

Adolescent boys face many serious problems that negatively impact their lives and the lives of those around them, negatively impacting the inclusivity of schools. Additionally, asking for help is not a traditional gender role for males. Young men are provided with messages from the media, peers, and their families that it is considered weak to ask for help and seek out support services when they need assistance. To address this need, the Department of Health and Wellness (with support the Department of Education) developed *Guys Work*: a grades 6 to 9 school-based program for boys, with a primary focus on the health of boys and those around them.

The *Guys Work* sessions take place during instructional time while other genders are participating in similar programming with other school staff. The 9 lessons take place in a simple circle of chairs and have been designed to move youth through an experience that leads to a place of conversation and reflection on the misperceptions and/or masculinity performances at play for boys and young men.

This guide is designed to provide a brief overview of the GuysWork curriculum at Grade 7 and to identify the curricular links. For more detailed information, visit <https://www.bridgesinstitute.org/guyswork>.

Note to Teachers:

The overarching purpose of Guys Work is that adolescent boys will begin to engage in healthier behaviours, disrupting traditional masculinity norms that affect the health of them and their peers. Understandably, teachers may want to address curricular goals through the Guys Work program as well.

To maintain the authentic, safe, and confidential model used by Guys Work, students should not be assessed on their level of participation nor on the content of what they share. However, teachers might use formative assessment techniques such as exit slips or the check-out question to assess curricular goals.

The table below identifies the topics explored and the Healthy Living 7 outcomes that can be addressed by each lesson in the Guys Work program.

Guys Work Topics	Healthy Living 7 Outcomes
Lesson 1 - Identity	
Individuality and Intersectionality	Learners will analyse how life skills influence physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health. Analyse ways in which peer, media, and social norms influence healthy decision-making
Lesson 2 – Cell phones	
Boundaries	Learners will reflect on how relationships impact physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health. - Investigate the importance of addressing challenges in relationships with family, friends, or peers - Formulate ways for engaging in safe relationships online and offline
Lesson 3 – Balance	
Balance – passions and responsibilities <i>Addiction (based on where conversation leads)</i>	Learners will analyse the relationships between health behaviours and physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. - Investigate healthy behaviours for using new technologies and media - Question the relationship between sleep and health - Investigate the relationship between physical activity and health - Analyse food choices and eating habits that contribute to health <i>Learners will reflect on the importance of mental health literacy.</i>

Guys Work Topics	Healthy Living 7 Outcomes <i>**Outcomes in italics are not explicitly covered in the lesson but may come up depending on where the Guys take the conversation.</i>
Lesson 4 – Haters	
Insults and othering Prejudice and stereotypes Bullying	Learners will reflect on how relationships impact physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health. - Investigate the importance of addressing challenges in relationships with family, friends, or peers. - Formulate ways for engaging in safe relationships online and offline. - Analyse ways of recognizing healthy and unhealthy relationships - Evaluate the impacts of unhealthy relationships on the dimensions of health Learners will analyse how life skills influence physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health. - Investigate interpersonal skills that enhance health.
Lesson 5 – Help	
Help-seeking	Learners will analyse how life skills influence physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health. - Investigate healthy ways of coping with difficult emotions and challenging life circumstances. Learners will reflect on the importance of mental health literacy. - Investigate help seeking strategies
Lesson 6 – Relationships	
Making Friends Maintaining Friendships (conflict)	Learners will reflect on how relationships impact physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health. - Investigate the importance of addressing challenges in relationships with family, friends, or peers - Formulate ways for engaging in safe relationships online and offline

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Lesson 7 – Risk	
Risk taking behaviours Peer pressure Injury prevention and harm reduction <i>Help seeking (closing)</i>	Learners will analyse the relationships between health behaviours and physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. - Investigate the relationship between physical activity and health Learners will analyse how life skills influence physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health. - Analyse ways in which peer, media, and social norms influence healthy decision-making - Investigate interpersonal skills that enhance health <i>Learners will reflect on the importance of mental health literacy.</i> <i>Investigate help seeking strategies</i>
Lesson 8 – Body Image	
Body Image	Learners will evaluate ways to access reliable sexual health information that positively impacts adolescent sexual and reproductive health. Analyse how body image impacts adolescent health
Lesson 9 – Puberty	
Puberty – nonphysical changes (cognitive, social, etc.) Body image in relation to puberty Puberty – bodies with vaginas and/or female hormones	Learners will evaluate ways to access reliable sexual health information that positively impacts adolescent sexual and reproductive health. - Investigate ways for accessing sexual and reproductive health information. - Investigate physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual changes associated with adolescent growth and development. - Analyse how body image impacts adolescent health.