



Men4Respect is a male mentoring and education program designed to enable young men to challenge violence-supportive attitudes and actions with other young men and boys. The aim is to build understanding of more positive forms of masculinity – to overcome the culture of male dominance and instead build gender equality and a valuing of diversity.

The Men4Respect program emerged out of, and is a companion program to R4Respect, a peer to peer respectful relationships education program.

The Program Manual was developed with support from Presentation Sisters and the Queensland Government Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.



## Program design

The program is delivered through educational sessions and group activities.

### Learning goals:

- To better understand the facts about gender inequality and violence
- To have a clear idea of different expectations we have of gender
- To understand how rigid views of masculinity can be harmful
- To reflect on positive ways to be male and healthy forms of masculinity.

## Pilot evaluation

The Men4Respect program was piloted across three sites to test the efficacy of the program and identify any areas for improvement.

- Beenleigh State High School
- Marsden State High School
- Logan Youth Justice Centre.

## Implementation

The program was designed to be delivered across four sessions over 10 weeks. However, implementation was condensed due to coronavirus.

**Attendance varied at each site across sessions.**

**39 young men and boys aged 12-17 participated in at least one session.**

**4 in 10 were from Indigenous or culturally diverse backgrounds.**

## Key outcomes

*The pilot program successfully:*

- challenged commonly held myths about gender-based violence
- promoted positive attitudinal change
- built skills and confidence to challenge disrespectful behaviours.

Participants expressed positive change in relation to attitudes towards control and consent within interpersonal relationships.

**16%** initially agreed that “men should take control in relationships”. This dropped to 0% after participating.

**35%** initially agreed that “if a woman sends a nude image to her partner, she is partly responsible if he shares it without her permission”. This dropped to 10% after participating.

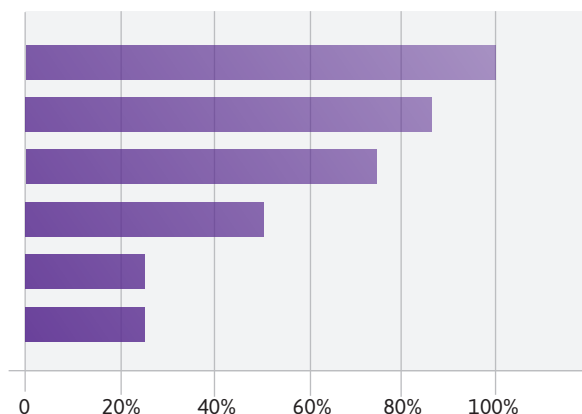
After participation, the majority of young men and boys reported they were willing and able to challenge disrespectful behaviours:

**70%** of participants felt they knew how to challenge disrespectful behaviours

**50%** said they would challenge disrespectful behaviours.

Behavioural intent is a significant predictor of behaviour. After the program, participants most commonly intend to treat everyone with respect and be a positive male role model

Treat everyone with respect  
Be a positive male role model  
Share learnings with others  
Challenge disrespectful behaviours  
Promote gender equality  
Follow Men4Respect on social media



## Participant feedback

Participant feedback on the program was positive, describing activities as “fun”, “challenging” and “energising”.

Key take-aways were around ways of being, including how to:

- be respectful
- be a better man
- be confident
- be more trusting
- not be a bully
- not be mean to people.



## Success factors

The Men4Respect program appears to stimulate attitudinal change and promote behaviour change in a number of ways:

- **Building rapport** - effective strategies include icebreakers, music, sharing a meal, and use of storytelling techniques such as yarnning circles.
- **Providing information** - information generates knowledge, which shapes attitudes, and can lead to behaviour change.
- **Building an emotional connection** - participants are encouraged to stand in the shoes of others. Activating empathy enables a deeper understanding of the issues than just facts and figures alone.
- **Sharing experiences** - helps to create a sense of emotional and cultural safety that enables participants to open up and to connect workshop content to personal experience.
- **Role-modelling** - ambassadors challenge participants on particular views or behaviours, demonstrating for young men how to challenge disrespectful behavior when they witness it.
- **Promoting reflection** - there was evidence of increased conscious deliberation as participants questioned their assumptions, which is associated with more durable attitudinal change in the long-term.
- **Tailoring the program** - the pace and delivery of program material was adapted to each audience at different sites.
- **Reinforcing messages** - education sessions are coupled with social media engagement to reinforce messaging and enhance the influence of the program.

## Need for further engagement

The research identified some existing knowledge gaps and concerning attitudes, relative to population norms, highlighting the importance of targeting young men and boys as key stakeholders and change makers, especially while they are still in their formative years and can be positively influenced by male role models. For example, prior to participation:

**35%** of participants agreed that “*violence against women is common*”, compared to 57% of young men nationally.

**40%** of participants agreed that “*men mostly or more often commit acts of domestic violence*”, compared to 52% of young men nationally.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ANROWS. (2017). Young Australians’ attitudes to violence against women and gender equality: Findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS). Retrieved from <https://www.anrows.org.au/research-program/ncas/>

For more information contact [communications@yfs.org.au](mailto:communications@yfs.org.au)