

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 8 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 *Guys Work* curriculum at Grade 9 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 9 outcomes that can be addressed by each lesson in the Guys Work program.

Guys Work Topics	Healthy Living 9 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 5 – Parent 2.0	
Male role models Masculinity norms Intergenerational trauma	Learners will evaluate health behaviours that promote short-term and long-term health • Reflect on the ways that personal identity can shape health related decisions Learners will develop communication skills that support the growth and maintenance of healthy relationships Learners will reflect on conditions that positively counter harmful gender norms, stereotypes, and biases within relationships • Investigate the requirements for balanced power dynamics in relationships Learners will investigate ways to care for one’s personal safety and ways to prevent injury online and offline • Identify ways for setting and respecting personal boundaries of self and others Learners will evaluate healthy ways to navigate change and/or challenging life circumstances
Lesson 6 – The Dadbod Express	
Health promotion and prevention strategies Social determinants of health STBBIs	Learners will evaluate health behaviours that promote short-term and long-term health • Investigate healthy behaviours that contribute to disease prevention Learners will investigate ways to care for one’s personal safety and ways to prevent injury online and offline • Analyse the risk factors associated with injuries in youth Learners will develop help-seeking efficacy skills Learners will analyse ways to care for one’s own sexual and reproductive health • Determine when and where to find options, supports, and treatments for issues that can impact health

Guys Work Topics	Healthy Living 9 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 – Boostermania	
Nude images and sextortion Gender equity Masculinity norms Coercion and consent Refusal skills	Learners will evaluate health behaviours that promote short-term and long-term health - Analyse the impact of technology use on health and well-being Learners will analyse ways to care for one’s own sexual and reproductive health - Investigate the factors that influence decision making relating to sexual health Learners will investigate ways to care for one’s personal safety and ways to prevent injury online and offline - Investigate rights and responsibilities of engagement in online spaces - Investigate ways to prevent, navigate, and respond to online victimization - Identify ways for setting and respecting personal boundaries of self and others Learners will reflect on conditions that positively counter harmful gender norms, stereotypes, and biases within relationships - Investigate the requirements for balanced power dynamics in relationships <i>Learners will evaluate responses to gender-based violence</i> <i>Analyse the ways that societal conditions, norms, and behaviours can contribute to gender-based violence</i> <i>Investigate ways to counter behaviours that contribute to gender-based violence</i>
Lesson 8 – Mud Puddle	
Peer support Help seeking	Learners will investigate ways to access health resources that support health and well-being Identify places to access reliable health information and health care

Guys Work Topics	Healthy Living 9 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 8 – Mud Puddle (cont'd)	
	Learners will evaluate healthy ways to navigate change and/or challenging life circumstances • Identify protective factors that support resilience in times of change • Investigate ways for coping with feelings associated with life challenges Learners will develop help-seeking efficacy skills • Identify signs that someone may need help with a mental health problem, illness, or addiction • Use communication skills to practice asking for help concerning mental health and addictions