

PRIORITY 1-54

2019

Maps to Manhood: Final Project Report (v3)



FUNDED IN
2017 BY


Hastings and Rother
Clinical Commissioning Group

 artswork

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Young People's Advisory Group

'It's always called banter but I think it's straight up bullying' [young woman]

'Look at double standards and how boys get away with things...like boys will be boys' [young woman]

'It's the popular boys who use sexist banter, but it's just 'boys will be boys' and so nothing gets done' [young woman]

'Verbal harassment is called 'boys being boys' by staff and we are told to just 'brush it off' [young woman]

'Teachers need to speak up and challenge boys, even if it feels awkward, and challenge the double standards' [young woman]

'Do something about challenging the rejection insults that men do... remind them of the fact they have sisters and mothers' [young woman]

'We talked about online pornography and sexting, but not in detail as teachers don't feel comfortable to talk about it' [young man]

'Don't spread things that you hear or twist things, it makes us feel intimidated, powerless and sad...you need to show more respect for girls' [young woman]

'We covered consent in year 11, by then it's too late' [young man]

'They need to know what a relationship is. It's about respect and trusting each other. It's not about sexting or pressuring someone into doing something they don't want to do' [young woman]

'I didn't know doctors were helpful for this [mental health] or that you could talk to them about it, I don't know if I would talk to mine about this' [young man]

Young men taking part in workshops

'I liked that we talked about things in depth like men don't have to hide their feelings...I'll remember these workshops' [Year 6 student]

'You can say what you want in the workshop without feeling embarrassed' [Year 9 student]

'It's okay to express my feelings, no matter who is around' [Year 10 student]

'I liked the fact that everything was equal. We all had a chance to talk and I felt included' [Year 8 student]

'I've learnt that you don't have to be tough to be a man, but no one wants to be seen to be weak' [Year 13 student]

'I'd be really wary about talking about my emotions because you'd be seen as weak' [Year 8 student]

'Learning about stereotypes and 'manning up' and what it means to be a man was very funny, but serious as well' [Year 6 student]

'The workshop was funny but still serious at the same time' [Year 9 student]

'I've learnt what masculinity means and where certain stereotypes come from' [Year 6 student]

'I need to think more about how my friends are feeling' [Year 9 student]

'Today I learnt that it's not always a good idea to bottle things up' [Year 6 student]

'I enjoyed all the subjects we covered in the workshops and learnt loads about banter and bravado' [Year 8 student]

'I felt embarrassed because of things we've called girls and some of our behaviour towards them' [Year 9 student]

'In school I would talk to friends [about mental health] and teachers but I would be careful who I would tell' [Year 9 student]

'I'd only talk about my feelings with my trusted friends but even then you run the risk of having the p*** taken out of you or worse still having rumours spread' [Year 9 student]

Feedback from school

'They [workshop facilitators] were amazing, they connected well with the boys and the boys remained focused and clearly liked the sessions. It was great that the boys can talk safely and in confidence, and relaxed the more the sessions progressed' [Secondary school support worker]

'The resources were interactive and informative. It gave them the confidence to talk about their feelings and worries' [Primary school support workshop]

'The activities and the materials were excellent to relax the boys. They loved the graffiti work and the ability to talk freely' [Secondary pastoral support staff]

'All of the boys have engaged really well and it has really given a boost to the boys' self-esteem and found a way to address those sometimes sensitive and often multi-layered issues relating to boys growing up in the modern age. Thank you for your enthusiasm and professional attitude!' [Head Teacher, Sacred Heart Primary School]

'The work that Priority 1-54 has been doing in Bexhill Academy has really helped develop our equalities work, challenging the stereotypical male role model. They have developed a programme for us that uses the experiences of both male and female students that is relevant and engaging and will now allow us to roll this out through the forthcoming year' [Head of Inclusion, Bexhill Academy]

