

# PEACE Program Boys' Group Curriculum & Facilitation Guide



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BC Society of  
Transition Houses



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## 1. Introduction

This document is designed for PEACE Program counsellors and group facilitators supporting boys and young men with experiences of violence in multi-week psycho-educational boy's groups. This curriculum is for PEACE Programs throughout British Columbia to facilitate groups where boys and young men can talk about their experiences in a non-judgemental space and consider healthy relationships and learn about themselves and their peers through the group experience.

## 2. Curriculum Overview

The boys' group curriculum presented in this facilitator guide provides PEACE Program counsellors and group facilitators<sup>1</sup> with a resource for exploring relevant issues with boys in a group context. It provides PEACE Program counsellors practical curriculum tools for facilitating boys' groups within the suggested group framework outlined in the [PEACE Program Toolkit](#)<sup>i</sup>.

In addition, this document is intended to support boys navigating their experiences of violence, and explore their strengths, safety and healthy relationships. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that group experiences for youth are effective, and in some instances, more effective than individual sessions.<sup>ii, iii</sup> PEACE Program boys' groups aim to nurture and reinforce positive peer relationships, healthy self-expression, open communication and the development

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this curriculum and facilitator guide we use of language of PEACE Program counsellor and group facilitator interchangeably and recognise that PEACE Program counsellors may co-facilitate groups with someone who is not a PEACE Program counsellor.



of life skills. This document combines group work theory with practical suggestions for building relationships and sharing real life experiences with the boys themselves through discussion, communication, art making, play, nature and friendship. This format offers a way to engage boys and young men in a real life experience, which challenges societal norms and predominant images of masculinity. This curriculum can be applied and adapted to a variety of contexts, and age ranges.

This curriculum consists of the following sections:

- Curriculum Overview
- Group Development
- Considerations for Facilitators
- Session Overview: Creating Routines
- Curriculum Topic Outlines

Throughout this curriculum, you will find references to sample group activities, resources and references. These are contained in the Appendices and divided into two sections.

- Appendix A: Curriculum Resources & Worksheets
- Appendix B: References





### 3. Group Development

All groups change and evolve over time. Knowledge of group development patterns can support PEACE Program counsellors to discern if issues that arise are a product of individual challenges or group developmental issues. In addition, knowledge of the group developmental process can aid with the planning of groups and the timely application of appropriate themes and curriculum content. There are four major assumptions underpinning all models of group development<sup>iv</sup>.

1. Groups develop in regular and observable patterns allowing for predictions of future group behavior.
2. The same developmental features of the group are evident within most groups. For example, conflicts generally arise in the second stage of group development and knowing this may help facilitators prepare accordingly. However, it is also understood that there is variation to this standard norm.
3. Later stages of group development are dependent on the successful negotiation of earlier stages of development. It is also important to note that development in certain groups may not always be linear or graduated.
4. Over time, groups manifest increased complexity and higher capacity to function, but all groups will on occasion revert back to earlier stages of development.

The first well-established model of group development was designed by Tuckman<sup>v</sup> (1965) and has continued to provide the backdrop for group development theory in a wide variety of educational and therapeutic contexts. Tuckman's model of group development exists in five stages titled; forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. The language for these



stages can be altered, however, this model of group development is a relevant tool for anyone looking to grow their toolbox for effectively facilitating groups.

For the context of the PEACE Program boys' groups, we have utilized the language reflected in the [PEACE Program Toolkit](#). Tuckman's (1965) group development stages are in brackets as a reference.

### STAGE 1 – ORIENTATION (FORMING)

In the forming stage, dependency on the group leader is high while the group participants' focus will primarily be on issues of group safety and inclusion. Group participants may be experiencing anxiety, ambivalence and uncertainty about the group. The common approach at this stage of the group is to keep things simple and avoid controversy. Serious topics and feelings are often avoided at this stage, although participants may engage in tentative self-disclosure and sharing.

The major objective at this stage of group development is to engage participants and clarify that everyone understands the group's purpose and the group's guidelines for safety and inclusivity. In addition, this stage of group development allows space for interpersonal relationships to grow and individuals can begin to identify commonalities between each other within the group. For groups to grow from this stage to the next, participants begin to show comfort with non-threatening topics of conversation and open themselves to the possibility of conflict.



## STAGE 2 – TESTING BOUNDARIES AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING (STORMING)

This stage is characterised by challenges around issues such as power and control. Specifically, conflicts may emerge between group participants at this stage and effective leadership has the potential to help reinforce openness, trust and group solidarity. Many theories about group development view the difficulties experienced in this stage as an essential pathway to the emergence of genuine group cohesion and cooperation.

The major objective at this stage is to support group participants to move from a ‘testing and proving’ mentality to a problem-solving mentality<sup>vi</sup>. The role of healthy group leadership is to help to reaffirm the group’s purpose and to remind participants of their common goals. In order to move onto the next stage of group evolution, it may be necessary to address individual behaviour that is not congruent with group goals. Ultimately effective group leadership can help support individuals to listen and understand each other in ways that respects diversity and accepts inevitable differences in personalities and opinions within the group.

## STAGE 3 – COOPERATION AND COMMUNICATION (NORMING)

At this stage, group participants arrive at a consensus of group tasks and working norms emerge which hold space for each individual group member to effectively learn and share their voice. All members’ contributions to the group are welcome and celebrated and there is an opportunity for learning new ideas, an openness to creative ideas and new ways of approaching familiar situations.





Leadership at this stage can guide a deepening of relationships within the group and a continued modelling of boundaries, routines and trust building. In the context of the PEACE Program, the main group learning objectives during this stage of the group are delivered through activities. Often at this stage, facilitators work to encourage problem solving, effective communication and learning through a variety of mediums and opportunities.

#### STAGE 4 – HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS (PERFORMING)

This stage is characterized by a mature and productive group process where individual differences are expressed. The group has the capacity to focus on meaningful work and the group participants engage effectively with difficult topics. As a group facilitator, it is important to know that not all groups reach this stage of function.

If groups arrive at this stage, all group participants have a sense of belonging and are able to be both task oriented and people oriented. Group morale is high. The task function of this stage is problem solving and learning. Depending on the length of the program, the anticipation of the group ending has an impact on how long groups are able to remain in this stage of high group function.

#### STAGE 5 – CLOSING (ADJOURNING)

This stage of group involves a planned conclusion that includes the recognition of participation, group achievements and an opportunity for members to say personal goodbyes. As the ending approaches, groups may experience upheaval, sadness, anxiety and anger. As a group



facilitator, it is important to acknowledge the challenges of a group ending and prepare for the emotions, which may or may not emerge.

Group facilitators may choose to facilitate a review of the time spent as a group and create realistic ways to stay connected (if this is reasonable). In addition, it is important to create opportunities for group participants to prepare for their future, independent of group participation, while simultaneously having moments to appreciate & celebrate the group experience they have shared.



## 4. Considerations for Facilitators

### SET-UP & PREPARATION TO RUN A BOY'S GROUP

- A. **Co-Facilitation** –Where possible, PEACE Program groups should be run by two facilitators. This allows facilitators to demonstrate and model a healthy relationship, offer a shared voice of leadership within the group and allows space for individual support if challenging behaviors and emotions arise that need additional attention. If a co-facilitator is not an option, facilitators can consider limiting group size and choosing curriculum topics that feel safe and manageable for a single group leader to manage. As an alternative option, facilitators can choose a location where another adult is in the building in case support is needed and/or welcome a second adult to join on days when more difficult topics are being shared and discussed.
- B. **Group Location and Space** – Consider the size of the group space and the accessibility of the location for the group participants. Facilitators may consider using a location at, or near, a school to increase access for children and youth who are eligible for the group but face barriers related to transportation.
- C. **Age of Participants** – Prior to deciding on the age of the participants, PEACE Program counsellors can consider the age of the children and youth on their waitlist and/or looking to access the PEACE Program. Based on input from PEACE Programs around the province, groups are most appropriate for children 6 years old and up. However, PEACE Programs may choose to include some younger boys in groups after building rapport and assessing group readiness through a few individual sessions.
- D. **Check Liability** – Facilitators are encouraged to check with their organization to ensure that the liability insurance covers them at the location you are planning to run the



group. Refer to the agency policy with respect to obtaining informed written consent for group services. See [A.1 – Consent Form](#) for a sample consent form for group.

- E. **Group Size** – For the purposes of this Curriculum, group sizes of 3 – 8 members are recommended. However, it is important to recognize that there will be times when groups will have 3 or less participants and times when groups will have more than 8 participants. For instance, if PEACE Program counsellors are newer to running groups, live in a rural setting, or don't have many boys interested in participating there is value and benefits in running smaller groups.
- F. **Length of Group** – Group length can vary from 4 – 12 weeks depending on the time of year, access to space and availability of the PEACE Program counsellor and group participants.
- G. **Community Support & Local Networking** – Many PEACE Programs around the province have nourished relationships with local school boards, community services and youth centres as a way to increase awareness and access to the PEACE Program. This networking can create opportunities for collaboration, referrals and shared resources and programming, which can be an asset particularly in smaller communities.
- H. **Paperwork & Consent** – See the [PEACE Program Toolkit](#) for referral, intake, consent & documentation forms appropriate for PEACE Program group work (pages 198-229).
- I. **Supplies Needed** – The supplies needed for the different topics, activities and exercises outlined in this curriculum are included in the Curriculum Topic Outlines section of this document. If PEACE Program counsellors have access to a budget for snacks, offering a shared snack when group participants arrive can help to support a smooth transition from school into group. Snacks also create the foundation for relaxed conversation and a natural transition to the group opening each week. Some PEACE Program counsellors



have successfully approached local grocery stores to donate a snack budget for PEACE Program groups.

## GROUP READINESS AND SELECTION PROCESS

The process of group selection is ongoing. Some suggestions from the [PEACE Program Toolkit](#) (p. 51), for considering a child or youth's readiness for PEACE Program groups include:

- Are support systems in place? The non-offending caregiver must support the child or youth and be willing to support them through issues that surface in group. Children and youth with separation anxiety may find group difficult.
- Is there motivation to attend? Or is the child or youth being pressured to attend? They should feel a sense of control over the decision. Motivation is the single most significant factor in the success of any group.
- A child or youth with severe behavioral challenges or aggression could have difficulty in a group setting. Consider working with them individually.
- A child or youth who has experienced repeated acts of severe violence over many years may have significant needs that may be better suited to individual counselling.

In addition to the considerations above, it may be appropriate to do a few individual sessions with a child or youth to build trust, gauge interest and determine if the group is appropriate for a particular individual before inviting them to join the group.





## DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN GROUPS

Recommendations from PEACE Program counsellors with experience running boys groups frequently include comments like ‘get to know them,’ ‘get interested in who they are and what they like to do,’ and ‘be honestly interested and listen to them.’

Sonia Manhas developed five purposeful actions that assist facilitators in the development of collaborative relationships when creating groups.<sup>vii</sup> Her work was also used by Natalie Clarke et al.<sup>viii</sup> as a guide for facilitators of girl’s anti-violence groups.

