



RAPCAN
protecting children's rights

Seminar Report

**Crime prevention interventions with boys: A review of
programmes and exploring what works
in the South African context.**

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Cape Town

Hosted by RAPCAN
with support from Save the Children Sweden

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1. Executive Summary

Crime and violence continue to be factors that complicate efforts to raise safe, healthy and happy children. In seeking to find meaningful approaches to crime prevention, RAPCAN hosted a seminar entitled “Crime prevention interventions with boys – review of existing programmes and what works in a South African context”. The seminar brought together practitioners from a range of backgrounds to provide a platform to discuss strategy and possible interventions aimed at boys.

Some of the key discussions from the seminar suggested that whilst work with boys should not be at the expense of girls, it does merit that interventions should target the needs of boys specifically. It is hoped that by doing so we will be able to address the root causes of violence and challenge masculinity stereotypes. Families and communities too will benefit from such interventions as they form an essential part of the boy child’s development. Whilst much debate existed around working with boys as a separate programme area, the seminar reached consensus that it is best that working with boys be integrated into all existing programme areas. This would ensure that the issues will be addressed at all levels.

With regard to theories and methods of intervention, it was felt that theories and existing models cannot be seen in isolation from the context and from the realities of boys today. Whilst a clear need exists for programmes to be evidence based, they need to be matched with the required needs and context of boys, their families and communities.

2. Background to the Seminar

The seminar: “Crime prevention interventions with boys – a review of existing programmes and what works in a South African context”, hosted by RAPCAN was held on the 22 October 2007 in Cape Town. The seminar, attended by forty participants from across South Africa, was funded by Save the Children Sweden.

RAPCAN is registered as a section 21 company and non-profit organisation. Its work relates to preventing and responding to the child victimisation and offending and it undertakes a comprehensive range of activities in response to these problems. These activities include direct services to children and families, the training of practitioners, the development and dissemination of resource materials and advocacy towards the reform of policy and legislation.

The purpose of the seminar was to profile the issue of working with boys as a prevention strategy, and to share knowledge and experiences of work in this nascent field.

The seminar set out to address the following questions:

1. What are we trying to achieve in our programme work with boys? Do our intentions relate to the prevention of gender violence, the prevention of violence more generically or other more fundamental goals (that are unrelated to violence and pathology) such as promoting the health and well-being of all children, raising happy children and families, etc.
2. How do we define and understand the problem that we are targeting through our programmes?
3. Should we be working with boys only or with boys and girls together?
4. What issues should we be targeting through our programmes?
5. What methodologies should we adopt within this work, both in terms of intervention and evaluation?

3. Presentations

RAPCAN invited a number of speakers to provide insight into working with boys. The presenters provided a number of different perspectives on the issue, including the discussion of programme interventions and findings from recent research:

- Lynette Rossouw presented the findings of research that she conducted on the impact of socialisation on the behaviour of boys
- Sakumzi Ntayiya provided information about EngenderHealth's approach of coaching boys into men
- Moefeeda Salie-Kagee presented research findings from research commissioned by RAPCAN on evidence-based international practice on working with boys as a crime prevention strategy, undertaken by Lillian Hu of the Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit at the University of Cape Town
- Dean Peacock explored risk and resilience and working with young men to address exposure to violence
- Louise Batty presented information from Keep the Dream's psychosocial programme to assist communities to cope with vulnerable children in Tzaneen

The discussion below summarises the presentations. The full presentations are available from RAPCAN.

3.1. The impact of socialisation on the behaviour of boys (research findings)

Lynette Rossouw, Western Cape Education Department.

Problem statement and focus of the study:

- Boys are a focus for social concern. They are much more likely to underachieve, drop out of school prematurely, be expelled or excluded from school, become involved in criminal activity, abuse dependence producing substances and commit suicide.
- Development/capacity building programmes for boys can only be effective if they are informed by research findings regarding the needs of this particular target group and the factors that contribute to their behaviour.
- An extensive literature study was undertaken and the views of various researchers and practitioners have indicated factors that contribute to boys' challenging behaviour. This information served as basis for this study.