About this report	This report provides an overview of the work undertaken by Priority 1-54 as part of the Maps to Manhood project, funded by Hastings Clinical Commissioning Group.
Maps to Manhood	<p>The overall aims of the Maps to Manhood project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take an ‘asset-based approach’ drawing on young people’s perspectives, knowledge and experiences to find solutions that address the root causes of peer-based sexual harassment and sexual violence experienced by young women in schools, colleges, youth settings and online; and • To provide young men with an opportunity to explore the links between traditional forms of masculinity and poor mental health outcomes while empowering them to find and activate solutions to these issues by building critical thinking skills, healthy coping mechanisms and emotional literacy.
Context	<p>A growing body of evidence has shown that messages boys and young men receive from an early age about ‘what it means to be man’ are limiting, confining, stereotypical and powerful, especially because they are not typically articulated as such.</p> <p>These messages come from family, peers and the media, telling boys and young men how to behave and feel and how they should relate to each other, as well as towards girls and young women. Many of these messages are harmful, with short and long-term consequences for young men, their families, the communities they live in and society as a whole.</p>
Key project objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with a Young People’s Advisory Group to co-produce high quality and innovative resources consisting of five carefully scripted workshops. • Strengthen mechanisms and community assets to support young men’s emotional wellbeing. • Deliver a series of 5 workshops across 6 settings that provide young men with bespoke learning opportunities to address the core issues that fuel peer-based sexual harassment and lead to poor mental health outcomes. • Provide young men with the resilience to speak out against sexual harassment and gender inequality. • Deliver two training events across Hastings to showcase and embed the new resources in schools and youth settings. • Produce of a free web-based resource available to schools and youth settings. • Actively pursue other funding streams to ensure sustainability of the project.
Phase One	<p>A key component of Phase One was the recruitment of a Young People’s Advisory Group to utilise their perspectives, knowledge and experiences of peer-based sexual harassment and mental health to inform in the development of resources.</p> <p>Thirty six young people took part in the initial consultation activities from a range of schools and colleges across the Hastings and Bexhill areas and existing youth voice groups, but a core group of 18 met five times over the lifetime of the project.</p>

Key findings

Many of the emerging themes that young people spoke about regarding their experiences of sexual harassment and mental health in schools, colleges and the community, mirrored many of the key findings from recent national research [see Feminista UK: 2017; Childnet: 2017; and South West Grid for Learning: 2017].

The Advisory Group provided great insight into young people's perceptions and experiences of the impact of gender stereotyping and how this often played out in their day-to-day interactions with their peers and adults, both in and outside of school.

Young people spoke about:

- Limited opportunities to discuss issues relating to sexual harassment and mental health in schools - opportunities that appeared to decrease in schools as young people get older.
- The variable quality of PHSE lessons across schools due to limited experience and in-depth knowledge of non-specialist PHSE teachers.
- Discussions in school about offline or online sexual harassment were often in response to specific incidents between students.
- Evidence that sexualised banter was often perpetrated by 'popular boys' with such behaviour frequently dismissed by (male) staff as 'boys being boys'.
- Online sexual harassment of young women was so common it had been normalised by young women and not reported.
- An unwillingness to report incidents due to young people's concerns about their 'reputation' amongst their peers.
- A reticence to report incidents of sexual harassment for fear of retaliation and being called a 'snake'
- The link between gender stereotyping and 'acting like a man' and/or 'manning up' and unwillingness of young men to talk about their feelings and potential mental health
- Reluctance to talk openly about their emotional wellbeing or mental health for fear of rumours being spread or being bullied by their peers
- The need for greater information about who to turn to for support if they were worried about theirs or someone else's emotional wellbeing or mental health.

This work proved essential in framing the focus and content of the first draft of the resources, which continued to go through a number of changes during the course of the piloting phase, as a result of ongoing feedback from students and teachers.

The initial themes included:

- Masculinity and what it means to be a man
- Gender stereotyping and toxic masculinity
- Boys' friendships, banter, bravado and bullying, including sexualised bullying
- Offline and online sexual harassment including non-consensual sharing of intimate pictures (sexting and revenge porn)
- Positive healthy relationships and consent; and
- Emotional wellbeing and the link between (toxic) masculinity and poor mental health outcomes

Aaron spoke in the group about feeling 'really low' for months during Year 8 and how he had kept this to himself.

'I'm not sure why I felt really bad. I just didn't go out. I shut myself away in my bedroom and played music. Then I joined the gym and I started to feel better about myself. Looking back I think I was depressed'

Chris's mum died when he was young but his dad still gets really upset when Chris tries to talk to him about her.

'My dad still cries a lot but he doesn't talk to me about it'

'When my mum died I cried a lot in school, but I got picked on which made things worse'

Chris talked openly about missing his mum in the workshop and was offered support by other boys:

'It's okay talking here I can say things and no one's going to take the p*'**

As a result of Kieran's parents' recent separation, he and his mum had had to move out of the family home and Kieran was about to move-up to a new secondary school without any of his close friends.

