



# Guiding Young Men: From Theory into Practice

**Moderator:** Audrey Barrientos, Western Illinois University

**Presenters:** Broderick Booth, Homewood Flossmoor High  
School

Lauren O'Connor, Westmont High School



# Why Young Men?

- ✓ Traditionally male-oriented society
  - Non women's studies=men's studies
- ✓ Females now attend college in higher numbers than males
  - More than 58% of college students in 2010 were female, and the gender gap is growing (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2010)
  - Over 62% of those attending college were white
- ✓ How can we help boys catch up?



# Learning Goals

- ✓ Describe self-esteem and gender role socialization patterns in adolescent males
- ✓ Determine ways to encourage boys in a manner to which they will be receptive
- ✓ Explain gender role socialization and gender role conflict as they relate to adolescent males



# Major developmental themes

## ▼ For all adolescents:

- Change
- Capacity for self-reflection
- Low self-esteem

## ▼ For males:

- All of the above, but no perceived acceptable way to discuss issues
- Gender role socialization often puts struggles with low self-esteem and other common adolescent phenomena in a straightjacket



# Self-esteem in adolescent males

- ✓ Highest around the age of 14
- ✓ Declines during and after freshman year
- ✓ Self-esteem bottoms out at the average age of 19
- ✓ High school seniors have some of the lowest self-esteem they have ever experienced (Hartley-Brewer, 2006)



# Self-esteem in adolescent males

- ✔ Factors contributing to low self esteem include:
  - Differentiation in self-concept
  - Self-consciousness
  - Capacity for abstract cognitive activity (i.e. speculation)
- ✔ Generally males score higher than females on self-esteem scales (Quatman et al, 2001)
- ✔ However, academic competence is one area in which boys report feeling worse about themselves than girls (Quatman et al, 2001)



# Encouraging adolescent males

- ✓ Focus on achievement
  - Commend positive actions and decisions
  - Keep encouragement practical
- ✓ Assign male mentors
  - Help student see the possibility of success beyond what they currently deem themselves capable
  - Be a living example
- ✓ Adolescent boys can gain self-esteem and become achievement-oriented in school



# Encouraging adolescent males

- ✓ Praise should be concise and relatively spare
  - Boys tend to determine verity of praise with an inverse relationship to frequency (i.e. the more often they hear it from you, the less likely they are to believe it) (Hartley-Brewer, 2006)
  - Maintain a future-focus when complimenting young men— “Your hard work preparing for the ACT will help next fall when you start applying to colleges.”





# Gender role socialization

- ✔ Society pressures boys to deal autonomously with decision-making, difficulty, and establishing an identity (Pollack, 1998)
- ✔ Typical male gender role socialization encourages toughness, discourages challenging the status quo, and objectifies or otherwise lessens the role of women in society
  - “MTV” culture and other media



# Gender role conflict

- ✓ Common in adolescent males
- ✓ Encouraged “to be manly but empathetic, cool but open, strong yet vulnerable” (Pollack, 1998)
- ✓ Balancing expectations of society/media vs. expectations of teachers and counselors
- ✓ More pronounced as students graduate high school and move on to college



# Gender role socialization and entering college

- ✓ College men are faced with developing their identity and integrity in a way that may cause cognitive dissonance
- ✓ Attending university may delay responsibilities of adulthood
- ✓ Unlike previous gender role socialization, intellectual discourse and questioning the status quo is encouraged
- ✓ May lead to dissonance in male identity development (Ludeman, 2004)



# Guiding adolescent males into college

- ✓ Prepare high school seniors for the college search and admission process
  - Support males in their future planning
  - Keep commentary practical, concise, and future-focused
- ✓ Assign college-aged or older mentors to high school males
- ✓ Encourage participation in school activities
- ✓ Provide opportunities for males to visualize themselves in better futures than they



# **V.I.C.T.O.R.S**

## **Male Leadership Program**

### Program Overview



# Overcoming obstacles

- ✓ Vigilance
- ✓ Integrity
- ✓ Courage, Creativity
- ✓ Tenacity
- ✓ Opportunity
- ✓ Responsible, Respect
- ✓ Service



# Mission

To provide young men with opportunities for personal, social, academic, and professional growth in an environment conducive to learning, enrichment, and leadership cultivation.