Sonia Manhas’ recommendations below offer PEACE Program counsellors tools to lead effective boys groups and develop meaningful relationships within the group environment.

- A. *Conscious Intent*: The role of conscious intent allows PEACE Program counsellors to be real with the group about their desire to support the individuals and the group through the process of learning about topics that are sometimes challenging and hard to talk about. In this way, PEACE Program counsellors play the role of teacher, co-learner and supporter.
- B. *Practical Application of Power Sharing*: In the context of group facilitation, the importance of sharing power with the boys and young men is paramount. By doing this, PEACE Program counsellors are space holders of safety and learning, and create spaces for the group participants to share and express their power within the group. As an example, PEACE Program counsellors can invite participation in the creation of group



guidelines and rules during the first session to increase buy-in and a shared support for the positive group environment.

- C. *Open Perspective:* This action relates to the quality of listening that group facilitators offer to participants, as well as the PEACE Program counsellor's capacity to let go of preconceptions about who the group participants are and how the group will unfold.
- D. *Honesty:* Young people identify the positive impact of adults who are 'truth tellers' in their lives<sup>ix</sup>. Group facilitators who speak with honesty about issues that are difficult to speak about invite young people to engage with them, develop their natural voice and a healthy critical understanding of the world. The academic research and writing of Carol Gilligan focused on feminist philosophy and moral ethics, identifies the positive influence facilitators can have when youth believe them to be 'truth tellers.'<sup>xxi</sup>
- E. *Self-Reflection:* According to Manhas, this step is key and serves as a relevant tool for group facilitators. Self-Reflection in this context is the ability of facilitators to debrief and reflect on their own experience in the group. According to Manhas, this practice of self-reflection is a key component of deepening the relationship with children and youth. In a way, self-reflection is a listening skill, which allows the facilitator to digest the ways the group experience is affecting them. Allowing this reality to emerge supports the development of real relationships and opens facilitators to truly listen to the group and become an ally for the boys in their learning and development. As a note, this process of self-reflection can be done in the form of a debrief after each group session as a way to review what emerged.



## 5. Session Overview: Creating Routines

Consider creating a reliable weekly routine for group sessions. This can enhance engagement and create time for curriculum topics to be shared and reflected upon. Routines support feelings of safety and allow time for community building. They can help group facilitators to frame the days' curriculum topic in a way that can be digested and absorbed.

The outline below can be used as a general guideline for the flow of weekly group sessions and is based on group sessions that run from 40 – 90 minutes in length.

- a) Arrivals and Group Opening – 10-20 minutes
- b) Curriculum Topic of the Day – 20-50 minutes
- c) Group Closing – 10-20 minutes.

PEACE Program counsellors can create a way of opening and closing each group session that is consistent each week. Some ideas for how to start and finish group sessions each week are listed below. All suggested activities listed throughout the curriculum and their age appropriateness reflect the age groups utilized in the PEACE Program Toolkit (6-8; 9-12; 13-18).

As a starting point, boys' group facilitators may choose one activity from each list or choose to weave together a few from the list provided. Consider keeping opening and closing moments rich in presence and less focused on curriculum. PEACE Program counsellors can use the start of their group sessions to acknowledge the traditional territory where the group gathers and by giving participants an opportunity to arrive and feel safe being together. At the end of each session PEACE Program counsellors can prioritize time for reflection and digestion of the discussions and emotions which may have unfolded.



## ARRIVALS AND GROUP OPENINGS

- **Snack time** (All Ages): As mentioned previously, there are many benefits of providing a snack at the beginning of the group session, including providing a smooth transition from where participants are coming from and into the group environment. Creating a snack plate for each group participant helps to eliminate the food frenzy which sometimes happens with children and food. It is also a way to minimize germ sharing and ensure each participant can enjoy their snack.
- **Light a candle** (All Ages): Candles and campfires have been used for generations to symbolize a place of gathering. If it is safe, lighting a candle can be a simple and effective routine to share each week as a way of indicating that group has started. Facilitators would close the circle by blowing out the candle. If candles are not appropriate for the group, facilitators might consider dimming the lights slightly for one-minute at the start of group. Shifting the light in the room can be a subtle and effective way to gather the groups' attention as it begins.
- **Coloring** (All Ages): When age appropriate, provide some blank paper and/or some coloring pages that allow for coloring in the lines. Group participants may choose to keep their weekly art in a folder which they can take home at the end of the group.
- **Paper airplanes** (All Ages): Provide paper and welcome the creation of paper airplanes. Experiment with various ways of making things fly. This can be a really fun way to break the ice within boys' groups.
- **Nature walk** (All ages): Go on a short walk when the group arrives. Each week facilitators can give the group something to do or focus on while they are walking. List 5 sounds you hear on your walk. What is the quietest thing you hear? Find something from nature and bring it back to the group circle. Bring trash bags and pick up trash together.



- **Playdough molding** (Ages 6 – 8 & 9-12): Offer each group member a ball of playdough. Each week give participants a few minutes to mold something out of their ball. If participants want, they can give their creation a name. Go around the circle and do a group check-in. As a part of the check-in, invite participants to share their creation.
- **Pipe cleaner shapes** (All Ages): Offer each group member a few pipe cleaners. Each week give participants a few minutes to create something out of their pipe cleaners. PEACE Program counsellors can give the group a prompt. For example, “create something that you did this week” or “tell a story with your pipe cleaners”. PEACE Program counsellors may also leave the options open. Participants may choose to share what they have made in the circle or they may let their creation speak for itself.
- **Circle check-in** (All Ages): Orient in a circle and invite group participants to share something relevant that may have happened this week and/or give the group a prompt for the circle check-in. Prompts can include, ‘What is something you are grateful for this week?’ ‘What color was your week?’ ‘If you were an animal today, what animal would you be?’ ‘Tell us one story from your week.’

Depending on the group, it can be helpful to have tools to support a sharing of the space. In particular, if there are participants who take up a lot of space, facilitators can keep the circle check-in concise by using a timer and giving each participant a maximum time limit (e.g., 1-2 minutes per participant) to check in so the voices are shared evenly. If every participant and PEACE Program counsellor takes up 2 minutes of time, depending on group size, the group opening will be close to 20 minutes.

It is important for facilitators to read their group and create a boundary for the circle time, which supports participants’ attention span. However, every week will be different, and exceptions can be made when an individual needs time to share something. In addition, it may be helpful for facilitators to remind participants that they





are welcome to reach out to them one-on-one if they really need to talk about something that requires more time.

## GROUP CLOSINGS

- **Circle check-in** (All Ages): Orient in a circle and use a talking stick to give each group member a voice in the closing moments of the group. Facilitators may use a question or prompt related to the curriculum topic discussed that day, or they may choose to use a question that relates to what comes after group. As an example, facilitators could ask, 'what will you have for dinner tonight?' or 'what is something kind someone did for you today?' If the group has had a full session and facilitators have already debriefed the curriculum topic, it can be nice to keep the closing moments simple and on the surface as a way to practice smooth endings and transitional moments.
- **Guided breathing relaxation** (All Ages): Invite group participants to find a quiet place to sit or lie down where everyone agrees not to disturb each other. Movement and stillness are welcome as long as participants are not disruptive to others. Use a gong, chime or instrument to encourage listening. As an option, facilitators can invite group participants to allow themselves to simply notice their breathing. If it feels good, continue and if participants don't like it facilitators can ensure they know participating is simply an option.

PEACE Program counsellors may want to guide participants through some breaths to help with focus or simply give them some time to be quiet and still. This may be just 1-5 minutes long. Often children and youth are averse to relaxation at first and it is generally ineffective if these exercises are forced. If it is shared as an option and offered each week, facilitators may notice that participants become more familiar and at ease



with it. With rambunctious groups, it can be helpful to frame the relaxation as a siesta, or a nap and it could be done outside if the weather and space allows.

- **Blow out the candle** (All Ages). Depending on the age of group participants, this process can be done by the facilitator, as a whole group or each week someone different from the group could do it.
- **Dance party** (All Ages): Put on some music and invite free movement as long as the group is able to manage keeping space and respecting each other's bodies. Take into account that this type of closing can leave group participants energized and may not be appropriate if they have to return to a classroom after group.
- **Cleaning up together** (All Ages): Reorganizing the space and putting supplies away can be a healthy way to support the transitional moment of the group ending each week.
- **Repeat the opening activity as a closing activity**: Some individuals and groups do very well with repetition. There may be an activity that works well for the group and holds the space in a way that assists the group participants to transition smoothly at the beginning and the ending of the group (e.g., check in/check out; guided relaxation).



## 6. Curriculum Topic Outlines

The following tables of curriculum topic outlines are intended to provide PEACE Program counsellors with a psycho-educational guide for facilitating boy's groups. The curriculum topics have been placed into three sections which align with the stages of group development presented in Section 3 of this document:

- Orientation and Relationship Building (Forming & Storming);
- Communication and Healthy Relationships (Norming & Performing); and,
- Closing (Adjourning).

To support the structure and overall purpose of the group and to respect where the group participants are at, within each of the sections of the curriculum, facilitators can choose to share the topics in any order. Some days the group may cover two curriculum topics and another day the group may spend more time with opening and closing activities and simply reviewing the material covered the previous week. Certain groups will naturally gravitate to certain topics and facilitators can use and adapt these outlines in any way that suits the interests, themes and energy level of the particular group they are working with. In addition, with all of these topics, it is important to follow the pace and comfort level of the group<sup>xii</sup>. Sessions can be modified, and topics can end at any time.

A facilitator's ability to adapt to the needs of the group and share curriculum topics in a timely way, is as important as how many topics are covered through the duration of the group. Doing this effectively is, in itself, a way for a facilitator to teach participants about listening skills and valuing the needs of the group. In a subtle way, the experience of really being listened to is powerful, encourages feelings of safety and enhances the overall learning environment.



## ORIENTATION AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES

The curriculum topics in this section are designed to be shared within the first 1-3 group sessions that are focused on orientation and relationship building. In particular, the first two topics (Confidentiality Review, Safety & Group Guidelines) must be shared in the first group session and facilitators may choose to review these regularly, when needed, or at the start of every group session. The other three topics can be shared in any order and used to support the early stages of group development.

| <u>Curriculum Topic</u>                              | <u>Goals</u>   | <u>Age Group</u> |
|--|--|------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>Confidentiality Review</u></a>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To support group cohesion through ensuring participants understand the concept of confidentiality. What is confidentiality?' and 'Why is it important?'</li></ul> <p><b>** This curriculum topic must be completed during the first group session.**</b></p> | All Ages         |
| <a href="#"><u>Safety &amp; Group Guidelines</u></a> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To invite input from group participants that supports the creation of a safe environment for everyone.</li><li>To introduce the concept of a symbol of safety.</li></ul>   | All Ages         |



|  |  |                   |
|--|--|-------------------|
|  | <b>** This curriculum topic must be completed during the first group session.**</b>  |                   |
| <a href="#">Symbol of Safety</a>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To give group participants time to reflect on a thing, place, activity or event that gives them comfort &amp; safety.</li></ul>                                    | All Ages          |
| <a href="#">Trust &amp; Friendship</a> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To build trust and group morale by encouraging the deepening of relationships and giving boys an opportunity to have fun, be creative and play together.</li></ul> | All Ages          |
| <a href="#">Fears</a>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To support group participants to reflect on things that make them feel nervous and invite them to share their fears with other group participants.</li></ul>       | Ages 9-12 & 13-18 |

### **CONFIDENTIALITY REVIEW**

**Goal:** To support group cohesion through ensuring participants understand the concept of confidentiality. What is confidentiality?’ and ‘Why is it important?’

