

Guys Work 8: Curriculum Connections

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 8 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 8 outcomes that can be addressed by each lesson in the Guys Work program.

Guys Work Topics	Healthy Living 8 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 1 – Identity 8	
Impact of masculine expression	<i>Learners will reflect on how relationships impact physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health.</i> <i>Reflect on the importance of respecting the rights of others.</i> <i>Learners will evaluate ways to access reliable sexual health information that positively impacts adolescent sexual and reproductive health.</i> <i>Analyse how body image impacts adolescent health.</i> <i>Learners will analyse how life skills influence physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health.</i> <i>Analyse factors that impact healthy decision making.</i>
Lesson 2 – Relationships	
Positive aspects of relationships Power dynamics in unhealthy relationships Challenges in relationships Traditional masculinity norms	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. - Identify how to respond safely to coercive behaviours
Lesson 3 – Homophobia	
Sexual identity, gender identity and gender expression Marginalization of queer individuals	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. - Reflect on the importance of respecting the rights of others.
Lesson 4 – Sexual Violence Part 1	
Consent	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

Guys Work Topics	Healthy Living 8 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 – Sexual Violence Part 1 (cont’d)	
Consent	• Formulate ways for engaging in safe relationships online and offline • Analyse ways of recognizing healthy and unhealthy relationships • Identify how to respond safely to coercive behaviours
Lesson 5 – Sexual Violence Part 2	
Power imbalance Age of consent Sexual violence literacy (rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual coercion)	Learners will reflect on how relationships impact physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health. • Formulate ways for engaging in safe relationships online and offline. • Analyse ways of recognizing healthy and unhealthy relationships • Reflect on the importance of respecting the rights of others • Identify how to respond safely to coercive behaviours Learners will evaluate ways to access reliable sexual health information that positively impacts adolescent sexual and reproductive health. • Investigate strategies for reducing sexual violence
Lesson 6 – Sexual Violence Part 3	
Sexual violence misconceptions Sexual violence literacy (rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual coercion)	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. • Analyse ways of recognizing healthy and unhealthy relationships • Reflect on the importance of respecting the rights of others • <i>Identify how to respond safely to coercive behaviours</i> Learners will evaluate ways to access reliable sexual health information that positively impacts adolescent sexual and reproductive health. • Investigate strategies for reducing sexual violence

Guys Work Topics	Healthy Living 8 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 7 – Pornography	
Influence of pornography Depictions of relationship, masculinity, and consent in pornography	Learners will analyse the relationships between health behaviours and physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health. - Investigate healthy behaviours for using new technologies and media Learners will evaluate ways to access reliable sexual health information that positively impacts adolescent sexual and reproductive health. - Question the reliability of sexual health information
Lesson 8 – Help Seeking 1	
Coping skills Identifying health issues that need support Normalizing 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 - Investigate interpersonal skills that enhance health Learners will reflect on the importance of mental health literacy. - Analyse help seeking strategies <i>Learners will reflect on how relationships impact physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health.</i> <i>Investigate the importance of addressing challenges in relationships with family, friends, or peers</i> <i>Learners will reflect on the impact of substance misuse on adolescent health.</i> <i>Compare strategies for coping with pressures and difficult emotions</i> <i>Learners will evaluate ways to access reliable sexual health information that positively impacts adolescent sexual and reproductive health.</i>

Lesson 9 – Help Seeking 2

Barriers to 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
- Investigate interpersonal skills that enhance health

Learners will reflect on the importance of mental health literacy.

- Analyse help seeking strategies

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*
- *Identify how to respond safely to coercive behaviours*

Learners will reflect on the impact of substance misuse on adolescent health.

- *Compare strategies for coping with pressures and difficult emotions*

Learners will evaluate ways to access reliable sexual health information that positively impacts adolescent sexual and reproductive health.