Conclusions of the study:

Evidence was found that the socialisation of boys does have an impact on their behaviour. It became clear that the boys are expected to conform to a masculine identity.

- The respondents would prefer not to have to act "macho", brave, strong and emotionless (stoic), but society dictates that they must act that way as they will be the future protectors of and providers for their families.
- Father absence has removed the male models for many of the respondents and distorted them for others. A number of respondents also were/are subjected to inconsistent, harsh discipline.
- Not all the respondents missed out on a positive father figure: several gave examples of kind, supporting fathers, who praise, feel affection for them and look after them to the best of their ability.
- At school many of the respondents do not feel safe and they have to act tough in order to be accepted by their peers and to steer clear of being mocked. When they break the rules a number of educators resort to humiliating them and subjecting them to corporal punishment. Some of the educators also feed into the cycle of violence by reacting and not responding to the learners.
- Within the peer culture the respondents often have to prove their maleness by keeping strictly to a specific model of what boys' masculinity and male behaviour. Their peers' stereotypical views on masculinity lead to male aggression and risk-taking behaviours, such as substance abuse.
- The respondents attach importance to earning money and being able to provide for a family and protect them from harm, despite the fact that they did not experience this from their own fathers or even their father figures. For them it is important to be strong and unemotional in order to fulfil these duties.
- Given the high crime rate and unemployment levels in the country, a group of the respondents admitted to being ambivalent or even scared at the prospect of being a man. They are very aware of male responsibilities.
- It was particularly clear that the respondents have a need for a connection with adults. Within the safety of the interviews they were able to express the need for love, caring, support, to be talked to and to be heard. A connection with at least one male affirming adult was articulated.

Recommendations from the study:

The needs and challenges expressed by the respondents are incorporated in the following recommendations:

- Learners should receive services consistent with the minimum standards of service delivery documented in the WCED policy document. This includes that gender sensitive services are delivered. A Multi-Disciplinary Team comprising the educator, residential educator, school psychologist, school social worker, occupational therapist and school nurse should serve on this team. They must use their combined expertise to develop a comprehensive Individual Development Plan (IDP) for each learner. The IDP requires co-ordination of all learner, educator, curriculum and institutional development support in the YCEC. Strategies must be developed to address these needs and internal and external resources must be utilised in the process. Services must be co-ordinated and the learner's progress monitored against set goals and objectives.

- Staff should be trained in the facilitation of a range of developmental programmes that address the needs of the learners in general and a specific learner in particular. These programmes should include:
 - Assistance to learners to deal with and overcome their drug dependency.
 - Enhancement of capacity of male youth to learn. Boys should be taught skills that they can rely on in the future.
- Redirection of boys' energies in constructive ways. They request that opportunities be given to them to get involved in art, music and sports.
- Assistance with interpersonal relationships in general and relationships with the opposite sex in particular.
- Awareness-raising of self-defeating behaviours. This means that socially constructed unhealthy beliefs must be challenged and alternative behaviours discussed.
- Assistance to the boys to handle aggressive feelings and other strong emotions effectively.
- Assistance for the boys to identify and express their emotions by creating spaces where they can talk without being judged.
- Encouragement of the development of a connection with at least one male affirming adult. Mentoring training should be provided for the male educators and other male volunteers.
- Advice regarding the successful utilisation of community resources prior to disengagement from the centres.
- Parental involvement in the development of the IDP should be effected. As many of the respondents come from mother-headed households, it is also important that the mothers be involved in parenting skills training. As far as possible the staff at the centres should encourage father involvement. The needs of the boys must be interpreted to the parents, as well as how they can address these needs within the family setting.