**Materials:** None

**Time:** 10 minutes





Taking the time with the group to discuss confidentiality and its limitations is required with all PEACE Program participants. PEACE Program counsellors can review pages 66-68 in the [Peace Program Toolkit](#)<sup>xiii</sup> for program standards and expectations.

It is best practice for PEACE Program counsellors to explain confidentiality to participants before they join the group and then address it in detail with the group at the start of the first group session. In addition, confidentiality can be revisited briefly at the start of each group session and during discussions where group participants are sharing personal stories as a reminder of how imperative it is that the group values and respects the privacy of all participants.

In the group context, beyond the professional requirement, ensuring confidentiality is a relevant and supportive way to encourage group cohesion and trust amongst children and youth. Confidentiality with all ages can be described as ‘what happens while we are in group stays in our group.’ Keeping it simple, concise and clear is effective with this message. Asking group participants to say the word out loud and opening the circle to see if there are any questions about confidentiality are both important strategies for ensuring the concept has time to be understood.

### **SAFETY AND GROUP GUIDELINES**

**Goal:** To invite input from group participants that supports the creation of a safe environment for everyone.

**Materials:** White board or chart paper and markers

**Time:** 20 minutes.



The issue of establishing group trust and safety for children and youth who have experienced violence is paramount as a foundation for healthy group sharing and individual relationships within the group.<sup>xiv</sup> In order to do this, facilitators will work to engage all participants in the process of articulating what it means to be a 'safe' group and create a list of guidelines or group rules to support the group experience.

Providing a space for group participants to develop group guidelines and share their needs can support them to feel safe and comfortable. Take the time to ask each group member about what they need from others to feel safe and relaxed in the group experience. PEACE Program counsellors can write down everyone's ideas and also contribute additional guidelines that are important to the safety of the group. Facilitators can help bridge the gap between understanding each other's needs and supporting the group to feel safe, welcome and accepted. As an example, a member of the group may communicate that they need 'everyone to be nice.' The facilitator can then choose to add 'kindness' to the group guidelines. As much as possible, it is helpful to frame the group guidelines using positive language. Where necessary, using stronger language like 'NO swearing,' can be effective as long as the general trend of the guidelines leans towards encouraging language.

A few useful guidelines that facilitators may consider adding to the group guidelines include<sup>xv</sup>:

1. No mocking or ridiculing of any other member of the group.
2. No interruptions or negative comments while somebody else is speaking.
3. Respect other people's contributions as you would like them to respect your contributions.



Facilitators may also add guidelines that are location specific. For example, ‘Group participants will stay inside the building at all times unless given permission to leave.’

As a final note, after everyone has shared and listened to each other’s needs and the list of group guidelines is feeling suitable and thorough for the group, facilitators can let participants know that they will revisit the list at the start of the second session and that the list can always be added to. This list of group guidelines can help support the navigation of boundaries and healthy relationships in future sessions and it can be posted on a white board or large sheet of paper which is visible in the space where the group gathers. The group guidelines should be negotiated and agreed upon by all members of the group. Facilitators might even choose to get everyone to sign their name on the list created.

### **SYMBOL OF SAFETY**

**Goal:** To give group participants time to reflect on a thing, place, activity or event that gives them comfort & safety.

**Materials:** Pens or paints and paper or clay.

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

Introduce the concept of the symbol of safety and invite participants to begin to think about a personally significant symbol, place or thing that represents safety or the absence of danger in their life. If this is difficult for group participants, PEACE Program counsellors may invite participants to think of a pleasant memory, or imagine an experience, thing, place or activity that would provide them with comfort and safety. Once participants have decided on their symbol, facilitators can invite them to draw, paint or mold it out of clay. Once complete, participants are invited to share their creation with the group.



## **TRUST AND FRIENDSHIP**

**Goal:** To build trust and group morale by encouraging the deepening of relationships and giving boys an opportunity to have fun, be creative and play together.

**Materials:** See specific materials included in the descriptions for the different activities listed below.

**Time:** 10-40 minutes

**Note:** There are 3 separate activity ideas provided for this curriculum topic. Facilitators may choose to use one or more in a single session, or over a few sessions, depending on time available and the age of the group participants.

a) **Rope Activity** (All Ages):

*Materials:* Rope

Sit in a circle around a rope. Ensure the group is evenly distributed. Invite everyone to grab a portion of the rope that is directly in front of them. Invite everyone to stand up without taking their hands off the rope on the count of 3. Once standing, everyone sits down together without letting go of the rope. Repeat a second time and challenge the group to do it silently.

*Debrief:* What does this exercise tell us about being in a group? If anyone struggled to get up, how did the group respond? Well-functioning groups do their best to hold each other up.



b) **Move If** (All Ages):

*Materials:* None

This activity requires an open space to move around and welcomes participants to learn about each other through movement and play. Invite the group to spread out in a circle with one person standing in the centre. The person standing says ‘move if....’ and provides a description. Everyone who matches the description stands up and has to find a new place to stand/sit. Whoever is left in the middle gets to ask, ‘move if...’

Some examples of descriptions group facilitators can use are:

- Move if you have 2 or more siblings.
- Move if you are an only child.
- Move if you go to \_\_\_\_\_ school.
- Move if you have two homes.
- Move if your favorite color is \_\_\_\_\_.
- Move if you have a garden.

The goal of this game is to learn some new things about each individual in the group through a balance of movement, play and sharing. It is unique because group participants can share without speaking, which works well for individuals who are less vocal and supports overall group energy and fun. If the group really enjoys it, facilitators may choose to play it again during another session as a warm-up.





c) **Life Journey Maps** (Ages 9-12 & 13-18):

*Materials:* Large sheets of paper, markers, magazines, scissors

Provide each group participant with a large sheet of paper and some markers. Invite group participants to work by themselves to make a map of their life journey, including key events, incidents, stories, places and people. Welcome the use of drawings, symbols, words and even cut out images from a magazine. Invite group participants to select moments that feel important to their life story and that they feel comfortable sharing. Begin with birth and use the whole of the page to depict the path of their life. Reinforce for participants that they are in control of exactly how much they want to share.

This activity may take two sessions as PEACE Program counsellors may choose to invite group participants to share their life maps in pairs and then debrief within the whole group. These maps can be returned to later in the group when exploring concepts such as masculinity, emotions, self-care and healthy relationships.

*Note:* This activity may not be suitable for some groups. As an example, facilitators may choose not to share it if there are challenging group dynamics emerging and/or if there are individuals in the group who may not seem ready for this amount of self-reflection.

## **FEARS**

**Goal:** To support group participants to reflect on things that make them feel nervous and invite them to share their fears with other group participants.

**Materials:** White board or chart paper & markers.

**Time:** 20 minutes



This exercise promotes healthy group development by encouraging honesty and giving group participants an opportunity to interact in smaller groups. Invite group participants to form pairs or small groups of 3. Each participant is invited to talk about each of the questions listed below for two or three minutes. Ensure that the group participants understand that they do not have to share and there is never an expectation that they do share if they do not feel comfortable. There are no wrong answers to these questions and all amounts of sharing are valid and welcome.

- a. What frightens me?
- b. What do fearful feelings feel like?
- c. What do I do when I am feeling frightened and can't show it?
- d. How do I pretend not to be frightened?

Bring the group back into a circle and open the conversation up for sharing about themes, ideas and difficulties that emerged. Encouraging discussion and honesty about fears can support group cohesion, depth and safety within the group environment.



## COMMUNICATION AND HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES

The curriculum topics in this section cover a variety of topics relevant to the lives of boys, their experiences of violence and daily interactions and influences, both in person and online. The activities can be delivered in any order and facilitators are encouraged to consider all aspects of the group including relevant topics of interest, timing and group readiness. Depending on how long group sessions are, facilitators may have space to complete two topics in one day. Facilitators may also find that a particular topic is especially relevant for the group. If this happens, they may choose to repeat a curriculum topic or expand on the curriculum provided in this document to meet the interests and needs of the group.

Facilitators should be aware that some of the curriculum topics contain exercises which may expose vulnerabilities in a way that may be triggering. As facilitators assess the group to be open and ready for various topics, they should be prepared to navigate the exercises slowly and take extra time where necessary. The curriculum is designed to be used in an order that best suits the needs of an individual group. A few curriculum topic outlines make note of a suggested pre-requisite topic and facilitators can make note of these as suggestions but not requirements.

There is no need to complete all the curriculum topics. Priority should be given to the overall group experience rather than curriculum content completion. As a final note, a co-facilitator is highly recommended to support group management and individual needs for these curriculum topics.



| <u>Curriculum</u><br><u>Topic</u>                               | <u>Goals</u>  | <u>Age Group</u>  |
|---|---|-------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>Listening &amp; Communicating</u></a>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To give group participants an opportunity to practice listening and communicating with peers.</li></ul>   | All Ages          |
| <a href="#"><u>Feelings</u></a>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To discover, name and embody feelings.</li></ul>  | All Ages          |
| <a href="#"><u>Naming the Violence in Our Lives</u></a>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To support group participants to begin the conversation about violence in a way that is relatable and safe for everyone.</li><li>To discuss the definition of violence as a group and set the stage for a dialogue about various types of violence and relationship violence.</li></ul> | Ages 9-12 & 13-18 |
| <a href="#"><u>Stereotypes &amp; Sexuality in the Media</u></a> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To reflect on assumptions that we make based on gender stereotypes in the media and the portrayals of men and women in the world.</li></ul>   | Ages 13-18        |
| <a href="#"><u>Masculinity</u></a>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To help boys recognize the stereotypes of masculine behavior and to reflect on the impacts of male stereotyping in their own lives.</li></ul>   | Age 9-12, & 13-18 |
| <a href="#"><u>Body Awareness &amp; Body Image</u></a>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To support program participants to talk about their bodies and to encourage the exploration of feelings about body image.</li></ul>   | Ages 9-12 & 13-18 |



|  |  |                   |
|--|--|-------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>Boundaries &amp; Self Care</u></a>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To support a better understanding of personal boundaries and the importance of respecting individual differences.</li></ul>  | Ages 6-8          |
| <a href="#"><u>Consent</u></a>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To engage in healthy, open conversation about consent and teaching appropriate language for communicating boundaries with regards to our bodies.</li></ul>   | All Ages          |
| <a href="#"><u>Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships</u></a> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To brainstorm and discuss qualities of a healthy relationship and/or friendship and warning signs of an unhealthy relationship/friendship.</li></ul>   | All Ages          |
| <a href="#"><u>The Power and Control Wheel</u></a>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To explore relationship belief systems and share the power and control wheel.</li></ul>  | Ages 13-18        |
| <a href="#"><u>Emotions in My Body</u></a>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To give group participants tools for identifying anger, sadness and fear in their bodies.</li><li>• To support group participants to become aware of what their bodies are telling them as a tool for managing emotions.</li></ul> | Ages 6-8 & 9-12   |
| <a href="#"><u>Conflict Resolution</u></a>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To offer tools to navigate differences by encouraging healthy conflict resolution strategies.</li></ul>  | Ages 9-12 & 13-18 |
| <a href="#"><u>Social Media &amp; Online Safety</u></a>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To give group participants tools for navigating the online world safely.</li></ul>   | All Ages          |



## **LISTENING & COMMUNICATING**

**Goal:** To give group participants an opportunity to practice listening and communicating with peers.

**Materials:** Room for pairs of group participants to find a quiet space.

**Time:** 10-20 minutes

Begin by inviting the group to brainstorm qualities of a good listener. If facilitators have already done a session on healthy relationships with the group, facilitators may reference the conversation the group had about this as communication and listening are two qualities that often emerge in the conversation about what individuals need to be supported in a healthy relationship.