# Vision

To expose and empower each participant with transferable skills to be used throughout his high school experience and in his future endeavors. Also, to relate these skills to the importance of academic success and social development.





# *Proper planning...*

## Chasing the myth versus planning the future

There's a big difference in engagement and persistence between students encouraged to "engage in college-going behavior" and those encouraged to become decision makers and long-term planners.

### CHASING

### PLANNING

"I will get a job"

"I want to be a pilot"

"I need to learn so I can ..."

Goal

"Ticket"

"Piece of paper"

"My degree is a credential"

"Getting a degree will help me because ..."

Degree

"School is a good time"

"College is an opportunity to grow"

"I will form lasting relationships"

Experience



# Primary Goals and Objectives

- ✓ Promote Academic Achievement
- ✓ Aide in Personal/Social Development
- ✓ Provide Essential Enrichment Opportunities
- ✓ Develop and Increase Leadership Capacity



# Promote Academic Achievement

- ✓ Identify areas for growth
- ✓ Improve overall engagement level
  - Impressing upon the group the value of education
- ✓ Promote Reading
  - Create an atmosphere conducive to reading for leisure
- ✓ Provide peer tutoring/guidance
  - Student to student interaction
  - Improving student resourcefulness and problem solving
- ✓ Monitor overall group and individual progress
  - Weekly progress reports, discipline reports, and assessments will be monitored and tracked



# Personal/Social Development

- ✔ Regular meetings will help to promote group cohesiveness
- ✔ Addressing/Discussing adolescent male development issues and challenges
- ✔ Embracing differences through diversity/bias training
- ✔ Identify/teach leadership skills
- ✔ Exploration of career development
  - Interviewing skills
  - Resume writing workshops
- ✔ Handling Adversity and Success
- ✔ Creating a clear Vision for future endeavors



# Enrichment Opportunities

- ✓ Group will be surveyed for career interest
  - Guest speakers will be sought relating to the interests of the group
- ✓ Post-secondary planning
  - College
  - Alternative options
- ✓ Volunteerism
- ✓ College Exposure
  - Visits
  - Enrichment programs



# Participant Identification

- Counselor recommendation
  - Sophomore thru Senior male students
    - Exceptions are made for Freshman on a case by case basis
  - 3.0-4.0 G.P.A. (Group A)
  - 1.9-2.9 G.P.A. (Group B)
  - 1.0-1.8 G.P.A. (Group C)
  - Personal/Social concerns
  - Overall Potential
- Application Process
- Counselor recommendation



# Program Logistics

- ✓ Location: Room 323-North
- ✓ Date and Time: Bi-weekly, Wednesday at 5:30.
- ✓ Mentors: Broderick Booth, Members of the local chapter of Sigma Pi Phi (Boule), and other HF staff members and community participants
  - Participants will be paired with a mentor
    - 1adult/2 students; 2 adults/4-6 students
- ✓ Start date: October 9<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ End Date: May 24<sup>th</sup>



# 2013-2014 Initiatives

- ✓ BigMarker
  - Students
  - Parents
- ✓ Young Women of VIRTUE
- ✓ Expanding data....





# The Experiences...





# The Experiences...







# The Experiences...





# The Experiences...

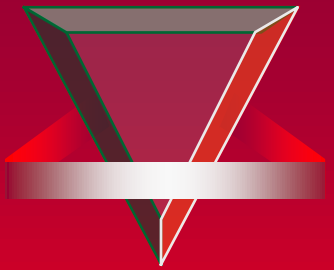






# The Experiences...





# Thank you!

Broderick Booth

Homewood Flossmoor High School

708-799-3000 x5621

[bbooth@hf233.org](mailto:bbooth@hf233.org)

Lauren O'Connor

Westmont High School

630-468-8100 x8111

[loconnor@cusd201.org](mailto:loconnor@cusd201.org)