Further research required:

- Insights into the impact of socialisation on boys were gained, but are limited due to the relatively small sample. A similar but more intensive study using a standardised questionnaire is warranted and will be undertaken. This should include boys in the mainstream schools, the special schools and the FET Colleges.
- Research with the aim of developing guidelines for effective collaborative practice by the YCECs team of professionals in the design and management of the IDPs should be undertaken. The objectives of such a study should be:
 - A critical analysis of the legislative processes and procedures for referral of learners to the YCECs
 - Describing various models and processes of professional teamwork
 - Discussing theoretical perspectives on the development and management of the IDP.
 - Investigating dynamics within the multidisciplinary team at the YCECs
 - Describing experiences and challenges expressed by the team members

- Presenting guidelines for team members in YCECs

3.2. Engaging men to end gender based violence: The Family Violence Prevention Fund (FVPPF) model of coaching boys into men - Sakumzi Ntayiya, Country Director, EngenderHealth South Africa

The presentation addressed the importance of working with men in recognition of their role in the spread as well as containment of HIV and AIDS. There are approximately 10 million HIV positive men in Africa and 7.5 million in the rest of the world, with 25% of men living with HIV under the age of 25. The presentation also addressed the linkages between sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence (GBV). According to the statistics presented, 1 in 5 women experience violence from men whilst 1 in 4 women experience violence whilst pregnant. There is also a need to explore the correlation between boys experiencing and witnessing violence and the influence this may have on their violent behaviour in adulthood.

In focusing on the socialisation of boys and men, there is a need to increase awareness about how gender role socialisation puts both men and women at risk and that it is possible to question such socialisation.

A number of organisations and institutions have dedicated themselves to working with men and boys on these and related issues. These include Engenderhealth (globally), Instituto Promundo (Brazil), Sonke Gender Justice (South Africa), Hope World Wide and others.

In 2000, the Family Violence Prevention Fund conducted a national formative survey in the United States to survey:

- Men's impressions of domestic violence
- Familiarity of people who have been in violent relationships
- Willingness of men to get involved in efforts of stopping violence against women and children

Some of the key findings of this survey were:

- Men responded very well to the idea that they influenced boys
- They understood the importance of teaching boys how to treat women with love and respect
- Role-modelling grabbed men's attention

A key insight to emerge from the research was that men understand the influence that they have on boys, and accept the importance of teaching boys how to treat women with respect and love.

A campaign to prevent domestic violence was developed based around the principle of men talking to the boys in their lives about how to treat women.

A simple action kit was developed for fathers/parents on how to talk to boys. It included information such as:

- Teach early
- Be there for him
- Listen
- Tell him how
- Bring it up
- Be a role model

Other campaign elements included:

- US Coaches' Playbook
- International Coaches' Playbook

Findings of the post-campaign evaluation:

- Before the campaign, 29% of men had talked to children about healthy, non-violent relationships.
- After the campaign, 41% had done so.
- 57% of fathers said they speak to their sons about domestic violence
- Respondents who remember seeing the public service announcement were more likely to say that violence against women is a very important issue and that they are considering doing something about it

3.3. Working with boys as a crime prevention strategy: Evidence-based practice

Moefeeda Salie-Kagee, Trainer and Materials Developer, RAPCAN. Presenting research undertaken for RAPCAN by Lillian Hu, Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit, University of Cape Town

The presentation provided an overview of theoretical frameworks and evidence-based practice in working with boys. The research looked at the context in which interventions need to take place and explored different methods used internationally that have shown success.

The presentation then described lessons learnt from interventions in South Africa, Brazil, India, Canada and the United States. The interventions presented were primarily framed within one or a combination of the following theories:

- Theory of masculinity
- Social cognitive / social ecological model
- Risk and resilient factors
- Social change theories

In conclusion the research findings showed that the key trends in interventions indicated the use of integrated strategies and practices. The interventions should demonstrate an understanding of the social constructs of masculinity and how this contributes to gender-based violence. The understanding of risk and resilience factors is key to assist individuals to make changes from within. Although interventions are not shorter than 18 months, evaluations are showing evidence of the benefits of a multi faceted, gender transformative approach in the prevention of gender based violence.