Invite group participants to get into pairs. Within each pair, invite participants to identify one as partner 1 and the other as partner 2.

Invite partner 1 to speak on a topic of their choice and partner 2 has the job of being a good listener. Partner 1 has 2 minutes (less with the younger age groups) to speak. PEACE Program counsellors can give group participants a topic to speak about if they are not sure, or facilitators can invite them to pick a topic relevant to the group themes that have emerged so far. After partner 1 has had a turn, switch roles – partner 2 will now speak while partner 1 listens.

Once everyone has had a chance to be a speaker and a listener, gather as a group and discuss what was difficult and what was interesting about the exercise. PEACE Program counsellors may help the group notice that some of us are better at talking and some are better at





listening. Both roles are important if we want to engage in healthy relationships and friendships. Knowing when to speak up and when to listen are both very important qualities.

As an add-on, if it seems appropriate, PEACE Program counsellors may choose to ask the group about tone of voice and volume of voice here. How does voice tone and volume influence communication and safety?

## **FEELINGS**

**Goal:** To discover, name and embody feelings.

**Materials:** Large sheets of paper and markers.

**Time:** 5-20 minutes

With younger children (6-8, 9-12), facilitators may choose to start this curriculum topic by reading a book that explores a range of feelings and emotions<sup>2</sup>, such as *“The Feelings Book”* by Todd Parr or *“Whimsy’s Heavy Things”* by Julie Kraulis. This will help the young boys with the next phase of the activity.

In small groups, invite group participants to write down all of the feelings and emotions they can think of. Give them 1-2 minutes. Invite participants to count how many feelings and emotions they came up with and ask each group to read their list out loud. Discuss the lists as a group and ensure that everyone understands what all the words mean.

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<sup>2</sup> Go to the [BCSTH Library catalogue](#) to find more books related to feelings and emotions.



As an add-on, PEACE Program counsellors could divide the group into pairs and invite them to choose one of the feelings without letting any of the other pairs know their choice. Invite them to prepare a mime<sup>3</sup> that reflects the feeling they chose. Inevitably the mime will tell some sort of story, but the main aim is to show the feeling at the heart of the situation. As the pair performs their mime, the rest of the group is an audience and has to guess the feelings that are on display.

### **NAMING THE VIOLENCE IN OUR LIVES**

**Goals:** To support group participants to begin the conversation about violence in a way that is relatable and safe for everyone. To discuss the definition of violence as a group and set the stage for a dialogue about various types of violence and relationship violence.

**Materials:** Open space to move, beads and a jar.

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

*Note:* There are 2 separate activity ideas provided for this curriculum topic. Facilitators may choose to use one or more in a single session, or over a few sessions, depending on time available and the age of the group participants.

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<sup>3</sup> A mime is defined as the “theatrical technique of suggesting action, character, or emotion without words, using only gesture, expression, and movement.”



a) **Naming the Violence in Our Lives** (Ages 9-12 & 13-18):

*Materials:* Beads and a jar

This exercise is designed to support group participants to acknowledge, identify and name the violence that exists in their lives. This can be a difficult thing to do; the violence in our culture has many forms, and lives in many places. Invite the group to name a few places where they encounter violence (e.g., home, school, T.V., movies, music, magazines, newspapers, news, sporting events, community centres, parks, sidewalks, streets). Then as the facilitator reads the list below, the program participants are asked to notice how they feel. (The bead portion of the exercise is done in silence.)

Place a jar in the middle of the circle. Provide all participants with a handful of beads. Invite group participants to place a bead (or a few beads) in the jar if they or someone they know has ever...

- Had their feelings or wishes ignored
- Been put down by an another person
- Been called names and ridiculed
- Not had their secrets kept
- Been ignored
- Been hit
- Been kicked
- Been punched
- Been physically hurt by another person
- Been threatened
- Been afraid because of violence that was around them



- Been bothered by someone on the internet
- Been bothered by someone via texts
- Been bothered by someone via emails
- Been bothered by social media postings about them
- Had their boundaries ignored
- Had someone close to them threaten suicide
- Been pressured to do something that made them uncomfortable
- Been pressured sexually

This exercise is best followed by an exercise related to creating safety, and collectively coming up with group rules and a commitment to a violence-free zone.

**b) Defining Violence (Ages 9-12 & 13-18):**

*Materials:* Tape, labels

Divide the floor space into three sections using tape on the floor or labels on the walls. One location is labeled violent, the second location is labeled non-violent and the third location is labeled unsure. PEACE Program counsellors can read out loud from the list below. As each new word or idea is shared, group participants are invited to go to the place that they feel reflects their view, as per the sections described above. Each time a new word or idea is shared, facilitators can invite a few of the group participants to explain their choice.

List of examples:

- Yelling at someone
- Eating meat
- Ultimate fighting (UFC)



- War
- Receiving a threatening text
- Hearing a racist/sexist joke and saying nothing
- Watching a fight on TV
- Watching a fight at school
- Hockey
- Gossip
- Video games

After spending some time with this exercise, facilitators could read a definition of violence and plant the seeds for a future discussion about the various forms of violence (e.g., physical, mental, emotional, sexual, cyber).

A sample definition of violence from the World Health Organization's report on Violence and Health is quoted below.

*'The intentional use of physical force or power threatened-or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation.'*<sup>xvi</sup>

### **STEREOTYPES & SEXUALITY IN THE MEDIA**

**Goal:** To reflect on the assumptions that we make based on gender stereotypes in the media and portrayals of men and women in the world.



**Materials:** Printed and cut out magazine images of men and women doing various activities. A few powerful examples can be found in [Appendix A.2](#). It's recommended that PEACE Program counsellors build a collection of these images so that they have a variety of images to present.

**Time:** 20-40 minutes

**Recommended Pre-requisite Curriculum Topic:** Listening & Communication

In preparation for this activity, PEACE Program counsellors can cut out and print images of men and women depicted in the media. It is best to print them large enough that they can be passed around and seen easily.

Share a definition of the word stereotype.

*Stereotype (noun): something conforming to a fixed or general pattern especially; a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude or uncritical judgement.<sup>xvii</sup>*

Hand out an image to each member of the group and ask them to look at the image. In a circle, invite participants to share some of their ideas about the way stereotypes are depicted in the image they have been given.

Points for discussion:

- a) How do we arrive at our assumptions? What places, people and things in our lives influence the way we think? Come up with a list together. Examples of places, people and things in our lives that influence us are: home, family, television, internet, peers, teachers, games, magazines, social media, etc...





- b) What do we associate with words such as: male, female, straight, gay, etc.?
- c) Do we recognize when we make assumptions about people we meet simply based on their looks? Have you ever made a comment about someone based on how they looked? Facilitators can acknowledge that we have likely all done this and becoming aware of stereotypes is a way of becoming more aware of how we can treat each other and ourselves better.

As young men, it is important to recognize that whether we like it or not, the media contributes to defining masculinity. Invite group participants to break into small groups and discuss the questions below. Remind the group that these discussions are to be open and supportive with an emphasis on listening to each other rather than a goal of finding a right answer. This practice of listening to each other is, in itself, a tool for challenging norms around masculinity and can be acknowledged.

- a) What do the images in the media tell us about men? What do the images want us to believe? How do the images impact our perceptions of what it means to be a man and what it means to be a woman?
- b) What do the lack of images in the media of gender diverse people say about the media? What is the impact of a lack of images of gender diverse people in the media?
- c) What do advertisers tell us about how women should look and behave?

### **MASCULINITY**

**Goal:** To help boys recognize the stereotypes of masculine behavior and to reflect on the impacts of male stereotyping in their own lives.



**Materials:** A variety of newspapers, magazines, pictures. Large sheets of paper, glue and scissors.

**Time:** 30 minutes

Invite group participants to create a collage under the heading of 'The Typical Man,' or 'The Typical Boy.' The title will depend on the age of the participants in the group. With younger boys, it may be helpful to pre-cut some images and articles out of magazines and newspapers to save time. This activity can be completed individually or in pairs.

When the collage is complete, PEACE Program counsellors can ask group participants to put their collages up on the wall or in a circle and individuals can have an opportunity to look at the images other participants chose. Facilitators may choose to invite the group to reflect and assess the messages of masculinity that are depicted and answer the questions below:

1. What are the main messages about the way men/boys are supposed to behave based on the images in your collage?
2. Do you think your collage shows a fair picture of what men/boys are really like? Why?
3. How do the images of men/boys that you see impact the way you behave?
4. What male qualities are not depicted in your collage?

### **BODY AWARENESS & BODY IMAGE**

**Goal:** To support group participants to talk about their bodies and to encourage the exploration of feelings about body image.

**Materials:** Extra-large roll of paper and markers.



**Time:** 30-40 minutes

Provide each group participant with enough paper so that a partner can draw around the outline of his body. As a slightly simpler alternative facilitators could have them trace a body part such as a hand or a foot. Facilitators can invite participants to use pastels or paint on their body/body part outline if space and time permits. With smaller body parts, individuals could even do a collage with magazine clippings and/or add some artistic expression. When the drawing, creativity and/or collage is complete, facilitators may choose to let the activity speak for itself. The intention behind this activity is to give participants a creative experience of embodiment and have a conversation about it. As an option, facilitators may choose to invite the participants to break into partners and share their experience with the help of the questions below. If facilitators feel like the questions may not be appropriate for their group, it is reasonable to do the activity as a tool for self-reflection and body awareness without requiring participants to talk about it.

- How has your body / body part changed since you were little?
- Can you identify specific growth points?
- Do you over-use or under-use certain parts of your body?

As a closing exercise, facilitators can invite participants who feel comfortable to display their body art. In addition, facilitators may put on some music and offer some free movement, dance or simply running around as way to debrief the embodiment art.



