

The Men's Project

Providing leadership on the reduction of violence and other harmful behaviours prevalent among boys and men, and building new approaches to improve their wellbeing and keep families and communities safe.

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A Jesuit Social Services initiative

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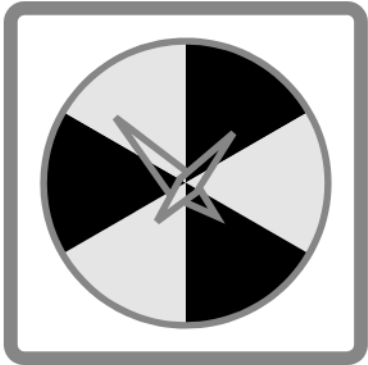
Context

- Jesuit Social Services have more than 40 years experience working with boys and men.
- Each year, Jesuit Social Services works directly with over 5,000 male participants across a range of programs.
- Too many boys and men are struggling to live safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives.
- More needs to be done to **support boys and men to be their best selves.**

We have a problem with men and boys... Not all of them, but too many.



On average, every four hours a male suicides



Aims of the Man Box study

- To understand the pressures young men experience around being a 'real man'
- To understand whether young men personally agree with the social messages of the Man Box
- To understand the influence, if any, that agreeing with those rules has on the lives of young men and those around them

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KdRrjCOqzZY>

Two thirds of young men have been told that a
“real man” behaves a certain way.



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The Man Box is the set of beliefs in society that place pressure on men to be a certain way.



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themanbox.org.au

The Man Box rules...

- Don't cry or openly express emotions *except for anger*
- Be tough & athletic
- Don't show weakness or fear
- Demonstrate power & control *especially over women and others who are "less manly"*
- Show aggression & dominance
- Be a protector
- Don't be "like a woman"
- Don't be "gay"
- Show strength & courage
- Don't require/seek help
- Women are (sexual) objects, not equals/friends
- ...

The Man Box Rules

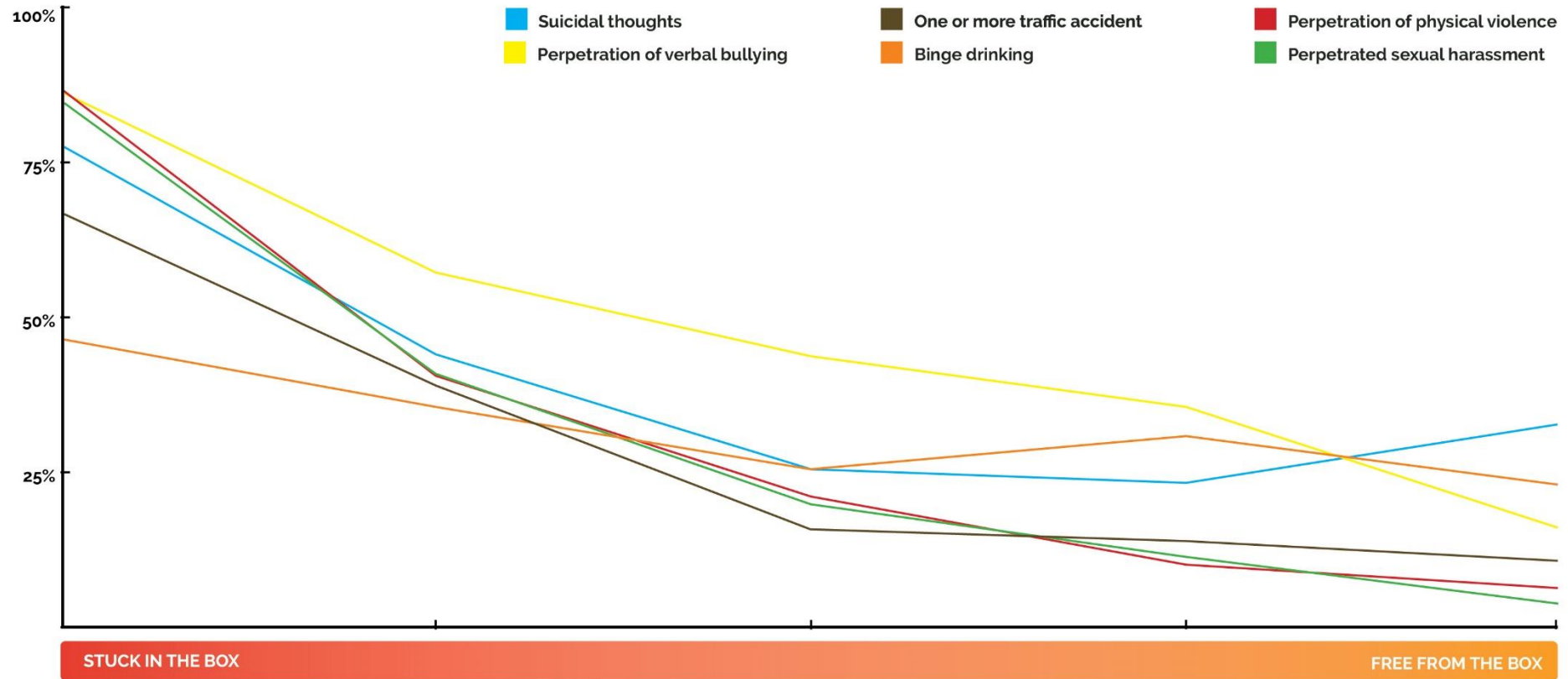
Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that <i>“Society as a whole tells me that...”</i>	Man Box Rule	Percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that <i>“In my opinion...”</i>
69%	Acting tough: E.g. Guys should act strong even if they feel scared or nervous inside.	47%
54%	Self sufficiency: E.g. Men should figure out their personal problems on their own without asking others for help.	27%
35%	Aggression and control: E.g. Men should use violence to get respect if necessary	20%
56%	Hypersexuality: E.g. A “real man” would never say no to sex.	24%
56%	Rigid gender roles: E.g. Men should really be the ones to bring money home to provide for their families, not women.	35%
48%	Physical attractiveness: E.g. A guy who spends a lot of time on his looks isn't very manly.	32%
47%	Heterosexuality and homophobia: E.g. A gay guy is not a “real man.”	28%

