does the program gather follow up data to ascertain its longer-term impacts?	1	2	3	4	5

[NEXT]

Program score and ranking: Implications

The broad implications of a program's score on the checklist are summarised in the following table.

Program score and category	Implications
Exemplary: 85+	Your program is highly effective in working with men and boys for gender and social justice. It is likely that it will have or is having significant positive impact. Programs like yours are exemplary in relation to the four key areas and can thus make strong claims as to its efficacy. Your program may also still have areas for improvement. You may have noticed suggestions where you program could review and improve. Your program might benefit from drawing on the Resources Bank.
Accomplished: 65-84	Your program has strong features and is likely to lead to positive social change with men and boys. Programs like yours are accomplished in relation to the four key areas and thus can make claims in relation to its efficacy in these areas. Programs in this category may have areas or items for improvement and thus would benefit from reviewing and drawing on the Resources Bank.
Developing: 40-64	Your program may have some strong features but not in all areas. Programs like yours may lead to some positive social change in relation to the four key areas and may be able to make some claims for efficacy. Programs in this category would benefit greatly from deep engagement and review of the materials in the Resources Bank especially in areas where the program did not score well.
Beginning: Under 40	Your program may have some strong features but not in all areas. Programs like yours may not lead to impact for social change and might be considered beginning in relation to the four key areas. Your program may still be able to make claims for efficacy on particular items. Programs in this category

	would benefit greatly from deep and comprehensive review and engagement with the materials in the Resource Bank.
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EXPLANATIONS

Working with Men and Boys for Social Justice Assessment Tool

The following explanations are associated with items in the assessment tool that may require further definition and clarification. They are accessible through the question mark icon in the survey.

Does your program aim to transform rigid gender stereotypes and norms and patriarchal practices and structures?

TEXT: For example, does the program aim to change men's and boys' rigid understandings of gender and masculinity towards more equitable understandings? Does the program aim to change men's and boys' patriarchal behaviours and encourage more egalitarian behaviours? Does your program aim to encourage men and boys to take part in wider action for social change?

Does your program aim to address how constructions of masculinity constrain or harm boys and men?

TEXT: For example, the program might explore how common norms of masculinity – that men must be strong, stoic, in control, take risks, and avoid showing vulnerability – can limit men's and boys' health, their ability to seek help or support, or the quality of their relationships and friendships.

Does your program apply an intersectional lens that recognises the multiple factors and conditions that contribute to gender (and other forms of) inequality?

TEXT: Applying an intersectional lens means recognising how factors such as gender identity, sexuality, race, class, religion and ability, and conditions such as access to housing, health, education and employment intersect to make worse or alleviate experiences of discrimination and injustice (e.g., homophobia, racism, poverty). Does your program provide opportunities for participants to examine how these factors and conditions play out in their lives and in their relations with others?

Does your program support participants to be personally accountable for their own behaviours and their behaviours towards others?

TEXT: For example, the program should encourage boys and men to gain critical awareness of how their attitudes and behaviours might be harmful to themselves and others, to take responsibility for their actions, and to do the work of personal change.

Does your program include a focus on supporting connection, care and respect for the non-human world (e.g., animals, the natural environment)?

TEXT: Westernised ways of living value individualism, competition and wealth accumulation (including ideas of property/land ownership and the use and abuse of animals). Challenging these values through supporting participants to see themselves as connected to and caring for all living things is important when working with men and boys for social and environmental justice.

Does your program employ a theory of change or logic model to account for how the program's content and processes are intended to achieve their outcomes?

TEXT: A logic model shows how a program is supposed to work, depicting relationships between activities and results. It is a visual representation of a project's activities, outputs and the changes it seeks (impacts), all linked together in a series of 'if-then' relationships ('if this happens then that will occur'). A theory of change is more sophisticated. Like a logic model, a theory of change shows activities and outcomes, but it also explains *how* and *why* the desired change is expected to come about. A theory of change includes a theoretical or conceptual account of the problem, an explanation of why activities will produce outcomes, and the indicators or evidence of whether the intended changes have occurred.

Does your program strive to maximise the safety of participants and the people in their lives?

TEXT: Does your program include policy and practice that all staff are aware of and can implement when working with men and boys to ensure the safety of participants and others in their lives? For example, do you have a screening assessment for facilitators and participants that can reveal their experience of violence both as perpetrators and as victims? Does your program have mechanisms to identify, assess and report violent or at-risk behaviour (including issues of child safety)? Does your program include mechanisms to support perpetrators and victims of this behaviour? Does your program support regular staff debriefs/supervision about issues of safety with a skilled manager?

