

# Executive Summary

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## Informing a Government of Alberta Action Plan to Engage Men and Boys to Stop Violence Against Women

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A Partnership Between  
Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence and  
Government of Alberta – Ministry of Human Services,  
Family & Community Safety Branch



### **Authors**

Lana Wells, Elizabeth Dozois, Deineria Exner-Cortens, Merrill Cooper, Elena Esina, Ken Froese and Sophia Boutillier

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### **Contact**

Lana Wells, Brenda Strafford Chair in the Prevention of Domestic Violence  
2500 University Drive NW, Calgary, AB, Canada T2N 1N4  
Phone: 403-220-6484 Email: [lmwells@ucalgary.ca](mailto:lmwells@ucalgary.ca)

Paulette Rodziewicz, Executive Director  
Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying, Human Services  
9940 – 106 Street, Edmonton, AB, Canada T5K 2N2  
Phone: 780-643-6651 Email: [Paulette.Rodziewicz@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Paulette.Rodziewicz@gov.ab.ca)

## Important Note from Shift: Setting the Context for the Report

At this moment in Alberta, Canada, we all have an opportunity to better support men and boys to play a positive role in the movement to end violence against women. For this reason, we have proposed recommendations specific to the Government of Alberta to inform the development of their Action Plan to positively engage men and boys to advance gender equality and promote healthy masculinities in order to stop violence against women. However, we envision this report as an *interim* strategy because once men have been invited into the movement in positive ways and they become true allies and leaders in stopping violence against women, they can then be included in a more general strategy to engage *all* genders in violence prevention. In this sense, engaging men and boys is a bit like preferential hiring or reverse discrimination policies – that is, something that is needed for a period of time to redress a particular oversight or injustice, but is relinquished once that issue has been addressed. As a result, this report was written with the following assumptions in mind:

- That the work with men and boys must be done in partnership with women’s organizations. All genders must be engaged to achieve gender equality and stop violence against women.
- Funds must not be taken away or diverted from existing women’s organizations in order to advance an engaging men and boys strategy. New funds and resources must be found.
- Violence against women and girls is a human rights violation. As such, this work must be informed by a human rights based approach in order to empower all genders to claim their rights and to ensure accountability of individuals and institutions who are responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights.
- Experiences of masculinity are affected by class, location, ethnicity, cultural background, sexuality and many other factors. We need to reflect this intersectionality in our analysis, funding, program design and evaluation strategies.
- We live in a patriarchy that reinforces structural inequities and reinforces violence against women. We therefore must work towards dismantling the existing structures and norms that breed men’s sense of entitlement and maintain their privilege, power and control over women.
- Gender equality is in the best interest of everyone.

This report is written with the intention of: 1) changing the discourse on men and boys from perpetrators to allies and violence disrupters; 2) promoting the inclusion of men and boys in efforts from which they have been largely absent, and 3) promoting the use of research and evidence to inform our violence prevention approach. Shift believes that working with men and boys can have a positive, transformative impact, not only on the lives of women and girls, but also on the lives of men and boys. Shift is committed to advancing this area of research and invites you to contact us to continue the dialogue and learning.

Lana Wells, Brenda Strafford Chair in the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary ([lmwells@ucalgary.ca](mailto:lmwells@ucalgary.ca))

## 1.0 Executive Summary

### 1.1 Background

Worldwide, there is growing recognition that men and boys can be key allies in preventing violence against women and girls.<sup>1</sup> Increasingly, public and non-profit organizations in Alberta are also coming to understand the importance of engaging men and boys as leaders and partners in helping to end violence against women. In 2013, with the release of its new family violence framework ([Family Violence Hurts Everyone: A Framework to End Family Violence in Alberta](#)), the Government of Alberta (GOA) identified “engaging men and boys to promote gender equality, respect and healthy relationships” as a key priority.

In May 2014, the Government of Alberta partnered with *Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence*, Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary to develop a robust, evidence-informed provincial Action Plan to engage men and boys in preventing violence against women. This Executive Summary offers highlights and recommendations from the research and consultations undertaken by Shift to inform the development of the Action Plan, including:

1. Findings from the academic and practice research related to engaging men and boys in violence prevention;
2. Themes from interviews conducted with 24 Alberta leaders and service providers engaged in this work; and,
3. Findings from a systematic electronic scan (with supplementary telephone consultations) of programs and services designed to engage men and boys in primary prevention<sup>2</sup> in Alberta.