Life in the Man Box

	Inside the Man Box	Outside the Man Box
Felt down, depressed or hopeless in the last two weeks	83%*	77%*
Had thoughts of suicide in the last two weeks	44%*	22%*
Perpetrated verbal bullying in the past month	56%*	24%*
Perpetrated online bullying in the past month	47%*	10%*
Perpetrated physical bullying in the past month	47%*	7%*
Made sexual comments to women you don't know in public place	46%*	7%*
Experienced verbal bullying in the past month	66%*	44%*
Experienced physical bullying in the past month	52%*	15%*
Drinks to the point of getting drunk once per month or more	31%*	22%*
Been in one or more traffic accidents in the past year	38%*	11%*

* represent statistically significant relationships at $p < .05$

Life in the Man Box



What The Men's Project is doing

Engaging communities

including building workforce capacity and positive culture / attitudes around what it means to be a man

- Modelling Respect and Equality (MoRE)
- Engaging schools / workplaces
- Tips sheets and tools
- Advocacy submissions
- Our Way of Proceeding Gender Justice

Building effective interventions

to reduce violence, other harmful behaviours and improve men's well-being (beyond MBCP / individual engagement)

- Before it Starts
- Family Assisted Adolescent Violence Response
- "At-risk" dads
- Restore and Starting Over (Restorative Justice in Family Violence)
- Stop it Now! And Worried About Sex and Pornography Project

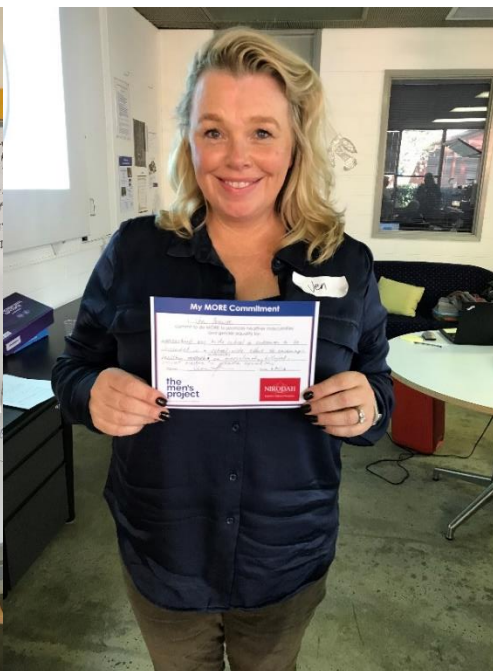
Building knowledge

about attitudes regarding masculine norms and what works to engage men and boys

- Unpacking the Man Box
- Man Box in Schools
- African Australian Men's Scoping Study

