

Becoming Something Other Than 'Boys Will Be Boys'



Promoting Healthy Relationships for Youth Conference 2017

Presenters:
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What is WiseGuyz?

WiseGuyz is a program of Calgary Sexual Health Centre



WiseGuyz provides information and resources to help young people understand HIV/AIDS and how to prevent it.

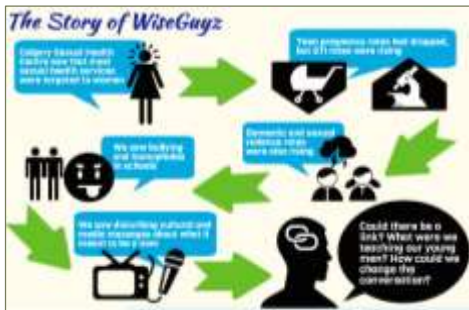


WiseGuyz provides information and resources to help young people understand STI/STD/CLAP and how to prevent it.



WiseGuyz provides information and resources to help young people understand safer relationships and how to prevent violence.

Begins With A Noticing....



Anatomy of WiseGuyz

- School based program for Gr. 9 boys
- Grounded in social influence theory and information-motivation-behaviour model (IMB)
- Partnership with schools
- Length of school year
- Meet once per week for 1.5 hours (one period of school)



Anatomy of WiseGuyz

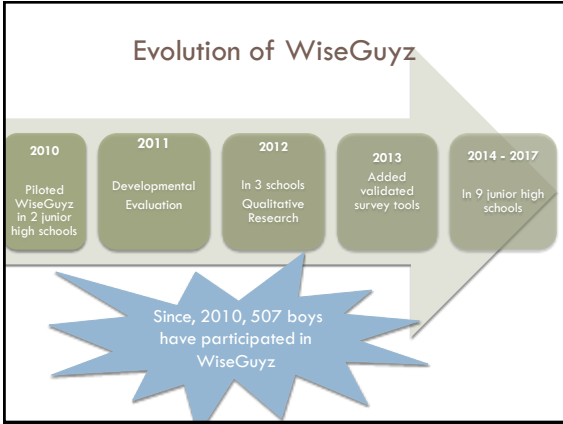
- CSHC male facilitators
- Integrated curriculum of 4 sequential modules facilitated over 14 sessions
 - Healthy Relationships
 - Sexual Health
 - Gender
 - Human Rights



WiseGuyz Team

- WiseGuyz Coordinator
- 7 WiseGuyz Facilitators
- Research, Evaluation and Scaling Consultant
- Community-University Partnership with University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Work
- PhD Student





“Boys Will be Boys...”

“...Don't be a wimp. **Aggressive.**

Tough. Physical. You have to be ripped.

Dream man. Do sports. **Stick up for yourself.** Stick up for others. **Being the boss.** Taking charge. **A leader.** Showing dominance. **Being the alpha male.** Take a punch. **Just showing off.** Showing that you're dominant to everyone so that they know not to mess with you. If they do, they get messed up...”

- WiseGuyz Participants, 2013

“There's so much stuff like guys shouldn't cry, guys need to have big muscles, guys can't show feelings, they can't show pain you know.

So if you can't do all that, it's just gonna build up inside and you gotta let it out sometime. Either that can be a good release through conversation, or it can be a bad release where you start a fight with somebody.”

- WiseGuyz Participant, 2016

What Difference is WiseGuyz Making?

We asked:

- What did they learn?
- How have they changed?
- Why does the program work?
- How could we make it better?

Qualitative Research

- 24 focus groups with WiseGuyz participants: N = 112 (2013 - 2016)
- 5 Interviews with school administration (2013)
- Observation (2013, 2014)

Quantitative Approach

- Sexual Health Practices Self-Efficacy Scale (SHPSSES) Survey
- Male Role Norms Inventory-Adolescent-revised (MRNI)
- Homophobia Survey
- N = 261 matched data sets

Bartholow Koch, P. et al. (2010). "Sexual Health Practices Self-Efficacy Scale". In *Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures*, edited by Terri Fisher et al, p.345 – 347. London: Routledge.

Levant, R. et al. (2012). Exploratory Factor Analysis and Construct Validity of the Male Role Norms Inventory-Adolescent-revised (MRNI-A-r). *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*. *Ibid.*

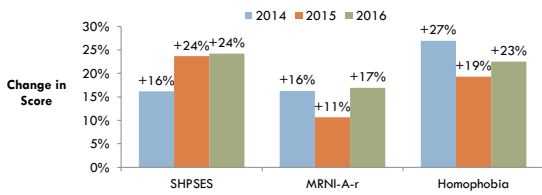
Overall Research Themes

- Boys become more emotionally literate
- Boys are less homophobic and more likely to become active interveners in disrupting homophobic events and interactions in their social contexts
- Boys describe less aggressive attitudes and behaviours

Overall Research Themes

- Boys have developed deep and supportive friendships and networks that will help them in sustaining healthy male norms
- Boys are more confident to communicate about boundaries within a sexual relationship
- Boys are engaging in constructive behaviours in their family, peer and romantic relationships