For the full report, please go to [www.preventdomesticviolence.ca](http://www.preventdomesticviolence.ca).

### 1.2 Highlights from the Literature

Research suggests that the Government of Alberta should focus investments on policies, programs and initiatives that help *non-violent* and *healthy* male leaders to:

**Model and advocate for gender equality<sup>3</sup> and healthy masculinities<sup>4</sup>, and bring other boys and men on board to leverage positive male influence to prevent violence against women.** Gender inequality<sup>5</sup> and violent masculinities<sup>6</sup> are two important root causes of violence against women – ones that *must* be addressed with the help of men and boys. Research shows that, while most men do not agree with violence against women, they generally remain silent about it and do not challenge sexism and stereotypical beliefs about masculinity<sup>7</sup> that perpetuate this type of violence. Particular types of programming for boys that are led by healthy men and near-peers can foster the development of healthy masculinities that support gender equality and non-violence in word and deed. Implementing policies concurrently that focus on reducing gender<sup>8</sup> segregation in the labour market and in the home, like the inclusion of paternity leave policies, has also been shown to reduce gender inequality. Social marketing campaigns may also help to

shift gender norms and make it easier for men to challenge social norms that promote or condone violence against women.

**Assist in teaching other men and boys the skills required to enjoy healthy relationships<sup>9</sup> with their intimate partner.** Building and sustaining healthy intimate partner relationships requires a range of skills, including the capacity to treat others with respect, engage in peaceful problem solving, communicate feelings and needs, and hear and understand the feelings and needs of others. While developing the capacity for healthy relationships is a key strategy for all genders, skill development is especially critical for men and boys at two key life stages:

- a. As adolescents: The patterns that are set in a boy's early dating experiences can serve as a foundation for his relationships with intimate partners throughout his life. Therefore, it is critical that boys are supported to develop healthy, reciprocal, gender-equal relationships with girls.
- b. As fathers: Building fathers' capacity to develop healthy relationships with their children not only enhances positive, engaged parenting and reduces the risk of child maltreatment, but also sets children on a developmental trajectory toward healthy, non-violent relationships throughout their lives, thus contributing to violence prevention in the next generation.

**Cultivate the skills and capacity required to safely and effectively challenge and disrupt violence against women.** While most men do not condone violence, many are also not equipped to intervene in safe and effective ways. Sometimes this is because they are not attuned to risk markers; sometimes they lack knowledge about the association between the use of degrading and violent language about women and the perpetration of violence; and sometimes they simply do not know how to intervene. Thus, raising awareness and equipping men and boys with the skills to stop violence against women is critical. Research shows the efficacy of bystander education initiatives is enhanced when the larger socio-cultural environment and/or systems are also strengthened to prevent violence against women. Supporting boys and men to become allies and violence disrupters, rather than focusing on them as perpetrators or potential perpetrators, is critical to a men and boys' engagement strategy.

In addition to investing in social marketing campaigns along side evidence-informed engagement efforts and violence prevention programming for boys and men within these three content areas, policies, messaging and skill development on gender equality, non-violent norms and healthy masculinities, healthy relationships, and violence disruption should also be embedded in settings where men and boys already congregate, where they **work, learn, recreate, worship and socialize**, so that our efforts will have a much broader reach. These settings, described in this paper as entry points, can include schools, workplaces, sports venues/programs, health care settings, the military and fatherhood programs.

### 1.3 Highlights from the Alberta Interviews

Interviews with 24 key leaders and service providers in Alberta suggest that there is a high level of interest in working with men and boys to reduce and prevent violence against women, but efforts in this area are significantly hampered by a lack of funding, capacity and leadership. The following themes emerged from the stakeholder interviews:

- Key leaders and service providers in Alberta are eager to engage men and boys in violence prevention activities, but lack the organizational capacity to deliver effective programming and supports for men and boys.
- Male leadership on this social issue is lacking, and we need more competent men to actively influence attitudes, norms and behaviours. Recruitment of influential male leaders who strongly support gender equality and oppose violence against women is crucial to engaging a larger number of men and boys in violence prevention in Alberta.
- Engaging men in violence prevention initiatives can be challenging due to the stigma associated with the dominant discourse (i.e., men are seen as perpetrators) and the female-occupied nature of the human services sector.
- Work in this area has generally been implemented in a piecemeal fashion because Alberta lacks strategic vision and leadership at a provincial level, and very few dollars have been directed to this area.
- Lack of sustainable funding for men's and boys' initiatives is seen as a significant barrier to program design, implementation, evaluation and scaling.
- The majority of current activity at the local level is organized around crisis response and victim services for women. Where men are engaged, it is more often as perpetrators or at-risk individuals than as agents of primary prevention. Parenting services throughout Alberta also tend to focus on mother-child relationships, and are not fully engaging fathers and/or co-parents.