'Even though my dad was horrible to my mum I miss him and I'm gonna miss my friends. I'm worried about making new friends but everyone keeps telling me it's going to be okay'

Simon spoke openly and honestly about his experiences of domestic violence, his parents' alcohol misuse and how this was affecting his education.

'It's hard coming to school in the morning when you've just seen your parents arguing for the last 20 minutes, school is the last place I want to be'

'When my dad was splitting up with my mum, he rang me up when I was at school and asked *ME* [young man's emphasis] if I could come and get him cause he was drunk.'

Simon's discussion led to two others in the group talking about their own experiences of domestic violence and how this had impacted on their wellbeing.

Arsif talked about being bullied in primary school because of race and his appearance:

'I was picked on because I was fat and Asian. There was no way I was going to let that happen again...so I joined the Rugby team and lost weight and then I started getting into fights, but as I said there's no way I'm going to get bullied'

Phase Two

During the workshops a diverse range of other issues were raised. These included:

- Being ostracised by their peers, together with previous and current experiences of bullying behaviour and feelings of loneliness
- Managing the transition from primary to secondary school
- The extent to which boys felt 'connected' to their school, family and community
- Sharing of (online) pornographic material between boys
- The meaning of consent, sexting and non-consensual sharing of intimate pictures
- The death of a close family member and dealing with bereavement
- Dealing with a parent's mental health difficulties
- Parental separation, divorce and having to manage new family relationships
- Overt parental conflict including domestic violence and its impact on wellbeing and behaviour

The workshops were piloted in two waves. The first wave of workshops took place with young men in Years 8, 9 and 13 and the second wave of workshops with two groups of Year 6, with a total of 51 young men taking part in the piloting phase.

Following the first wave of workshops and feedback from young people, many felt the workshops should be delivered to Year 6s and 7s. Therefore, the resources/activities were made more age appropriate, accessible and differentiated, whilst attempting to retain key themes and learning points.

Key findings

The piloting phase raised a number of important issues.

A number of boys and young men recruited by the schools to take part in the workshops displayed behavioural issues that sometimes made delivery of the workshops problematic and impacted on the extent to which the workshop facilitators were able to create and maintain a safe space for others in the group to talk openly and honestly. Therefore, careful consideration needs to be given when identifying and recruiting boys and young men to ensure a balanced mix within the workshops. Moreover, young women (and men) stated that it was often '**popular boys**' in schools who conformed to traditional gender norms, and engaged in 'sexist banter' and inappropriate behaviour towards girls and young women.

The workshops and activities were designed to be flexible enough to be delivered using both a small group approach or within a classroom setting. Those who received more targeted support spoke positively of being in a smaller group as this allowed for much more open, honest and deeper discussions.

Workshops were roughly 50 minutes long, but in many cases this was never quite long enough, as young men were often keen to explore an issue in more detail. Primary schools were able to offer



much more flexible in timetabling, with one school setting aside the entire morning for delivery.

This provided greater opportunities to discuss the workshop themes, ideas and concepts and greater learning opportunities for the boys. We ensured enough time was available before taking a 'deep dive' into the workshop themes so that a satisfactory conclusion could be reached when discussing important issues.

In one school, an entire class of boys took part in the workshops and asked for an accompanying set of resources to support the girls which we were able to provide. These explored emotional resilience, social media, online safety and transition to secondary. The Advisory Group had discussed the need for support for girls and young women, as they also needed a safe space to talk about issues relating to gender stereotyping, sexual harassment, online safety and emotional wellbeing.



Establishing a group agreement at the beginning of the first workshop and each subsequent workshop were important to build trust within the group and between the boys and the workshop facilitator.

A number of safeguarding themes were covered in the workshops and appeared to act as a catalyst for safeguarding disclosures. Confidentiality and disclosure was discussed at the beginning of each workshop, with all safeguarding disclosures addressed in accordance each setting's safeguarding procedures.



When addressing some of the more sensitive themes i.e. non consensual sharing of intimate pictures, sexist banter and sexual harassment, young men frequently became defensive, with a tendency to resort to 'victim shaming' and 'victim-blaming' of young women. This was always robustly challenged but the extent to which this affected the rapport between the workshop facilitator and young men was continuously under review.

There was clear evidence that certain young men deliberately attempted to sabotage more frank and open discussions as a means of circumventing deeper conversations in the group. Again, this was vigorously challenged and pointed out to young people and discussed within the context and use of male bravado.