Is your program connected with and supported by broader initiatives in your organisation or setting that aim to address similar issues or themes?

TEXT: The evidence is that interventions are more likely to make change if participants have multiple points or sources of exposure to the intended messages. For example, a face-to-face education program might be complemented by communications or media strategies in the organisation or community, or local events, or other strategies. More widely, interventions that work at multiple levels of an organisation, setting, or community are likely to have a greater impact on attitudes, behaviours, and social norms.

Are the aims and activities of the program supported by relevant stakeholders (including participants, families, community groups and organisations, women's and queer health services, local and govt organisations)?

TEXT: How are others included in your program? If your program is attempting to end violence or racism, how are the people most impacted by this oppression included in the design, content and aims? How transparent are your processes and activities? Can people access them on your website? Have you reached out for community consultations about key issues or concerns? Do you have activities that are co-developed and facilitated with diverse practitioners? Do you regularly seek feedback from stakeholders about the aims and activities of your program (in de-identified ways if necessary)?

Is the content trauma-informed and mindful of possible impacts on participants?

TEXT: It is important to identify the areas of content in your program that may be traumatic for some men and boys. It is important to develop a plan for recognising and responding to this trauma in physically, psychologically and emotionally supportive ways.

Is the content focused on building awareness about different forms of inequality (e.g., associated with gender, sexuality, class, race, and ability diversity)?

TEXT: This is about providing opportunities (e.g., through posing scenarios or connecting with participants' personal experiences) for men and boys to understand how different forms of inequality work. This may involve, for example, exploring how practices of sexism, homophobia, classism, racism and ableism impact on different people in different contexts.

Does the content support participants to see themselves as connected to and caring for all living things?

TEXT: This is about providing opportunities for participants to consider their relations with the non-human world (e.g., how do they think of and care for the non-human world - the land, trees, plants, animals etc.?) Do they think of these things as material to accumulate and possess or as things to connect with and nurture?

Does the content support action focused on social change (such as work in the community or other advocacy)?

TEXT: Are men and boys provided with the opportunity to practice with others the new knowledge and skills they are being exposed to? Learning theory informs us that people must be provided with the opportunity to practice new thinking and skills in different settings, in order to master those areas. How are men and boys actioning their aims and how are they being captured in order to claim change or a program outcome? For example, if communication skills are an aim of your program just self-reporting of increased capacity from men is not enough. How could men show that this is something they are practicing or how could they record their attempts to inspire and inform others?

Are teaching and learning processes and activities designed to support and address the emotional discomfort of this work?

TEXT: For men and boys to really understand and engage with the emotional discomfort of this work, teaching and learning activities need to be designed in ways that open up rather than close down conversations. Do your program's activities support open questions and invite further conversations to support men and boys to think critically about and explore the issues, values and feelings behind common responses to this work (from men and boys) such as resistance and disagreement? Do your activities invite men and boys to examine their emotions – for example, identifying what, when and why they feel specific emotions (e.g., anger, rage, sadness as well as happiness and joy) and what these emotions do to their bodies and their relations with others? Do your activities open opportunities for boys and men to explore how they might channel their emotions in positive or pro-social ways?

Are facilitators able to work with (rather than ignore or suppress) challenging conversations or points of view and respond to questions in constructive and inclusive ways?

TEXT: Are facilitators skilled in connecting with participants in ways that recognise and provide space for them to express their points of view even if they are uncomfortable (e.g., through demonstrating empathy and the active listening skills of paraphrasing or summarising) while also challenging harmful attitudes and behaviours (e.g., by offering different perspectives and ideas)?

Are facilitators able to engage participants in building solidarity to mobilise positive change?

TEXT: Do facilitators foster a belief in the group's power to create positive change? Are they able to build solidarity among group members to support this change? This might occur through participants working together on an activist project in their communities designed to support gender equality and other forms of equality.

Do facilitators recognise the emotional discomfort involved in social change work and are they skilled and trained in being able to respond to issues associated with this discomfort (e.g., disclosures, collusion and resistance)?

TEXT: For example, are facilitators able to create and sustain environments and relationships where participants feel able to express their emotional discomfort without feeling silenced or shamed but where they are also invited to critically reflect on this discomfort? Can facilitators support participants to examine their emotional discomfort – e.g., identifying what, when and why they feel specific emotions (e.g., anger, rage, sadness as well as happiness and joy) and what these emotions do to their bodies and their relations with others? Can facilitators support participants to consider how they might channel their emotions in positive and pro-social ways? Can facilitators respond to disclosures through protective and supportive practices?