Overall, the interviews suggest that there are key leaders, organizations and community initiatives dispersed throughout Alberta that see the need for development in this area and are interested in being part of this change. They acknowledge that this work is long-term, and suggest that capacity building in this area will require investing in organizational development, support for collaboration, and a commitment to education to advance best and promising practices to engage men and boys in violence prevention.

### 1.4 Highlights from the Alberta Environmental Scan

A systematic electronic scan ("e-scan") with supplementary telephone consultations was conducted from July-September 2015 in order to: 1) provide a current inventory of best and promising programs, practices and initiatives in the province of Alberta that engage men and boys in *primary* prevention efforts; 2) identify gaps in services both at the programmatic and geographic level; 3) understand where evidence is strong and can be scaled up, and where

program/evaluation support is needed; and 4) identify infrastructure (people, policy, organizations, initiatives, resources) that can potentially be leveraged to partner and deliver a comprehensive strategy to engage men and boys in violence prevention, with the goals of preventing violence against women and advancing gender equality. Highlights from the scan include:

- The number of evidence-based<sup>10</sup> (n=1) and promising practice<sup>11</sup> (n=6) primary prevention programs operating in Alberta was small compared to the number of programs in development<sup>12</sup> (n=16). Thus, the majority of men's and boys' primary prevention programs operating in the province currently have no evidence of effectiveness.
- The geographic reach of evidence-based, promising practice and emerging programs is insufficient to serve the needs of men and boys in the province. Programs engaging men and boys are not reaching rural populations, with communities north of Edmonton particularly underserved.
- The majority of identified programs focused on building healthy relationships. The second most common areas of focus were healthy masculinities and social-emotional learning<sup>13</sup>. A minority of programs focused on domestic violence prevention or advancing gender equality. Thus, training on the intersection of these issues and how they are linked to root causes of violence against women is needed to guide the work forward.
- There is a large discrepancy between program focus areas as stated in publically available program documentation and stakeholders' perceptions of their program focus areas. Ensuring knowledge of, and common language around, root causes of violence against women, as well as program design and evaluation to demonstrate effectiveness in these areas, should be a priority, so that key players in Alberta are using relevant and mutually understandable terminology and research when describing their work.
- Over half of all identified programs were focused on boys; this focus is promising for primary prevention and should be scaled province-wide. There are currently programming gaps for adult men, especially for fathers and diverse men.
- In the places where men and boys spend the majority of their time, almost no evidence-based or evidence-informed programs are available to promote primary prevention of domestic violence or promotion of healthy relationships. There is a need to invest in targeted programs in workplaces, places of worship, sporting and amateur sports, and schools in Alberta.
- Although program offerings are geographically limited, policies and community initiatives exist across the province that have the potential to meet the needs of a greater population of men and boys. Leveraging the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) infrastructure and other local funders (like United Way) to lead and support local initiatives is critical to advancing the work, and is already starting to happen in two key jurisdictions (Calgary and Edmonton-Evergreen).

Overall, these findings suggest that efforts to engage men and boys in evidence-based violence prevention initiatives are in their infancy and additional resources are required to plan, develop, initiate, sustain, and evaluate programs. Investment in rural, remote and small communities is needed, along with programming and support for diverse men and programming at earlier stages of intervention (in order to promote gender equality and healthy masculinities at key stages in children's development). Given the need for programs that also focus on early intervention (i.e., before adolescence), fathers need to be seen as a critical part of a violence against women prevention strategy. Results of the scan indicate that infrastructure to support a comprehensive strategy is in place throughout most of Alberta, and that the government should invest in education, resources and training that build capacity among these infrastructural stakeholders in order to better leverage these diverse settings, leaders and groups. Funding for program design and evaluation must be a priority where there is already momentum and leadership.

### **1.5 Recommendations to Inform a Provincial Action Plan to Engage Men and Boys to Stop Violence Against Women**

Findings from the literature, interviews and environmental scan serve as a basis for developing a provincial Action Plan, designed to address identified gaps, build on opportunities, and foster an evidence-informed approach to engaging men and boys to advance gender equality and prevent violence against women in Alberta.