It was evident that boys and young men became very self-conscious and embarrassed about stereotypical views, attitudes and behaviour they displayed towards girls and women. This may have become a particular issue where female teachers/practitioners sat in on the workshops. Equally, some female staff spoke of feeling uncomfortable listening to some of these discussions.

Young men spoke openly and with insight about their emotional wellbeing including:

- their own experiences of depression, loneliness and bereavement;

- the risks of speaking to friends about mental health concerns for fear of being labelled as 'attention seeking', having rumours spread or being bullied and;
- negative and positive coping strategies they had used.

Support networks were discussed in detail, including local support services together with a range of wellbeing Apps that appeared popular amongst young people.

It was during the second workshop that the young men started to talk openly about family circumstances. A number of young men spoke of having experienced parental separation or witnessing significant levels of domestic violence against their mums – circumstances that school staff were aware of. The young men spoke about difficult and sometimes violent relationships that they had with step-parents and the impact this had on their wellbeing and schooling.

There was clear evidence that young men were keen to talk about their wellbeing and mental health but felt there were few opportunities to do so in school. Where a young man had confided in a close friend about possible mental health concerns, this was quickly followed up with a discussion about the associated risk in doing so i.e. rumours being spread in school or on social media and the possibility of being bullied.

It was clear when talking to the Advisory Group that few knew who to turn to for support if they had a mental health concern. A list of national and local services was drawn up in the form of a leaflet which also contained a number of wellbeing Apps currently popular amongst young people. Checks were made to ensure these Apps had been quality assured by the NHS. This leaflet was given to all young people at the end of workshop four.

The second wave of workshops took place in June/July and schools asked if there could be a focus on transition to secondary school to address any anxieties or worries that the Year 6 boys might have. As such, workshop facilitators were able to incorporate discussions and activities around transition into the workshops.

Having an experienced Youth Arts Educator use arts based learning to co-deliver the workshops was key to the success of the project.

The benefits of using arts-based learning with young people included:

- Acting as an incentive for them to take part in and engage positively in the workshops
- Additional creative learning opportunities to further explore the workshop themes
- A vehicle to aide discussion when talking about sensitive and difficult issues as well as an innovative positive outlet
- As a cathartic process during workshops when expressing opinions and feelings on difficult subjects

Art based learning (Arts Award)

- The opportunity to work collaboratively, share ideas and skills and engage in peer-to-peer praise, rather than peer pressure

The benefits for the school also included:

- An introduction to new arts styles and methods outside of the regular arts curriculum
- Up-skilling staff with new arts techniques and practical creative activities to continue issue based lessons
- The use of arts-based learning as a vehicle to engage hard to reach young boys
- Use of arts-based learning as a cross-curricula approach i.e. Arts and PHSRE
- Artwork produced by the young people displayed in schools to act as a lasting legacy of their involvement in the project and to promote important learning points to others in the wider-school setting

Following initial conversations with HRAEN, about our responsibility to aid joined up thinking around approaching Hastings schools from an arts, accreditation and cultural perspective, we were subsequently informed that we had not been categorised as an 'Arts Project'. So any arts expectations and outcomes that were achieved, although welcomed, were considered as extra to the other identified arts projects involved.

With this in mind when we approached each school we looked at how the 'Maps To Manhood' art work and arts process could be part of any wider art achievements each setting was looking for. During all initial conversations with Heads and staff we looked at whether the school and pupils were engaged in Arts Award and also if the school was looking to obtain Arts Mark.

We were then willing to make sure our offer was bespoke to their needs and that we captured all evidence and testimonial to support these objectives. It was made explicit to each school we would be happy to commit additional time and resources to help achieve these outcomes, including staff support and guidance, talking with Trinity, testimonials or evidence and supporting arts displays of all created work. Unfortunately none of the settings we visited were engaged in either Arts Mark or Arts Award which meant our offer was not taken up in this way.

Each workshop was co-facilitated enabling observations of group dynamics and the ability for any comments or discussions engaged in by the young people to be noted. At the end of each workshop young people were asked to complete an evaluation form based on each workshop's key learning points.