3.4. Risk and resilience: working with young men to address exposure to violence Dean Peacock, Director, Sonke Gender Justice.

This presentation commenced with two digital stories – The story of James and the story of Zihulele, of men’s experience growing up and how their relationships with their fathers in particular had shaped their behaviour and relationships with others. The stories were very poignant in pointing out how the relationship between father and son shapes the adult boy and how violence perpetrated by the father against the child is instrumental in developing the boy’s sense of self as well as his ability to manage anger and relationships.

Young and Adult Men’s Attitudes and Practices:

- A 2006 Medical Research Council survey of 70 rural villages indicated that “16.3% had raped a non-partner, or participated in a form of gang rape; 8.4% had been sexually violent towards an intimate partner; and 79.1% had done neither” (Jewkes et al, 2007).
- Survey of over 250, 000 school aged youth: males are more likely to believe that “sexual violence does not include forcing sex with someone you know; girls have no right to refuse sex with their boyfriends; girls mean "yes" when they say "no"; girls who are raped ask for it; and girls enjoy being raped.” (Anderson et al, 2004)
- 42% of men indicate they think government is “doing too much to end violence against women” (Sonke Gender Justice, 2006)

Understanding young men’s willingness to use violence:

- Violence is learned and used strategically
- South Africa has some of the highest levels of violence in the world (Altbeker, 2007)
- In South Africa, men kill women and other men at alarmingly high levels
- Many determinants driving the use of violence:
 - Self protection
 - Inequality
 - Exposure to violence

Exposure to child abuse:

- Fang et al (2007)– Analysis of data from US National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health in 1994-1995 and follow-up study in 2001-2002 indicates that: people who suffer certain kinds of abuse or neglect as children are more likely than their peers to perpetrate both youth violence and intimate partner violence

Compared with non-victims, the study finds:

- Victims of child maltreatment are more likely to commit youth violence (up to 7% more likely for females and 12% more likely for males)
- More likely to commit young adult IPV (up to 10% more likely for females and 17% more likely for males)

- The link between child sexual abuse and future IPV perpetration is significant for males but not for females

Exposure to domestic violence

Children exposed to domestic violence:

- Are more likely to attempt suicide, abuse drugs and alcohol, run away from home, and commit other delinquent behaviour, engage in teenage prostitution, and commit sexual assault crimes
- On average exhibit more aggressive and antisocial behaviours, fearful and inhibited behaviours, anxiety, depression, trauma symptoms, temperament problems, and lowered social competence, than children who do not witness such violence
- Research also indicates that exposure to domestic violence can affect cognitive functioning
- Research has found that men who as children witnessed their parents' domestic violence, are twice as likely to abuse their own wives compared to sons of non-violent parents

Responding to exposure to violence:

- Primary prevention: Best practice in the US includes nurse-home visitation, pre-school interventions and programmes for youth exposed to violence
- In SA, responses undermined by chronic shortage of social workers and psychologists in schools, communities and juvenile jails
- Passage of Child Justice Bill urgent priority

Programme Evaluations: Is there room for Optimism?

- The Medical Research Council's evaluation of Stepping Stones showed significant changes in young men's attitudes and practices after two years: men reported fewer partners, higher condom use, less transactional sex, less substance abuse and less perpetration of intimate partner violence (Jewkes et al, 2007)
- Instituto Promundo/Pop Council: participants between four and eight times less likely to report STI symptoms and 2.4 times as likely to use condoms with primary partner.
- WHO/Promundo study of 57 male involvement programmes: 53% of the programs classified as gender transformative were assessed as either promising or effective.
- *The Centre for AIDS Development, Research and Evaluation (CADRE): Sonke's OMC workshops "had a very high impact resulting in reported behaviour change. There is high dynamism as participants develop community action teams on how to put the training into action. The farmers are passionate about addressing gender and there is a need to build on this response... There have been major changes reported on reduction of sexual partners and increased demand for VCT...."*
- Family Violence Prevention Fund Survey 2007:
- Two-thirds of men (67%) say domestic violence and sexual assault are common in the United States.