We recommend that the Government of Alberta commit to developing and implementing a whole government approach to the primary prevention of violence, with specific attention to engaging men and boys in developing healthy masculinities, becoming allies, and learning how to disrupt and stop violence against women. This approach should be built on principles of gender equality and operate from an ecological and multi-systemic model, in order to maximize individual, social and cultural change. This work must be done in partnership with key community leaders, organizations and institutions throughout Alberta in order to achieve lasting change. Specifically, we recommend that the Government of Alberta:

1. Have strong government leadership with an operational infrastructure that includes inter-departmental collaboration, full time dedicated staff and the development of an internal strategic plan to support comprehensive policies and program funding for men and boys' violence prevention. Primary prevention should be a key priority area of activity across government policies and practices, while building strong linkages with secondary and tertiary areas of prevention work to ensure a continuum of services are available across Alberta.
2. Rewrite the Education Act and mandate curriculum to ensure it's based on a human rights approach that builds values and skills on advancing and reinforcing gender equality, builds social and emotional learning and competencies, supports healthy sexuality and critical media literacy, and supports the promotion of healthy masculinities and bystander skills. There also needs to be standards and measures attached to contracts with school



divisions to ensure implementation. Students' progress could be monitored according to benchmarks for gender equality, social skills and emotional well-being, similar to those developed for literacy and numeracy. Educators will need to be trained, schools need to commit to whole school approaches and school jurisdictions need to develop policies to this effect.

3. Develop a comprehensive fatherhood action plan that includes father friendly policies and investments across the prevention continuum. Several Nordic countries have increased father involvement and leveraged this approach as a vehicle to advance gender equality in the home and in the workplace. These policies have been accompanied by other policy changes that will be required such as increased publicly-funded child care, opportunities to have more flexibility in the scheduling of work hours, and work cultures that support fathers' efforts to give priority to their involvement with their children. To advance this recommendation, use the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Group on Family Violence as a mechanism to introduce paternity leave for fathers. This leave should be over and above the currently existing 35-week parental leave. Evidence indicates that parental leave that is specific to fathers and not transferable to mothers leads to a more gender-equal division of domestic work and childrearing, which advances gender equality.
4. Commit to the design and implementation of a gender equality plan that is based on best and promising practices. This strategy should not just be about bringing women into spheres traditionally occupied by men (e.g., the workplace), but also about bringing men into spheres traditionally dominated by women (e.g., social programs, parenting programs, etc.). The gender equality plan must cultivate and promote healthy forms of masculinities and identify specific outcomes and measures (indicators) of gender equality.
5. Commit to developing a workplace accreditation program<sup>14</sup> and process that recognizes workplaces that are taking active steps to prevent and respond to violence against women. The Government of Alberta should be the first organization to go through the accreditation process.
6. Create and invest in a 'community of practice' – by regularly bringing together researchers, service providers, and policy staff to build capacity around men and boys engagement by ensuring dissemination of the latest research and by keeping the field up-to-date with emergent evidence-informed policy and practices.
7. Prioritize capacity-building among government and the human services workforce by developing and implementing comprehensive training on primary prevention and components of best and promising programs, policies and practices that: reinforce and advocate for gender equality; promote and build healthy behaviours in relationships; promote healthy masculinities; and, teach non-violent men and boys the skills required to challenge violent masculinities and sexism.
8. Invest in new research that will: 1) help us understand how to best leverage the settings and institutions where men naturally congregate (specifically, the creation of practical guide books on the effective components of engaging men and boys in violence