Outcomes for young people

Workshop One

- 93% said they understood what a stereotype is
- 82% said they understood how gender stereotypes can shape their feelings and behaviour
- 76% said they understood the negative consequences of gender stereotypes

- 67% said they would be able to recognise when a stereotype was being used

Workshop Two

- 87% said they understood what is meant by the term masculinity
- 98% said they understood how gender stereotypes are learnt and reinforced
- 63% said they understood how male gender stereotypes could be a source of bullying behaviour

Workshop Three

- 100% said they understood why friends are important
- 64% said they understood how bravado and banter are used by boys
- 87% understood the negative impact of banter and bully behaviour

Workshop Four

- 63% said that they understood the connection between masculinity and poor mental health outcomes for boys
- 81% said that they understood what is meant by emotional wellbeing
- 92% said they understood ways to promote their emotional wellbeing

Workshop Five

- 76% said they understood the barriers that prevent boys from asking for support
- 88% said they understood that it is okay to ask for help
- 100% said they understood who they would turn to for support

Lasting legacy

When speaking to the young men, either individually or as a group, about the workshops many felt the workshops should continue in their school. As such, schools and youth settings will need to think creatively about how the workshops can be embedded within their settings to maximize their full potential and their long-term impact on boys.

At the time of writing this report, a final draft of the web based resources has been signed off by the Young Person's Advisory Group and waiting for final branding before being disseminated schools and youth settings across East Sussex and beyond.

A number of PHSE Hub training events were delivered to primary (Nov 2018 and Jan 2018) and secondary schools (March 2019) to enable schools (and youth settings) to **respond** effectively to incidents of 'harmful sexual behaviour' and use curriculum-based resources to prevent such incidents from occurring.

Following attendance at these training events practitioners will:

- Understand policies and procedures for responding to and preventing 'harmful sexual behaviour' in school (and youth settings)

- Recognise best practice principles in delivering a 'whole school approach' for reducing 'harmful sexual behaviour' with prevention at its core
- Embed learning immediately using curriculum based materials that explore gender stereotypes, toxic masculinity whilst promoting healthy relationships and emotional resilience amongst young men

These events delivered in collaboration with East Sussex's Equality and Participation Team, PHSE Hub Leads and SWIFT Specialist Family Service.

Training feedback

In total, 47 delegates attended 3 events, with delegates providing additional feedback on resources and how they could be used back in their settings.

- 'Implement group/class work around toxic masculinity/gender stereotyping for Years 5/6'
- 'Look to develop a project around toxic masculinity and how we can incorporate this into our curriculum for the top end of KS2 and secondary'
- 'This course will definitely inform my discussions with the school SLT and ensure we have agreed policies and procedures (school governor)'
- 'Think about my language, do more research on 'what it means to be a man'
- 'Great ideas for PHSE lessons and assemblies and will be reading recommended book'
- 'Create a new lesson for Year 11 around Prejudice Unit i.e. Masculinity and Manosphere'
- 'Gave insight and ideas approaching key issues with young men'
- 'This was an great workshop, the presentation by John Khan was excellent and informative with lots of practical ideas to take back to school'

In October 2017, Priority 1-54 successfully secured funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (Catalyst Funding) to explore the themes of Hate Crime and online sexual harassment on college campuses. There were significant overlaps and recurring themes between both projects, with evidence that many of the negative behaviours engaged in by young men continue into early adulthood and beyond. Priority 1-54 will be looking for further opportunities to combine learning from both these projects and disseminate the findings in Spring 2019.

Conclusions

A small number of schools have approached Priority 1-54 within and outside of East Sussex, with a view to delivering the workshop program where there are ongoing concerns about boys' attitudes and behaviours towards girls and female members of staff. However, funding the workshops remains a notable barrier for many schools.

The purpose of this project was to offer young men a safe space to explore the notion of (toxic) masculinity outside the confines of

the 'what it means to be man', the sexual harassment of girls and young women and poor mental health outcomes associated with being a young man.

Although many of the issues discussed within the workshops were addressed within some of the schools' existing PHSE curriculum, evidence suggests that these opportunities appear to diminish as young people get older, arguably at a time when they need it most. As such, those taking part in the project valued the opportunity to discuss these issues in much more depth, outside of their classroom settings.

A number of young men felt that the workshops should continue or opened up to others in their school but the extent to which these would be attended voluntarily by young men needs further exploration.

Given the positive feedback from young men and schools, schools and youth settings need to think about how to embed the workshops into their wider wellbeing offer to young men.

Finally, we would like to thank all the young people who took part in the project, practitioners in the schools and colleges and Hastings Clinical Commissioning Group with Artsworld, for funding the project.