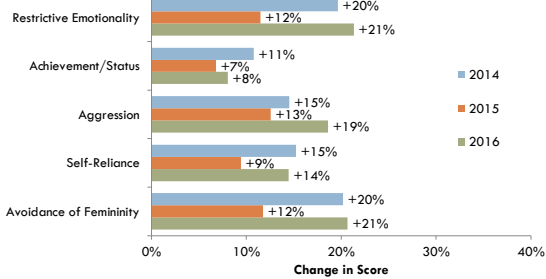
Overall Survey Results



Over 3 Years:

- Overall improvement of 21% among the boys in sexual health efficacy
- Overall improvement of 15% in boys supporting positive male norms.
- Overall improvement of 23% in the boys being less homophobic

Masculinity Survey Results



Qualitative Research Themes

Safety

“...outside [of WiseGuyz] you act tough and everything...you act like you are not upset, but here you can be you and you can just trust and talk.”
- WiseGuyz Participant, 2016

- ✓ Comfortable to be vulnerable
- ✓ Setting aside the “masculine figure”
- ✓ Non-judgmental
- ✓ Being curious and asking questions

Connection

“... it felt like a sense of community...it brought us together, whereas I was friends with people there, but there were some people that were an acquaintance and we just got closer. Like going there, you felt accepted; you felt like you could speak your mind and it was an ease off the shoulders.”
- WiseGuyz, Past Participant, 2014

- ✓ Emotional literacy
- ✓ Comfort with vulnerability
- ✓ Belonging
- ✓ Trusted support network

Consciousness

"I try to pick my words before I say them. I used to say "oh that's so gay, that's so dumb," but now after WiseGuyz, all of those words have meanings to them and I really shouldn't say them anymore." – WiseGuyz Participant 2015

"You never really think before WiseGuyz about the stereotypes of being a guy and like, what they're supposed to do. You just kind of follow that. After WiseGuyz...you're more open for breaking free from the stereotype." – WiseGuyz Participant 2015

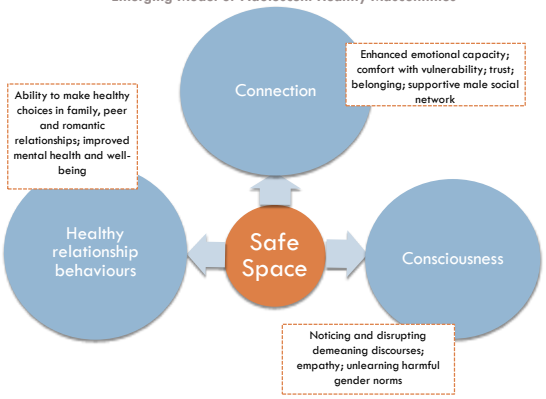
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Disrupting negative discourse
- ✓ Deconstructing Stereotypes
- ✓ Understanding the construction and influence of male norms

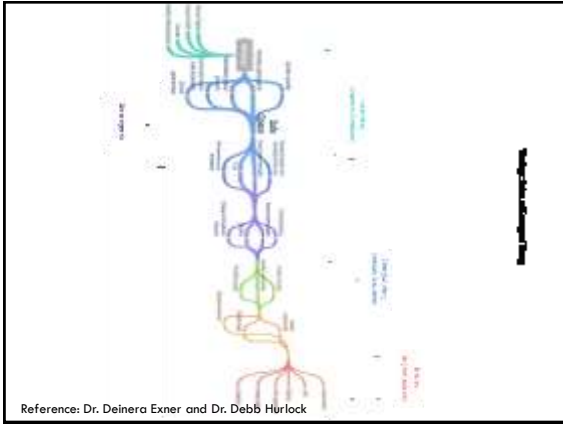
Healthy Adolescent Male Norms

"Honestly, I could see myself as a bully. I know I have pushed people around. I kind of see myself saying it to look cool, look tough, look masculine, and be big around bigger people than me. It [WiseGuyz] really made me think that's not cool, like I'm actually hurting people. - WiseGuyz Participant, 2015

- ✓ Reshaping male norms
- ✓ Boys well-being: "you don't have to hide yourself"
- ✓ Less aggressive

Emerging Model of Adolescent Healthy Masculinities





Reference: Dr. Delnera Exner and Dr. Debb Hurllock

Emerging Fidelity Practices

- Boys Only/Gender Specific Program
- Long-Term Partnership with Schools
- Program Coincides with Length of School Year

Emerging Fidelity Practices

- Program Occurs During School Hours
- Community-Based Male Facilitators
- Group Based Participatory Process
- Comprehensive Integrated and Experiential Based Curriculum

Future of WiseGuyz

- Community based
 - ▣ Indigenous
 - ▣ Youth justice
 - ▣ Treatment-based (boys with sexually abusive behaviours)

- Expanding into High Schools

- Developing an Implementation Scaling Process

Further Resources

- Expanding Masculinity: Moving Beyond Boys Will Be Boys. TedX Calgary. Blake Spence
 - ▣ www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xe0Nh5tn6s8

- WiseGuyz research reports
 - ▣ www.calgarysexualhealth.ca/programs-workshops/wiseguyz/

- A New Sex Ed for Boys. The Walrus. 2014
 - ▣ www.thewalrus.ca/the-talk

Contact us....

Calgary Sexual Health Centre (CSHC)

<http://www.calgarysexualhealth.ca/programs-workshops/wiseguyz/>

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