- prevention) and to investigate the specific efficacy of these proposed components, and 2) support Canadian research on bystander programming in the post-secondary environment as a tool to prevent violence against women.
9. Fund and support municipalities to partner with key community organizations, leaders and institutions to develop and implement *local* Violence Against Women prevention plans that advance a community development approach to engage local leaders, systems and programs in collective impact and change. Create a set of criteria that is evidence-informed for communities to use in their development process, including a specific plan to engage men and boys in violence prevention.
  10. Fund existing momentum and leadership that is on the ground. In our e-scan, we found 1 best practice program, 6 promising practices, and 16 programs “in development”, along with many provincial and local initiatives advancing a primary prevention approach that are already operating throughout the province. The Government of Alberta needs to help these organizations and community initiatives scale best and promising practices and better support the ‘in-development’ programs with research, evaluation, and capacity building in order to understand what works in the Alberta context. The investment in primary prevention programs with men and boys must align with the following criteria developed by the NSW Government in Partnership with the University of Sydney. Programs should include: aiming to prevent violence before it occurs; aiming to specifically engage men and boys as part of a wider strategy of prevention; targeting the social determinants of violence such as socioeconomic status, cultural background, sexuality and ability; using a multi-systemic approach to primary prevention; clearly demonstrating adherence to recognised best practice education or other prevention activity standards; framing work with a commitment to human rights and social justice; being embedded within a broader sectorial/community response, as demonstrated by close integration with other services; having clear objectives and strategies to meet those objectives; and, having a clearly articulated plan for evaluation. In addition, program development must be in consultation with targeted subpopulations of men and boys, so that they maximize effectiveness and geographic reach.<sup>15</sup>
  11. Make a significant investment in a comprehensive, multi-faceted social marketing strategy that is evidence-informed and focused on men and boys. This strategy must be connected to the women’s sector and community-based organizations already doing work in this field. The Government of Alberta can leverage the huge success of the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative (AFWI) that connects early brain and biological development and children's mental health with addiction research, prevention, and treatment. The AFWI has been successful in translating current research into sound policy and practice on behalf of Alberta families. The AFWI funded and worked closely with the Frameworks Institute to help craft an evidence-informed communications strategy to make research accessible to policy makers and the public. We recommend that the Government of Alberta replicate this strategy in order to build a comprehensive communication and marketing strategy that is Alberta-based, and is focused on moving the conversation away

from the idea that all men are potential perpetrators of violence against women toward the idea of healthy men being allies and catalysts in ending violence against women.

12. Actively work in partnership with the private sector, non-profit sector, and philanthropic sector (e.g., United Way, Community Foundations, etc.) to leverage opportunities for local funding and capacity building to advance this area.

Lastly, the Government of Alberta can make some quick investments today. We recommend the government immediately:

1. Bring together key researchers, leaders, service providers, and policy staff to consult on the proposed recommendations for feedback and strategic direction.
2. Fund the development of a curriculum to build organizational capacity and readiness both within and outside government to develop effective policies and practices to engage men and boys in stopping violence against women. Develop an expert workforce on primary prevention and gender equality.
3. Scale best and promising practices that are already operating in Alberta, with a focus on adolescence (including both universal programs and those targeted specifically to boys) and fatherhood. Prioritize underserved areas and populations.
4. Support program development and evaluation with those programs that are ‘in development’. Depending on the status of the program, invest in developmental, formative/process and/or outcome evaluation to ensure that appropriate evaluations are conducted so that multifaceted learnings about this work can be harvested and shared. Ultimately, we need to know what works in the Alberta context.
5. Support local leadership by working with FCSS programs/municipalities to fund, partner and support local violence against women prevention plans that must include a strategy to engage men and boys in violence prevention.
6. Create an advisory committee with key leaders throughout the province to oversee an investment into the Frameworks Institute to develop a comprehensive social marketing strategy targeted to men and boys.

Overall, this Action Plan **must** also be embedded within a broader, population-based approach to advancing gender equality and stopping violence against women, and must be seen as an interim strategy<sup>16</sup> that is integrated into existing systems and structures in order to complement the work already happening throughout government and community. The Government of Alberta can be a leader in this area, investing in the well-being of all Albertans through effective and cost-efficient policies and practices to prevent violence against girls and women. Overlooked for too long, men have an important role to play in creating a safer, more peaceful province. This report puts forward recommendations for ways to capitalize on this important opportunity, and engage men and boys in violence prevention. Reducing rates of violence against women in Alberta will require significant leadership, commitment and long-term funding from the Province. Albertans are ready. The time is now.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> L. Wells, L. Lorenzetti, H. Carolo, T. Dinner, C. Jones, T. Minerson, and E. Esina, *Engaging Men and Boys in Domestic Violence Prevention: Opportunities and Promising Approaches* (Calgary, AB: The University of Calgary, Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence, 2013), [http://preventdomesticviolence.ca/sites/default/files/research-files/Promising%20Approaches%20to%20Engage%20Men%20and%20Boys\\_0.pdf](http://preventdomesticviolence.ca/sites/default/files/research-files/Promising%20Approaches%20to%20Engage%20Men%20and%20Boys_0.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Primary prevention explicitly focuses on action before the condition of concern develops. In the area of family violence, it means reducing the number of new instances of violence by intervening before any violence has occurred. Interventions can be delivered to the whole population or to particular groups that are at high risk of using or experiencing violence in the future.