## **BOUNDARIES AND SELF-CARE**

**Goal:** To support a better understanding of personal boundaries and the importance of respecting individual differences.

**Materials:** Open space to move around

**Time:** 10-15 minutes

The group facilitator divides the group into pairs. Each pair stands across the room from one another. One person is invited to start walking towards the other, while the other stands still. The person standing still is examining their boundary. As the person walks towards them, they are invited to say “STOP” when they don’t want them to be any closer. This is a kind of boundary. Ask the group participants to remain in eye contact while they do this. PEACE Program counsellors can normalize that this may feel very silly, and we all feel like giggling when we do this. It is a difficult exercise. Everyone’s boundaries will be different, and at certain parts of the exercise, ask the participants to freeze, look around the room and take note of this.

## **CONSENT**

**Goal:** To engage in healthy, open conversation about consent and teaching appropriate language for speaking about our bodies and communicating boundaries with regards to personal space.

**Materials:** White board and markers

**Time:** 20-40 minutes



Before sharing on this topic, PEACE Program counsellors can familiarize themselves with the [BELIEVE project curriculum](#) and the relevant [Violence Is Preventable \(VIP\) Curriculum](#) topics related to consent. In addition, it can be helpful for facilitators to read the article, [Talking to Kids about Consent](#).<sup>xviii</sup>

Have a conversation with the group focusing on the key messages about consent:

- **Ages 6-8:** Group participants at this age need to know the correct names of all of their body parts, including genitalia. Many children do know the names and if they don't, teaching them with a book or a diagram that uses proper names can be effective. Facilitators may acknowledge that *'some people (both adults and children) feel uncomfortable saying the names of certain body parts, and also there are certain places and times where it may not be acceptable to talk about them, however knowing the names of the parts of our bodies is important for understanding personal boundaries and types of touch.'* Knowing the names of body parts can help children to understand why body parts are private and that only they themselves can touch their private parts. The only exceptions may be when a caregiver cleans genitals during bath time or in the case of a health care provider. Once this is clear, children need to understand types of touch and boundaries.

Two kinds of touch: There are yes touches (unhealthy) and no touches (unwanted). Use this moment in the group to help kids to brainstorm, what is a yes touch and what is an unwanted touch. Examples of a yes touch would be a high five, a welcomed hug, two people sitting next to each other on a school bus may incidentally touch body parts or holding hands with someone you are friends with. A no touch is anyone touching you in any way that you don't want



to be touched or you touching anyone in any way that they don't want to be touched.

- **Ages 9-12:** Similar concepts apply to this age group as with the younger group. If facilitators haven't been using the scientific terms for body parts, it is recommended to start now. Group participants may be squeamish and uncomfortable during this conversation, but it is a normal developmental stage. In order to develop a healthy understanding of consent in relationships, it is very helpful to understand our own anatomy.

Once basic anatomy has been covered, facilitators can ask the group:

- What would you do if somebody asked you to kiss them and you didn't want to?
- What would you do if somebody asked you to remove your clothes if you didn't want to?

At this age, most kids are not ready to be sexually active, however these types of situations arise. Acknowledge with the group that *'it can seem strange that someone would want to force you to do something, even if you don't want to.'* When kids are prepared to deal with these unwanted situations it's more likely they can be prevented and/or that they will reach out to a safe adult if they need support. Ensure that the group knows that they are completely in charge of their bodies and that a 'yes' is required in order for anyone to touch or kiss them in any way. Remind the group to know who their safe adult is and provide a hotline or contact number for a youth centre in their area for kids to use if they need support.





- **Ages 13-18:** Employ the concepts as used above with the younger age groups. It can be surprising how many youth do not know their own basic anatomy. Statistically, most youth in high school in British Columbia are not having sex. For those who are, they are between the ages of 15 and 17<sup>xix</sup>. The goal with talking about consent is to help guide group participants to understand what consent looks like and how it feels. It is also helpful to discuss and help participants understand the concept of emotional readiness for sexual activity with another consenting person.

Another topic that is important to address is alcohol and drugs and the fact that it is not possible to consent to sexual activity when under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. It may be relevant to use some of the online resources, videos and curriculum outlines from the [BELIEVE project](#) or from the Grade 11/12 [VIP curriculum](#) as a way to expand and further guide the group's understanding of this topic when working with Grade 11/12 classrooms.

Boys' groups can be a unique environment to break down barriers and norms of masculinity simply by talking about these issues. The act of engaging in healthy and safe conversations about these issues is in itself a way of challenging norms for boys and young men.

Facilitators are encouraged to acknowledge the courage it takes for boys and young men to approach these issues, ensure they know they are not being judged and that we are all learning.

## **HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**

**Goal:** To brainstorm and discuss qualities of a healthy relationship and/or friendship and warning signs of an unhealthy relationship/friendship.



**Materials:** White board and markers

**Time:** 20-40 minutes

Begin by inviting the group to break into small groups or pairs. Request that the groups come up with a short list of things that they would like from a friend or a boyfriend/girlfriend in a healthy friendship or relationship. This exercise works with groups of all ages. If group participants are younger children, PEACE Program counsellors can use friendships to reflect on healthy versus unhealthy relationships. In addition, adolescents who are not in, or have not had, an intimate relationship can reflect upon healthy and unhealthy friendships they have had as a reference point for things they value in a healthy relationship.

Return to the larger group and invite group participants to share one quality or characteristic of a healthy friendship or intimate relationship. Remind the group that there are no wrong answers. Compare and discuss if there are any contradictory ideas that emerge.

Next, invite the group to come up with a list of warning signs that a relationship or a friendship is not healthy. 'What is a list of things that you don't want as a part of a healthy relationship?' Ensure that the group understands that lots of friendships and relationships are fun and also unhealthy. Offer a few examples, such as 'sometimes we have friends or partners who are nice to us when we are around others but unkind or hurtful when we are hanging out alone or in privacy'. 'We may also have friends who are nice to us, however we witness them acting in ways that are mean or unkind to others'. As a final example, 'maybe you have someone who is friendly with you online but when you see them in-person they pretend they don't know you'. All of these examples (and others like them) are important to reflect on as we consider the types of friends and relationships which are healthy and supportive.



If this topic is of particular interest to the group, there are a number of videos and additional activities in the [Violence Is Preventable \(VIP\) Curriculum](#).

### **THE POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL**

**Goal:** To explore relationship belief systems and share the power and control wheel.

**Materials:** White board and markers. Optional access to the internet and to a screen to show some videos.

**Time:** 20-40 minutes

**Recommended pre-requisite curriculum topics:** Masculinity, Naming Violence in our Lives and Healthy and Unhealthy relationships.

Begin by reviewing some of the qualities of a stereotypical boy and/or man that the group discussed in the curriculum topic of masculinity. Perhaps there are some new things the group feels comfortable adding to the list? Take some time to explore in small groups how the gender stereotypes and pressures on young men could influence or lead to an unhealthy relationship.

Some examples that facilitators may share:

- A common stereotype of men is that they don't like to talk as much as women. If we engage in this stereotype as true, it may support the development of unhealthy communication in relationships.
- Another common stereotype about men is that they only care about what women look like. If this stereotype is fulfilled, it may result in a relationship where the girl or woman feels pressured to look a certain way in order to be liked or treated well.



Next, facilitators can use the Teen Power and Control Wheel in Appendix [A.3 – Teen Power and Control Wheel](#) to reference during the next part of this curriculum topic. The original Power and Control wheel was developed in the 1980s by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, and there have been several iterations since then. Explain that the wheel is a useful tool in understanding patterns of abuse in relationship. Each of the spokes on the wheel highlights a tactic that people showing abusive behaviours use to gain control in relationships:

- Peer Pressure
- Anger/Emotional abuse
- Using social status
- Intimidation
- Minimize/Deny/Blame
- Threats
- Sexual Coercion
- Isolation/Exclusion

Facilitators can share the power and control wheel on a white board or print a copy for each group participant. Explain that an abusive incident in a relationship is typically accompanied by behaviors that fit into the spokes of the wheel. Some behaviors are less visible than others, but all of them work together to establish and maintain control over the individual. The wheel helps to give an overall picture of the pattern of behaviors and helps to make less visible tactics more apparent. In addition, it helps to emphasize the methodical nature of dating abuse.

Remind participants that their comments in the group will remain confidential and that no one should repeat what they shared outside of group. Be aware that this topic may be triggering for



some group participants and open the circle up for discussion and questions they have about the Teen Power and Control wheel.

Next, read out loud, or allow participants to read to themselves, the excerpt from Amanda Grace's novel *But I Love Him* found in Appendix [A.4 - Reading from Amanda Grace's](#) novel. Analyze the text together or in small groups. Facilitators can give participants an opportunity to identify specific examples of things described in the power and control wheel. Encourage participants to look for actual examples rather than responding in a general fashion.

Ask the group some questions about the issue of dating violence:

- How does this chapter influence the way we think about relationships?
- Does reading this chapter change the way you experience and understand the power and control wheel?

Discuss options that individuals in abusive relationships can take to be safe.

- Review how difficult and dangerous it can be to leave an abusive relationship. And, remind group participants that anyone can experience abuse in relationships.
- Why might it be hard for the individual to leave an abusive relationship even though they are afraid of the abuse? Possible answers include: fear of what the abuser will do; fear or embarrassment of others finding out about the abuse; belief that the abuser will change; low self-esteem; and, confusing abuse as part of love.
- Facilitators can explain that there are steps individuals can take to stay safe. Ask group participants what some of those steps might be? Examples include: talking to someone he/she trusts, plan escape routes from home, work and school; asking friends to call the police if they think there is danger; and, finding a counsellor or local support group.



- Emphasize the importance of following through with supports even after the relationship has ended to ensure safety and the risk of additional violence decreases.

This exercise is modified from a curriculum outline shared by *Break the Cycle* called *Love is Not Abuse*<sup>xx</sup>.

### **EMOTIONS IN MY BODY**

**Goal:** To give group participants tools for identifying anger, sadness and fear in their bodies. To support group participants to become aware of what their bodies are telling them as a tool for managing emotions.

**Materials:** Large roll of paper and different coloured markers

**Time:** 30-40 minutes

Use this group activity when discussing anger and emotions in our bodies. Ask the group participants where in their bodies they feel anger, sadness, or fear. The goal behind this activity is for participants to become aware of what their bodies are telling them, and how to address it. For example, once they recognize they are getting angry, they can start using learned techniques to help manage these feelings.

Facilitators can provide the group participants with a body outline cut out, ask them to draw a body outline on a piece of paper, or in pairs invite them to outline their bodies on a large piece of paper. Ask them to choose a color to represent different feelings (e.g., love, joy, confusion, anger, sadness, fear) and to colour or draw the feeling on the part of the body where they are having, or have had, that feeling. This activity allows group participants to think of the warning signs they experience in their bodies, when they feel a certain emotion. After they have





completed this activity, put all of the body outlines on the wall and invite each program participant to explain theirs to the rest of the group. Also use this as an opportunity to brainstorm what they can do alternatively when uncomfortable feelings arise.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

**Goal:** To offer tools to navigate differences by encouraging healthy conflict resolution strategies.

**Materials:** [Worksheet from Appendix A.5](#) printed, pens, white board/flip chart, and access to a screen to watch the short film [Elbow Room](#).