- Just 15% of men say it is not likely that, at some point, a woman or girl they know will be a victim
- Seven in ten men are willing to talk to children about healthy relationships (up from 55% in 2000)
- Men give no institutions high marks for doing enough to raise awareness and address domestic violence and sexual assault
- 87% want employers to provide information for victims, and 72% want employers to provide resources to employees on how to talk to children about healthy, violence-free relationships

3.5. Psychosocial programme to assist communities with vulnerable children: experiences from Tzaneen Louise Batty, Keep the Dream

The programme uses a four-pronged approach in attending to the needs of children by including children as an equal partner in the care model; NGOs and the private sector in creating an integrated, managed approach to caring for children in consultation with other sectors; Communities to create circles of support for and with children and finally the government sector to advocate for the rights of children.

The main method of intervention with children for Keep the Dream is via the Scouts movement whereby children are engaged in the Scouts process and ethos.

The aim of the Scouts is to encourage the development of young people in every way so that they may prove a useful part of their communities.

This is done through:

- through character development
- training them to be responsible citizens
- through strengthening their body
- through strengthening their mind and spirit

Scouting encourages the participation of boys and girls from seven years upward. It is progressive in terms of achievement and advancement of awards.

Methodology:

- Morals based – good citizenship
- Learn by doing
- Team work
- Strong leadership process
- Achievement and award/recognition system
- International movement – a sense of belonging to something bigger than self

Strengths:

- The requests for more training in more areas for youth and adults

- Behaviour change by the children and adults
- Child-led change
- Participation and programme development by the children for themselves
- Ownership by the children and youth
- Breaks down stigma and discrimination between tribal groups, male/female, adult/youth, vulnerable children

Challenges:

- Absence of male role models
- Lack of men wanting to work in a female dominated field working with children
- Lack of knowledge around the Scouts – fear and suspicion
- Behaviour change is challenging and slow to produce results
- Currently a ratio of 2 boys : 5 girls
- Mobilising more boys we have found that if we start with younger children we are able to guide and mould their behaviours more successfully; therefore we have to wait longer to see the fruitful results
- Older children leave the area to attend tertiary education institutions and take their skills with them leaving a gap of young mature youth/role models.
- Emphasis on the girl child and women to the exclusion of males
- Women and children are informed of their Rights and empowered to the detriment of men being educated, this sets up an unhealthy competition and conflict

4. Key Discussion Points

The following is a summary of the responses related to questions put to the participants regarding working with boys. This input was received by placing seminar participants into random discussion groups.

1. What do we aim to achieve by focusing our interventions on boys?

1.1. How do we expect that boys will benefit from such interventions?

- By addressing the root causes of violence in working with boys in society and family as well as targeting health needs
- By addressing the issues of boys in the context of their environment and not only their responses demonstrated by their actions and behaviour
- Challenge stereotypes relating to masculinity
- Provide skills and information relating to masculinity stereotypes
- Do away with negative attitudes but encourage ways of changing behaviours and being a role model

1.2. How do we expect families to benefit from such interventions?

- Families can be part of the change
- Involve parents through education via the media. This can be used to support and strengthen families
- Schools start a debate that needs to be discussed in the family. Unfortunately many families do not understand or have insight into these debates. Families hence need to be given this information so that they can engage in this discussion
- Families provide young men with a guide of how to manage their future relationships with partners.

1.3. How do we expect communities to benefit from such interventions?

- Communities: Social evils have become norms and therefore a need exists to challenge these through interventions and building the resilience of boys and the community at large via media on a mass scale
- To have responsible citizens in a non-violent society. Non-violent masculinity needs to be redefined. Liberating the man or boy to a new vision of masculinity. Boys will benefit from these interventions as they will be provided with the opportunity to challenge the negative notions and to explore discriminatory notions of gender

2. Should work with boys be integrated into all programme work or should programmes be targeted specifically at boys?

- A separate programme is not needed - rather work with boys should be integrated and complement existing programmatic areas.
- Programmes should not be too prescriptive and must be adaptable to the varying needs of communities.