<sup>3</sup> Gender equality, as used in this report, refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same, but rather that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on the sex of their body, their sexuality, or their gender identity.

<sup>4</sup> Healthy masculinities are defined in this report as "nonviolent personal and interpersonal behavior[s], emotional and social intelligence, and the ability to be both assertive and empathic."

<sup>5</sup> Gender inequality refers to differences in rights, responsibilities, and opportunities based on gender, including the disregard for the unique experiences or needs of certain groups. It can be perpetuated through stereotypes and beliefs, interpersonal relationships, policies, practices, institutions like family, government, religion, education or the media, as well as larger structures that inform people's life chances and well-being based on gender. Historically, and today, masculinities are more valued than femininities.

<sup>6</sup> Violent masculinities also referred to as "negative," "extreme," "traditional," "dominant," and, in some circumstances, "hegemonic," masculinities, are those which justify and naturalize male power and the subordination of women. In addition to a subtle or overt sense of gender superiority, traditional characteristics associated with violent masculinities include being tough, unemotional, powerful, dominant, uncompromising, self-reliant and aggressive.

<sup>7</sup> Masculinities are the different definitions and expectations of what it means to be a man or manly. They are socially constructed, change over time, place, or group, can shift throughout the lifespan, and are not inherent to being born male. Factors such as race, class, ability, culture and sexuality shape expectations of masculinity.

<sup>8</sup> Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female. Gender is socially constructed and learned through socialization. Often gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context.

<sup>9</sup> Healthy relationships are those that consist of a connection between people that increases well-being, are mutually enjoyable, and enhance or maintain each individual's positive self-concept. Healthy relationships are based on the belief that everyone has value and is equal, and that the power in a relationship is shared. Characteristics of a healthy relationship include respect, trust, support, accountability, honesty, shared responsibility, fairness and non-threatening behaviour. When conflict (i.e., a disagreement of opinion or interest between people) occurs, it is resolved through negotiation rather than the misuse of power.

<sup>10</sup> Evidence-based programs are well-defined programs that have demonstrated their efficacy through rigorous, peer-reviewed randomized controlled trial(s). These programs are also often endorsed by government agencies and well-respected research organizations.<sup>10</sup> These programs are not only well-defined and effective, but may have also shown long-term benefits and been successfully replicated across a range of populations and contexts.

<sup>11</sup> Promising practice is a program with preliminary evidence of effectiveness in small-scale studies (i.e., pilot or preliminary data).

<sup>12</sup> Programs in development is a category used to describe programs that had a structured curriculum, but had not yet generated any evidence of effectiveness (e.g., had not collected any impact data, were in the planning stages of evaluation). Because of their structure, these programs have the potential to generate data in the future and were therefore included in this review.

<sup>13</sup> Social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of acquiring and applying five core competencies – self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, (healthy) relationship skills and responsible decision-making – in order to "understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions."

<sup>14</sup> Please see White Ribbon Australia's Workplace Accreditation Program as an example: <http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/workplaces>.

<sup>15</sup> The criteria were taken directly from M. Carmody, M. Salter, G. H. Presterudstuen, *Less to lose and more to gain? Men and Boys Violence Prevention Research Project Final Report* (Parramatta, Australia: University of Western Sydney, 2014), 10, [http://www.women.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/file/0019/300619/PDF\\_2\\_Final\\_Report\\_Men\\_and\\_Boys.pdf](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/file/0019/300619/PDF_2_Final_Report_Men_and_Boys.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> The authors feel that a specific emphasis on men and boys is warranted because men and boys have been largely absent from playing a positive role in the movement to end violence against women (i.e., they have generally been cast as perpetrators and have not been included as potential allies, change makers and violence disruptors). For this reason, a specific focus on positive engagement is necessary at this time. However, we envision this as an *interim* strategy because once men have been invited into the movement in positive ways, they can be included in a more general strategy to engage *all* genders in violence prevention. In this sense, engaging men and boys is a bit like preferential hiring or reverse discrimination policies – that is, something that is needed for a period of time to redress a particular oversight or injustice, but is relinquished once that issue has been addressed.