**Time:** 30-45 minutes

Before showing the film *Elbow Room*<sup>xxi</sup>, explain that in everyday life, conflict is normal. Conflicts that are dealt with effectively are a normal and important part of growing into, and being a part of, a healthy relationship, friendship and family dynamic.

In pairs, invite group participants to think of situations in their own life where they have had to 'share space' with someone else and it turned into a conflict or a fight. Facilitators can let participants know that this could involve a conflict with a sibling, friend, neighbour, teacher, coach or any person in their life. After a few minutes of sharing in pairs, invite participants to regroup and share the conflicts that they have experienced. Once the situations are shared and listed on a board, facilitators can explain that they are going to read off typical human responses to conflict (listed below) and group participants are invited to raise their hands when the response sounds like something they would do.



In a conflict over space would you:

- Try to ignore the situation?
- Start a fight?
- Make a joke?
- Plot some sneaky revenge?
- Call an adult?
- Work out a satisfactory solution?

Invite group participants to share which (if any) of the above responses they have used to solve a conflict. Explain that the film *Elbow Room* illustrates different responses to conflict.

View [Elbow Room](#) from the NFB website and after viewing the film, write RETREAT, DENIAL, FIGHTING and NEGOTIATION on the board or flip chart. Ask group participants to share examples from the film that demonstrate each of these reactions to conflict. Suggest that each of us has our own conflict style and our own way of reacting to conflict. Invite group participants to fill out the CONFLICT STYLES survey on the worksheet in [Appendix A.5](#) to see if they can identify their own conflict style.

After group participants have completed the worksheet, invite them to share their responses with another group member. Take the time to share the steps below as a strategy for effective conflict resolution or problem solving. It is also important to acknowledge that all conflict resolution styles are important and useful. In what situations would it be better to use the TURTLE, LION or TEDDY BEAR approach?



Share the steps to OWL or Win/Win Conflict Solving

1. State clearly what you need or expect.
2. Listen carefully to what the other person needs or expects.
3. Think together of at least three or four ways that everyone can get what they need.
4. Choose the best option and act on it.

Invite group participants to discuss how this style of conflict resolution may be relevant for the previous discussions about healthy relationships and how they can utilize it in disagreements they have in their lives with friends, families and others.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE SAFETY**

**Goal:** To give group participants tools for navigating the online world safely.

**Materials:** White board or flip chart and markers

**Time:** 20-40 minutes per activity.

**Note:** There are 4 separate activity ideas provided for this curriculum topic. Facilitators may choose to use one or more in a single session, or over a few sessions, depending on time available and the age of the group participants.

With all ages, facilitators can begin this topic by inquiring with the group about what they use the internet for by asking a few simple questions. The first question would likely be most relevant for younger boys.

- Do you ever go on the internet?



- What kinds of things do you do on the internet?
- What kinds of things could you do on the internet?
- What types of devices do you use to access the internet at school? At home?

From this conversation, we can gain a better understanding of how the group is navigating and using the internet. Facilitators can respond positively by acknowledging, ‘wow, there are so many amazing things we can do online.’ In the same moment, facilitators can open the conversation up to the importance of staying safe and responsible when we are online.

**a) Red Light – Green Light Analogy & Game (Ages 6-8 & 9-12):**

With group participants aged 6-8 & 9-12, PEACE Program counsellors can use the metaphor of an internet traffic light to help participants understand online safety. Similar to the traffic light game children play, green means GO forward, yellow means proceed with CAUTION and red means STOP. Using the simple language of GO, CAUTION or STOP can assist group participants to reflect on various internet safety situations.

Invite the group to consider the questions below. Some groups may be able to help facilitators come up with answers and other groups may need the facilitator to teach them this list.

1. What would you consider a green website or App? Be sure to explain that a GREEN website contains all three things on this list below:
  - A site or App that is appropriate for age and development.
  - Has fun age appropriate things to do, see and learn.
  - Has appropriate words for my age.



Facilitators can give the example of learning to read and finding a book that is just right for them. Facilitators may also reference movies and how some movies have language or violence that is suggested for certain age groups (i.e., PG-13 or R).

Additional questions facilitators can explore with the group:

- What are some examples of green websites or Apps that you use or visit?
- How do you know they are safe for you?
- What do you do when you find a GREEN website or App? For example, can you enjoy the content and share it with your friends and family?

## 2. What is a yellow website or App?

- A site or App you are not sure is 'just right' for you.
- Has words that are hard for you to read.
- Asks for information such as your full name, address or phone number.
- Asks you to fill out a form.

Facilitators can explain that caution means being very careful. Emphasize that participants must ask a grown-up for permission before continuing to use a yellow website or App. If there is no grown-up around, it is recommended that they STOP using the website until they can share it with a safe adult to determine if it is appropriate.

## 3. What is a red website or App?

- Has the same characteristics as a yellow site.
- Is clearly not age appropriate.
- A place you have gone to by accident.



- Has pictures, words or videos that are for older kids or adults.
- A place where people can chat with people they don't know.

Facilitators can explain that these are websites that participants should STOP using and if they have further questions or feel curious, take the time to find a trusted adult and explore their questions with them.

Facilitators can ask group participants if they have ever been to a red App or website? How did they know it was not right for them? Invite participants to share in pairs or small groups about their online experiences and then invite them to come back together and to share with the larger group. Ensure the group knows that the facilitator is not there to police their experiences, but rather to help them understand what they should do in the future if they encounter a website that is yellow or red.

After this dialogue, PEACE Program counsellors can move the group into a game of 'red light green light' for internet safety.

Explain the rules of the game:

The PEACE Program counsellor will read out a list of statements that relate to a website or App.

- For each 'green' site or App, participants move forwards two steps.
- For each 'yellow' site or App, participants move forward one step.
- For each 'red' site or App, participants don't move.
- If participants get the answer wrong (i.e., they move incorrectly), they must go back to where they stood before and take one step back. If space is limited or there are other constraints, PEACE Program counsellors can modify the game so





that the group uses a white board or a piece of paper to keep track of their steps.

PEACE Program counsellors can say to group participants, 'each of the statements I will read is about a pretend website or App that you might visit. After I read each statement, take the number of steps you think is correct.'

- You went to the Games-o-Rama website by accident and a stranger sent you a message asking for your name and age. *RED (no steps).*
- The Wacky Bunny site is funny! Even your grandma thinks it's just right for you. *GREEN (forward two steps).*
- You are searching for pictures of hearts but come across a site that makes you feel uncomfortable. *RED (no steps).*
- You visit a site about our solar system, but the words are hard to read. *YELLOW (forward one step).*
- A site for your favorite TV show has fun things for kids your age to do. *GREEN (forward two steps).*
- There's a kids' sports site you visited that allows people to chat with each other. *YELLOW (forward one step).*
- You're on a game site where a screen pops up and asks for your email address. *YELLOW (forward one step).*
- Your teacher tells you to visit a site where you can learn things about giraffes. *GREEN (forward two steps).*
- You watch a funny video but notice the videos next to it look like they're for big kids. *YELLOW (forward one step).*



PEACE Program counsellors and group participants can add to this list with their own examples.

**b) Social Media Usage & Safety (Ages 9-12 & 13-18):**

Ask the group to define social media. What is it?

Clarify that social media includes websites and Apps that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. Invite group participants to share if they are on social media and which platforms they use. Facilitators can observe the groups responses and acknowledge what they hear, e.g., ‘seems like most people are using...,’ or ‘seems like half of our group is using this App and all of you are using this other App’.

Explain to the group that legally many social media sites require you to be 13 years old to sign up and some require you to be 17 or 18. Point out that almost all Canadian teens use social media.<sup>xxii</sup>

Option to watch the trailer for the 2020 NETFLIX documentary titled [The Social Dilemma](#)<sup>xxiii</sup>.

Depending on the amount of time facilitators wish to spend on this topic and the age and development of participants, the group could watch a longer portion of this documentary and frame a few weeks of group discussions around this topic.

Divide into pairs or small groups and invite group participants to discuss the benefits and problems/drawbacks that they personally experience with social media. If participants don’t use social media, invite them to think about possible benefits and drawbacks to its use. Return to the larger group and come up with a few lists on a white board based on the smaller group discussions.



Ask group participants:

- Do they feel like they have to be on social media?
- What do they feel like if they are without their mobile device for a period of time?
- Would they be willing to try doing a full day without their mobile device to see how it feels?

Be genuinely interested and curious about how this world of social media is influencing them as a way to encourage them to share and be open with the nuances of its power.

c) **Red Flag Feelings** (Age 13-18):

Explain that using social media can sometimes lead to oversharing, which is sharing personal feelings, information, images or experiences that later make someone feel uncomfortable or regretful. Acknowledge that everyone has different views about social media and there isn't always a right or a wrong answer for what to share and what not to share.

Oversharing may include things like:

- Sharing your thoughts, feelings or intense emotions in the heat of the moment.
- Sharing things that you wouldn't want everyone to see, such as photos from a party or of you acting silly or weird, but then it was shared with a bigger group of people.
- Sharing images of your body and/or sexualized images of yourself.
- Sharing every detail of your life, like what you ate for breakfast or every thought that comes to mind.



People can experience both positive and negative experiences when using social media. A red flag feeling is when something happens on social media that makes you feel isolated, worried, anxious, sad, or uncomfortable. These feelings are a warning sign that something might be wrong.

Ask group participants 'What can we do when we notice we have a red flag feeling?' When we have a red-flag feeling it is important to slow down, pause and think about how they're feeling by using the questions below.

- *Identify:* Who are the people involved in the scenario? What dilemma or challenge are they facing?
- *Feel:* What do you think each person in the situation is feeling? Why might the situation be hard or challenging for each person?
- *Imagine:* Imagine how the situation could be handled. Come up with as many ideas as possible without creating one right answer. Then choose, which one might lead to the most positive outcome, where most people feel good or taken care of?
- *Say:* What are you feeling? Is there anything that needs to be communicated? What do you want to do?

See Appendix [A.6 - Online Relationship](#) Scenarios for a few scenarios and questions designed for facilitators to explore with group participants.

**d) Online Relationships (Ages 13-18):**

Facilitators can let the group know that for this activity they will be talking about relationships and friendships and how people communicate with each other online.



Review the curriculum topics of *Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships* and *Consent* as an important reference point. Facilitators can reference the list the group came up with related to the qualities needed to feel supported in a healthy relationship.

Begin with a few questions that can either be answered in the large group or in smaller groups. Take the time to write the questions below on a flip chart or a white board.