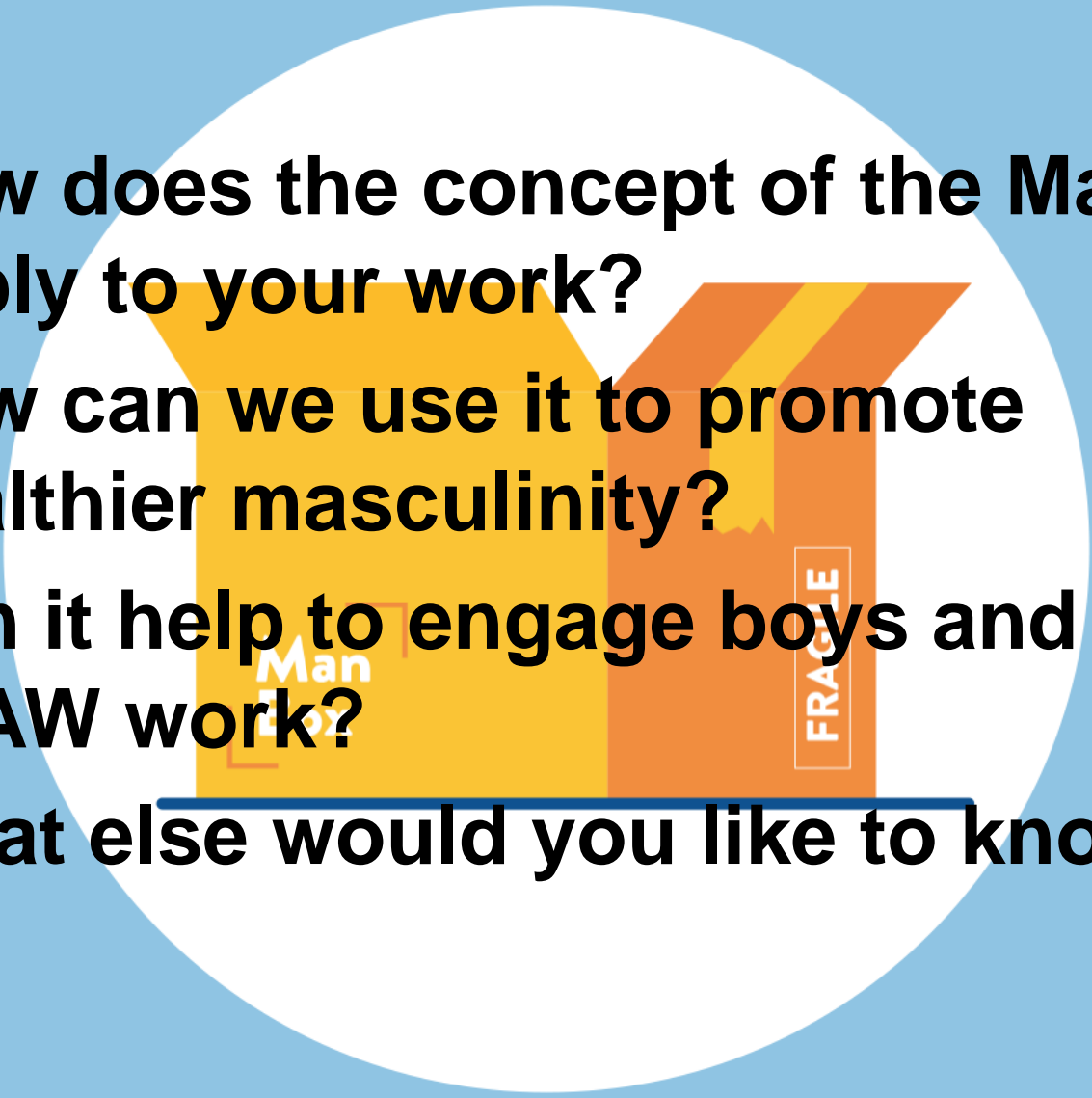
Modelling Respect and Equality (MoRE)

- Challenges problematic expressions of masculinity that are drivers of family violence and works with a strengths-based approach to promote a **positive and healthy culture of masculinity** and respectful relationships.
- Recruits, trains and supports male and female role models who interact with boys and men on a frequent basis and in a range of settings, including **community groups, schools, sporting clubs, and workplaces**.
- Through tailored training and ongoing support, role models develop the **knowledge, awareness, skills** and **confidence** to become influencers for change in their community.



Discussion

- How does the concept of the Man Box apply to your work?
- How can we use it to promote healthier masculinity?
- Can it help to engage boys and men in PVAW work?
- What else would you like to know?



More questions?

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