3. Who should programmes be targeted at? (Age, gender, etc.)

- Interventions need to be presented in partnerships and hence work with boys needs to be marketed to organisations so that they can gain an understanding of the importance of such work in addressing the root causes of violence
- Socialisation starts from a very young age, however programmes are currently mainly for older boys and men. The group felt that the interventions should hence start at a much younger age.

4. What are the theories or theoretical frameworks upon which to base interventions relating to boys?

- Theories must not be looked at in isolation
- Asset-based approach. Indigenous knowledge. Men working with men and how women can make a contribution.
- Circle of courage: Mastery, belonging, generosity and independence
- Developmental model
- The ecological framework: focusing collectively on the individual, family, community and society.
- Strengths-based perspective: Focussing on strengths, resilience. Work on enhancing what is already there and not seeing behaviour only as a pathology
- Theories around narrative work – not only about stories but challenging social constructs, beliefs, e.g. roles of women and children, challenging common perceptions and why we believe what we believe – believing blindly versus questioning and evaluating beliefs
- Systemic theory, Paulo Friere, participatory action research
- Child participation: There are however challenges related to sustaining such participation
- Evidence-based programming, to be informed in our programmes and methodology

5. What key elements should interventions relating to boys address (e.g. gender roles, masculinity, etc.)? In relation to each of the elements that you suggest, what issues should be addressed?

- Individuality, i.e. "I can be different."
- Promoting self awareness and introspection
- Leadership: exploring what is a leader, leadership and the wisdom that goes with it (not to just follow others blindly). Explore authority versus leadership.
- Notion of family and the different faces of family
- Role identity for boys: what do we expect of them in terms of what their societal roles are, what is it that we want them to be?
- Both men and women have a right and responsibility to help and support each other
- Must be about choice and respect, must not be enforced
- Challenge myths and traditional roles and beliefs, everyone can do everything by choice - education in the home and school
- Circle of courage

- Problem-solving approaches and having an understanding of problems
- Power issues – conflict management
- Alternative ways of expressing anger
- Sexuality and the dynamics of relationships
- Long-term interventions
- Male and female roles are not static but rather fluid
- Accountability for one's own health-related behaviour and how you affect others
- Media: the role it plays in getting messages across
- Literacy
- Critical thinking
- Women may not like positive changes men make, e.g. absent fathers – women could be responsible for isolating men from having contact with the child
- Different cultures in communities and how to mediate that, e.g. sexuality. Who do you target: leaders, teachers, etc. Which messages do we target at which levels
- Sexual identity – tolerance

6. Who should present programmes to boys? What skills should they have in terms of issues such as gender, experience and personality traits?

- Men and women should facilitate programmes together – they could act as role models and encourage positive perceptions of relationships, model the different kinds of relationships, etc.
- Facilitators that display empathic communication skills
- Facilitators could be men or women, as long as they are affirming of men
- Facilitators with negative perceptions and problems relating to boys or men (e.g. the view that they are all the same, that they cannot change) are not appropriate
- Facilitators need to facilitate and not prescribe. They need to be properly trained and have a positive attitude
- Peer trainers may be useful in providing role-models and better able to provide support to another young person

7. How should programmes relating to boys be evaluated? What are indicators of success?

- Measuring shifts through pre and post-tests
- Behaviour change is only realistically seen over the long term. It is therefore recommended that interventions in schools take place over a minimum of six months.
- Gather statistics that relate to environmental factors e.g. less trouble at school, arrest rates of boys, etc.
- A range of indicators need to be used
- Client impact surveys
- Mid evaluations (in the middle of the programme)
- Participatory action research can be integrated into the programme and take place over the longer term. Recipients and participants are an active part of the evaluation to identify what they regard as important

- Evaluations with perpetrators as well. To see whether we are filling the gaps that perpetrators are stepping into.
- Evaluations need to be matched to the original objectives that the programme set out to achieve