- Ask group participants how often they chat, message or text with their friends. Every hour? Every day? Do they have boundaries around screen time? Who implements the boundaries (themselves, girlfriend, boyfriend, school, coach or their parents)? Facilitators could help participants brainstorm about why it might be healthy (sleep, anxiety, loneliness) to reduce screen time and spend some time away from online interactions.
- How is messaging with their friends different from speaking to them in-person?
- Do participants feel they talk about different things when using a phone/FaceTime vs. in-person? Do they feel they and/or their peers act differently online? Do they ever feel pressure to communicate online to fit in or be accepted?
- What does a healthy online relationship and friendship look like? Should it feel or look different online? Can you have a healthy online relationship with someone you don't know in person? Facilitators could guide the group in making a list together about qualities of a healthy online relationship.
- How does consent relate to online relationships? What are things we need to consent to in an online relationship? Some specific topics worth discussing are photo sharing & video sharing. It is important to note that it is illegal to share



photographs and videos of people under the age of 18 anywhere (that means social media, screen sharing, text messages and email).

Review the red flag feelings and the importance of slowing down, pausing and thinking if these feelings emerge in online relationship. Participants should know that they do not have to share images/videos of themselves nor should they feel pressure to share images/videos of themselves in online relationships. Remind group participants that if these feelings don't go away or stop, it is important to reach out to a safe adult for support to ensure their emotional, physical and mental safety.





## ENDINGS AND SAYING GOODBYE: TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES

Facilitators should take the last one or two sessions of their group to spend time wrapping up topics from previous sessions and transitioning the group to ending. The curriculum topics in this section are simple, and yet powerful and unique as tools for giving boys and young men a healthy experience of an ending and saying goodbye.

| <u>Curriculum Topic</u>               | <u>Goals</u>   | <u>Age Group</u> |
|---------------------------------------|--|------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>Gratitude</u></a>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To learn a simple practice of appreciation and to say thank you to each other for the time they have shared.</li></ul> | All Ages         |
| <a href="#"><u>Saying Goodbye</u></a> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To give the group participants a healthy experience of saying goodbye.</li></ul>                                       | All Ages         |

### GRATITUDE

**Goal:** To learn a simple practice of appreciation and to say thank you to each other for the time they have shared.

**Materials:** Pens and paper

**Time:** 20-40 minutes depending on group size

This activity can be a powerful way to leave group participants feeling connected and appreciated. Begin by inviting individuals to write their name somewhere on a sheet of paper.



Have everyone gather in a circle with some space between them. PEACE Program counsellors can begin by inviting the group to share something about the group experience that they liked or appreciated. It may be appropriate to share with the group that being thankful for little things and communicating it with eye contact and specific examples can help us feel connected. Using a talking circle format can create an environment of listening and it may encourage everyone to share something, although it is not a requirement.

Following some time with group appreciations, ask everyone to pass their paper to the person on their right. Each person now has someone else's paper and facilitators can invite participants to write an appreciation on each page that is specific for the individual whose name is on the paper. Continue to ask participants to pass their papers to the right until each group member has their original page back. After the exercise is complete, each group participant will have a collection of gratitude and appreciations, specifically for them.

As an alternative to this activity, PEACE Program counsellors can lead the activity verbally and the co-facilitator can write everyone's appreciations for other group participants. This supports group participants in verbally communicating gratitude. It can also be helpful for children and youth who struggle with written expression and are self-consciousness around spelling things correctly.

### **SAYING GOODBYE**

**Goal:** To give group participants a healthy experience of saying goodbye.

**Materials:** Art group participants have made during the group; small gift for each participant (if applicable)



**Time:** 10-20 minutes

Gather the group into a circle in a space that has become familiar and comfortable. Take some time to review all the things the group has done together. PEACE Program counsellors may choose to go over the memories in chronological order, reflecting on each week's topic. Or they may choose to invite group participants to share the things that they remember in a spontaneous way. PEACE Program counsellors can express gratitude for the things that they have observed, experienced, and appreciated in their time as the group facilitator.

As the end of the last session gets close, ensure that all group participants have all of their artwork and projects to take home. In addition, it can be nice to gift each group participant with something small as a way for them to be reminded of the work the group did together. For some individuals in the group, the gift may act as a transitional object<sup>xxiv, xxv</sup>. A transitional object has the potential to support individuals navigating the ending of something by activating memories and reminding them of relationships with others<sup>xxvi</sup>.

A few examples of gifts that may be relevant are described below.

- Perhaps, during the group's time together the group went for a walk one day and facilitators invited each group participant to find a rock. These rocks could then be placed in the centre of the talking circle the following week. The rocks are an example of a gift (which may serve as a transitional object for some individuals) that group participants could take home with them and keep somewhere special.
- Another example could be a bracelet, an art project or a flag that was created during the weeks of group work.



It is important to note that these gifts don't have to cost money to have an impact in supporting the transitional time away from the group.



## 7. Appendix A

### A.1 – CONSENT FORM

#### **PEACE Program for Children and Youth Experiencing Violence Consent to Provide PEACE Program Support to Minors**

I give **[Agency Name]** permission to provide PEACE Program for Children and Youth Experiencing Violence counselling services for my minor child.

I give consent for my child to receive the following service(s):

- ☐ Individual counselling
- ☐ Group counselling
- ☐ Safety Plan Development
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that this consent is part of an application and does not guarantee that my child will receive all of the services indicated.

In signing the consent form I give consent for my child to participate in Program evaluation activities such as feedback surveys and/or a closing interview. I understand that if I choose for my child to not participate in Program evaluation this will have no impact on their ability to access services or the services they will receive.

- ☐ By checking this box I request that my child be excluded from participating in Program evaluation activities.



This agreement is in effect for as long as this document is kept on file by the PEACE Program. This means a minimum of 7 years after my child reaches the age of majority which is 19 in BC. However, my child can withdraw from participating in the PEACE Program at any time.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Counsellor \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## A.2 – STEREOTYPES CURRICULUM TOPIC IMAGES

### Sample Images for Stereotypes Curriculum





BC Society of  
Transition Houses

PEACE







BC Society of  
Transition Houses

PEACE

**MILK**  
for  
**REAL MEN**

REAL NUTRITION WHEN YOU NEED IT  
Whether you're hiking through a workout or hiking up a mountain, if you need a quick lift on the go, grab yourself a Maxi-Milk. It's got 20g of high quality protein, 10g of BCAAs and it's also fat free. So, basically it's great at building lean muscle and helping you do nearly anything.  
[facebook.com/maximilk](https://facebook.com/maximilk)

**HIGH PROTEIN** **FAT FREE**  
HIGH QUALITY PROTEIN • 20g • 10g • 0g

**MAXI-MILK**  
maximilk  
DIPLOMA

REAL NUTRITION WHEN YOU NEED IT  
Whether you're working out or walking home, if you need a quick lift on the go, grab yourself a Maxi-Milk. It's got 20g of high quality protein, 10g of BCAAs and it's also fat free. So, basically it's great at building lean muscle and helping you do nearly anything.  
[facebook.com/maximilk](https://facebook.com/maximilk)

**HIGH PROTEIN** **FAT FREE**  
HIGH QUALITY PROTEIN • 20g • 10g • 0g

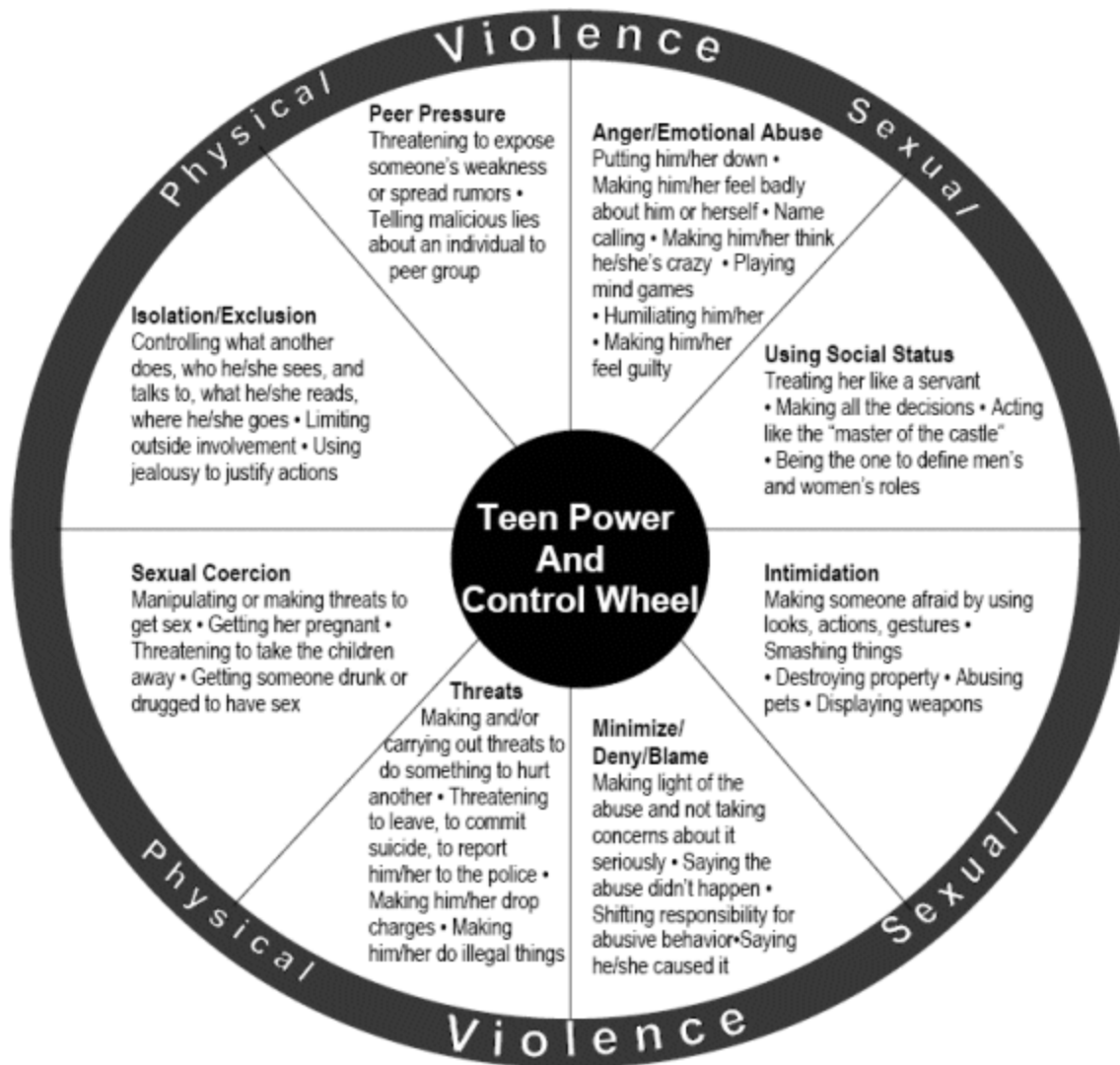
**MAXI-MILK**  
maximilk  
DIPLOMA





### A.3 – TEEN POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL

Teen Power and Control Wheel



This version of the power and control wheel was adapted from the Domestic Abuse Intervention in Duluth, Minnesota and retrieved from: [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/datingviolence/DHS-datingviolence-PowerControlWheel\\_198402\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/datingviolence/DHS-datingviolence-PowerControlWheel_198402_7.pdf)



#### A.4 - READING FROM AMANDA GRACE'S NOVEL

In Amanda Grace's novel *But I Love Him*<sup>xxvii</sup>, Ann, a high school senior, describes how her relationship with Connor takes her from a happy, straight-A student and athlete to a broken, bruised girl who no longer recognizes herself.

