



Western
Education

Centre for Research & Education
on Violence Against Women & Children

LEARNING NETWORK

LearningNetwork Brief 24

**Engaging men in gender-based
violence prevention:
Review paper synopsis.**

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The Learning Network is an initiative of the Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children, based at the Faculty of Education, Western University, London, Ontario, Canada.

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Funded by:



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SUGGESTED CITATION

Straatman, A. (January 2015). Engaging men in gender-based violence prevention: Review paper synopsis. Learning Network Brief (24). London, Ontario: Learning Network, Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children. <http://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca/engaging-men-boys>

White Ribbon conducted a review of research and evaluation approaches for gender-based violence programming for men and boys. The concept of “engagement” is defined and deconstructed and includes a call to broaden the definition of engagement to include male responsibility and commitment when measuring program effectiveness. Additionally, with the increasing utilization of social media in prevention programming, it is important to consider physical and virtual spaces when evaluating engagement.

Gender-based violence prevention programs that engage boys and men appear to universally have the goal of changing social norms among men and boys regarding their behaviours and attitudes towards masculinity and violence against women. A number of entry points for intervention programs are identified including community-based interventions (particularly health-based and sports-based interventions). Programs are implemented in schools, and on rare occasions, community-wide but seldom system-wide. Recently, campaigns such as “It starts with you, It stays with him” have been developed and implemented to engage men and boys through social marketing and includes interactive tools such as a website, videos and various social media strategies. The research review identified a lack of programming for men and boys appropriate to various social locations and intersectional lived experience. Frequently, programs are created to serve the dominant culture community and seldom address those at highest risk of perpetrating gender-based violence.

A review of theoretical frameworks and participatory approaches is offered. Gender transformative programs were identified to be the most effective in that the goals of these programs include promoting equitable relationships, changing gender norms and social expectations. However, it is important that programs have a clear definition of what is meant by gender equality.

Best practices and challenges to the evaluation of engagement initiatives are identified. This review explores the benefits and challenges to obtaining and using baseline data for evaluation of changes in attitudes and beliefs regarding gender equality and gender-based violence. Questions such as, “does pre-test data influence outcome data positively or negatively?” are explored and reviewed. Various evaluation design methods are explored including experimental, quasi-experimental, descriptive, qualitative and quantitative. Scales to measure gender attitudes are discussed with a focus on the Gender Equitable Men Scale (GEM Scale). As with the development and implementation of programs intended to universally engage men and boys in a community or school, which may overlook various social locations, it is important to consider social location and cultural experience when evaluating interventions or changes in attitudes and beliefs. A challenge to current practices is the lack of sustainable funding to implement long-term evaluations which may offer further insights to long-term behavioural and attitude change. Currently, most evaluations are conducted either immediately post engagement or within short time frames. This does not offer an opportunity to examine retention of new attitudes or how this leads to actual behavioural changes in the long-term.

The full report is available at: <http://www.whiteribbon.ca/literature-review/>

White Ribbon Campaign. (2014). Men’s Engagement in Gender-Based Violence Prevention: A Critical Review of Evaluation Approaches. White Ribbon Campaign, Toronto, ON.