##### EXCERPT:

*August 15*

*Eleven Months, Sixteen Days*

*I've made a mistake. A huge, monumental mistake.*

*I forgot Connor's truck broke down. I forgot he was going to be waiting for me when I walked out of Subway. I've only been back on the job for two weeks, and it's already putting a strain on my relationship with Connor. And now he's seen me. He's seen me laugh and push Mark, the new guy.*

*And I know what he's thinking, and I know where his mind is going, and I know without asking that he's steaming, waiting for me. I know the fear he has of losing me overpowers everything else, even his common sense. I know deep inside he trusts me, but I know his raging insecurities will always prevail.*

*He's so afraid of losing me that he can't see I'd never leave him.*

*And I know he had to have seen the way Mark hugged me with one arm, just a loose sideways hug, but still a hug. He won't believe me when I say Mark means nothing. He'll just replay that hug over and over in his mind and he'll spin a story that's so far from the truth.*





*I've been so careful, for so long. It was bound to happen eventually. I was bound to slip and do something like this. Why do I even wonder why I have no friends anymore? Why do I even wonder why no one talks to me? It's my own doing. It's my own fears that something will happen, and I'll say the wrong thing to the wrong person, and they'll interfere somehow. And this is what will happen.*

*Even Abby knows it. It's why she stays away without me telling her to. It's why she smiles that sad smile when she sees me. It's why she's stopped trying to be my friend. She was the last to give up. The last to surrender me to Connor.*

*I hate this. I hate it so much, this waiting as we walk toward my car, Mark having no idea what's about to happen and me knowing it too well. I'm afraid. I hate that I'm actually afraid of him right now. I hate that I know what this silence means, and all I can do is wait for it to explode.*

*I feel claustrophobic and I'm not even in the car yet. I consider running. Away from him, away from everything. I could go five, ten miles before I had to stop. I'd be halfway to Aberdeen by then. Our tiny ocean town of Westport, Washington, is a town of nothing. I'd be gone in ten minutes.*

*But that won't solve it, and maybe this time he'll talk to me. He's been getting a little better, now that he's away from his dad so much. He's been cooling. Adjusting. Maybe this time he'll understand, and he'll see that Mark is just some random guy who means nothing at all, and we can use this to grow from.*

*I know that's going to happen, if I stick with him long enough. He just needs some guidance, some love, some understanding. He wants so badly to become that person.*





*But, of course that's not the case. When he clicks his door shut, and before I start the car, he grabs my wrist and squeezes, too hard. It's always too much, too intense, too everything.*

*"Forget the store. Take me to the apartment. Now."*

*And for some reason, the whole ride there, the whole deathly silent ride, I keep hoping that my car will break down too and I'll have to get out, that we'll never make it to his apartment.*

*But we do. I pull up at his fourplex, parking so carefully, perfectly between the white lines. I stare at the other three doors, hoping no one is home in those apartments. It's a tiny building, two apartments downstairs, two up. Connor's is on the upper left, with a big crooked number three nailed to the door.*

*I follow him up the old wooden stairs, my heart pounding. I can hardly feel the thin railing as it slides underneath my hand, guiding me toward the front door with the peeling red paint.*

*We're barely through the entry before he shoves me, hard, and I'm sent sprawling all over the floor. I bang my elbow and a jolt of electricity shoots up my arm. I hear the door slam behind me, and the pictures on the wall rattle with the force.*

*I lie there longer than I should, trying to keep my breathing down, trying to suppress the instinct to curl in a ball. I know his moods can turn with the right words. I know if I think clearly, I can steer him back toward being himself again. If I do this right, Connor will be back.*

*"You have no idea how...stupid you are."*

*And then he reels back, his hand fisted, and punches.*

*The wall.*



*It caves in around me, bits of drywall showering down around my shoulders.*

*And that is that.*

*The first hit, the first good, hard hit, usually wakes him up. I can actually see it in his face, this abrupt before and after.*

*I always know when it shifts. I think maybe the pain, so raw and real, pulls him out of his rage. Today I am lucky. Today it is the wall, and not me.*

*He blinks, twice, and looks at me. At the way I tremble in front of him.*

*“Oh. I ...” He steps away from me. There is always a moment like this. A moment where I think he is seeing himself, where he’s reeling everything back inside him, forcing it back down and bottling it back up, and then he turns to me. For that split second before he gains his senses again, I see that same shock and fear on his face as must be mirrored on mine. I see that he has no idea what he’s done. That he had no control of himself.*

*But it’s not fair. It’s not fair that he lets his rage take over, that he lets it rule him. I don’t know why he has to be two people. I don’t know why he gets to be two different people, and I only get to be me, the one who is here to take what he has to give, and who is here to pick up the pieces afterward.*

*Me. It’s always me. I don’t want it to be like this anymore. I can’t handle more of this. I’m barely holding it together. I’m barely holding him together.*

*It’s just not fair.*



*He steps forward to hug me, but I stiffen, and he has to force his arms around me to get the hug to work.*

*And I let out a sob of relief, because it's over. The episode is over. Today he didn't touch me. And I think this may be a good thing, it may mean he's not going to. Ever again. If he can see me with another guy and get this angry and not touch me, it has to mean something. I let myself hope that it means something, because otherwise I'm not sure how much longer I can last. He holds me and I melt into a mess of sobs, which shocks me. I thought I was done doing this. I thought I could steel myself from this. But I can't handle the roller coaster anymore. I can't handle this up and down.*

*He lets me slide to the floor and then he pulls me into his lap, and he rocks me, back and forth, as I sob so hard, I can't breathe and start hiccupping.*

*"I'm sorry, Ann. I'm so sorry."*

*I sniffle, my breath coming out in funny little rasps. "I don't want you to be sorry. I want you to stop doing this. I want it to be like it was when we met."*

*"I know. It will be, I promise. I'll treat you like I used to. I swear."*

*I nod my head, wanting to believe it.*

*But even when I stop crying, even when we fall asleep and I'm nestled in his arms, this will leave another scar. No one will see it. No one will know. But it will be there. And eventually all the scars will have scars and that is all I will be, one big scar of a love gone wrong.*



## A.5 - CONFLICT RESOLUTION WORKSHEET

**Name:**

### **What's your style?**

Read the situations below. Decide what you would most likely do, and circle *a*, *b*, *c* or *d*.

Be as honest as possible!

*1. You and your brother or sister share a bedroom. He or she is always complaining that you're messy and constantly complains about your clothes not being put away. You're tired of the nagging. What do you do?*

- a) Ignore him/her and mutter under your breath.
- b) Yell at him/her and throw things around to make the room even messier.
- c) Clean the room immediately and make sure you always keep things to his/her standard.
- d) Ask him/her to talk to you about how you can both enjoy the space you share.

*2. You're working beside a classmate who hums softly while she works. No one else seems to hear it, but you find it very difficult to concentrate on your work. What do you do?*

- a) When leaving class, tell someone else how annoying the person is.
- b) Hit her hard on the arm and tell her to stop singing.
- c) Tell her that you like her singing.
- d) Ask her to stop.



*3. You're on a crowded city bus and you have just sat down on the last seat available. An adult with a large briefcase sits beside you. He's not aware that the briefcase is half on your lap; you're uncomfortable and wish that he would remove it. What would you do?*

- a) Try to ignore your discomfort by thinking of something else.
- b) Constantly bump into him so he moves.
- c) Move further over in the seat so that he has more room for his briefcase.
- d) Explain how uncomfortable the situation is for you and ask him to move his briefcase.

### **Analyze your conflict style**

Your normal way of handling conflict is called your CONFLICT STYLE. There are four styles most people use:

- 1. A person who always tries to run away from conflict—a TURTLE.
- 2. A person who always FIGHTS when they have a problem—a LION.
- 3. A person who always gives in—a TEDDY BEAR.
- 4. A person who learns to face conflict and uses a WIN/WIN approach without fighting AND without giving in—an OWL.

### **Are you a TURTLE, LION, TEDDY BEAR or OWL?**

1. Review your answers circled in the above survey. If you circled “a” to the questions above, you use a TURTLE style, if you circled “b” a LION style, “c” a TEDDY BEAR and “d” an OWL style. Which style do you usually use? Do you use more than one style? Do you use a different style at home than you use at school? If so, why do you think that is the case?



## A.6 - ONLINE RELATIONSHIP SCENARIOS

### Scenario 1

Tanya and Mateo have been dating for two weeks. Because they live in different parts of town, they don't see each other very much outside of school. Tanya asks Mateo to send a text or an IM as often as possible, to help her keep from missing him. At first, he doesn't mind doing it, because it makes him feel like he's important to her, but sometimes if he forgets to send her something or can't do it, she starts sending him texts asking him where he is and why he hasn't texted her.

One time when Mateo isn't able to "check in" with Tanya she sends a text to him asking if the reason he hasn't contacted her is because he's with another girl. He says that he isn't and that sometimes he just doesn't have time to text her back. She suggests that he turn on the GPS on his phone so that she can make sure that he's at home and not somewhere else without him having to text her. He's tired of having to text her all the time so he agrees.

A few days later, Mateo sees a photo posted that someone took of him doing a scene in his drama class and 'Likes' it. Tanya leaves an angry comment on the photo asking if he liked it because he's seeing the girl who was in the scene with him. He promises that he isn't, and she makes him agree to unfriend her.

### Questions

1. What did Tanya do that was unhealthy?
2. What made it unhealthy?
3. Why do you think Tanya thought it was okay?





4. How do you think it made Mateo feel?
5. What do you think Tanya should have done instead?
6. What could or would you have done if you knew this was happening?

### **Scenario Two**

Sean and Nicky have been dating for three months. One of the things Nicky likes best about Sean is that he's a good listener: she calls, texts and IMs him every night, telling him about everything that worries or upsets her. Sometimes she tells him about things her friends and family have done that annoy her; she would never say these things to them, but it makes her feel better to tell him.

When Nicky gets a chance to go on a student exchange to France, Sean is upset. She promises to keep in contact with him, but he doesn't want her to go. When she says that she is going anyway, he says that if she does, he will post all of her texts and IMs to him online, including ones where she complained about her friends and family, and make sure that everyone she knows sees them.

### **Questions**

1. What did Sean do that was unhealthy?
2. What made it wrong?
3. Why do you think Sean thought it was okay?
4. How do you think it made Nicky feel?
5. What do you think Sean should have done instead?
6. What could or would you have done if you knew this was happening?



## 8. Appendix B

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