



THE
COUNCIL[®]
FOR BOYS AND YOUNG MEN

Men of Honor

Becoming Respectful,
Nonviolent Leaders

SET ONE (OF TWO)



**10-SESSION FACILITATOR
ACTIVITY GUIDE**

For Ages 13+

By Beth Hossfeld, LMFT
and Mac Petty

Edited by Giovanna Taormina

Published: 2015



Session Eight Theme: ENGAGING IN EDUCATION – PART 1

While some educational barriers are rooted in policies and conditions beyond students' immediate control, this Council session explores the barriers to boys' and young men's educational engagement resulting in part from Man Box messages about school and being a student. In this session, a fun activity allows the young men to discover the power of setting goals, identifying rewards, and accessing support systems in school for success. By addressing these issues, we hope to empower young men to embrace their intelligence and find their place as active participants in their schools, potentially shaping their economic and health outcomes over their lifetimes.

ACTIVITY: Group Jump, Discussion: Young Men and Education

MATERIALS:

- Talking piece and Council Agreements
- Pens, pencils
- Chalk (a few pieces)
- Erasers
- iPad or laptop to play a music video
- Candy, treats, or small prizes for rewards
- Journals

PURPOSE

- Explore Man Box beliefs and rules about school and being a student
- Identify risks and benefits of investing time and energy into school
- Define personal motivations and identify goals related to education
- Describe how investing in education can contribute to becoming a Man of Honor

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- 1 Read through and practice the “Group Jump” Activity as it will set the stage for this week’s session.
- 2 Use or create a clearly marked starting line for Group Jump. If needed, use chalk to make a line on the floor or ground from which the first player will jump.
- 3 If feasible, use a laptop or iPad and locate the song “Win,” by Brian McKnight on YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uy-nmV9earo. Alternatively, you can read the lyrics aloud that are printed in this session plan and in the Journals.
- 4 Have the Journals ready to distribute.



Session Eight



OPENING RITUAL

Open with your chosen ritual that marks the beginning of your Council.



THEME INTRODUCTION

State the theme today – **Engaging in Education**. Let the young men know that later in the session they will be discussing the benefits and barriers that come with investing their time and effort in school.



WARM-UP ACTIVITY

Choose a favorite Warm Up or select from the tabbed section of the guide.



CHECK-IN

Using the talking piece, go around the council and invite each young man to “check in” about a high and low, or something on his mind or in his heart today.



ACTIVITY 1

Group Jump

This activity challenges the group to see how far they can jump as a team.

- 1 From a clearly marked starting line, ask for quiet from the whole group to elicit concentration and support.
- 2 Have one person do a standing jump from the line, jumping as far as they can. Have the second person jump from where the first person landed and jump as far as they can. Repeat this step for each Council member. Mark the ending point.
- 3 Next, ask the Council members if they think they can get further than their first try. Ask them how much further they think they can get. Then, start over and have everyone jump again.
- 4 Finally, repeat one more time, and offer a reward (candy, etc.) if they can get even further. On this final try, encourage as much cheering as possible.
- 5 Gather to stand together in a circle. Debrief the activity:
 - What just happened?
 - How did the first attempt feel different from the second or third tries?
 - What motivated you to try to jump further each time?
 - What barriers kept you from being able to jump even further?
 - What was the main point of this activity?
 - How did you support each other and why was that important?
 - Why was setting a higher goal important to you?
 - How might this activity relate to your education and experience in school?



Session Eight

- 6 **Summarize** what's been stated. Then say,
 - Setting goals, identifying rewards, and finding support are helpful ways to achieve more of what we want.
- 7 Ask the young men to listen as you play or read this excerpt of the lyrics from the song, "Win," which is printed in their Journals, Session 8:
(www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uy-nmV9earo)

"Win" by Michael Brandon Barnes and Brian McKnight

Dark is the night
I can weather the storm
Never say die
I've been down this road before...

I'll never quit, no, no
I'll never go down
I'll make sure they remember my name
A hundred years from now

I'll never give up, never give in
Never let a ray of doubt slip in
And if I fall, I'll never fail
I'll just get up and try again

Never lose hope, never lose faith
There's much too much at stake
Upon myself I must depend
I'm not looking for place to show, I'm gonna win.

- 8 Ask Council members for their reactions to the lyrics. Then say,
 - Sometimes lyrics can encourage us when we aim for our goals.



ACTIVITY 2

Discussion: Young Men and Education

- 1 Say,
 - Let's go further into the Group Jump activity and how it relates to school. We saw from the activity that knowing our goals, identifying rewards, and having support are helpful to achieving more of what we want.



Session Eight

2 Ask,

- So, in general, how are boys and young men doing in school?
- Please call out some of the Man Box rules about school. (Allow some time for them to think and respond. If needed, share one or two of the following examples: *don't care, be indifferent; joke around; skip doing homework; if you do care – don't let on; don't ask for help, etc.*)
- How are the Man Box rules about school affecting boys and young men you know?
- How do they affect you personally and in what way?
- In popcorn style, name some goals you have related to school, work, career, life and other interests.
 - If some boys don't mention a goal, ask them to imagine a goal they could set if they decided to.

Note to Facilitator: These may be immediate, short, or longer term goals, i.e., grades, attendance, behaviors, graduation, a diploma, college and higher education, a relationship, a career, travel, performing in a band, earning an income doing, etc.

3 Ask,

- What connections do you see between your goal(s) and school?

4 Read (or invite two volunteers to read) the following:

- Young people with a high school diploma earn higher incomes, are more satisfied in their jobs and careers, and enjoy better mental health than those who don't finish high school.ⁱⁱ Those who are able to attend college have even higher incomes, and more satisfaction in their jobs and careers.
- The average dropout can expect to earn an annual income of \$20,241 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. That's a full \$10,386 less per year than the typical high school graduate, and \$36,424 less per year than someone with a bachelor's degree.ⁱⁱⁱ

5 Invite the young men to stand for the remainder of the discussion. Ask,

- On a scale from 0-10, with 0 meaning *Not Important at all*, and 10 meaning *Very Important*, how important is completing high school? Ask each person to state or indicate a number with their hands/fingers. Thank them for their responses.
- If you said 5 or less, why isn't your number lower?



Session Eight

- What is your most important reason for attending school and what are the benefits to you?
- How does completing school connect with the goal(s) you named earlier?
- What Man Box or other obstacles can get in your way and how can you get support with these obstacles?



REFLECTION

- 1 **Summarize** the main points that were discussed. Pass out the Journals and pens. Ask the young men to turn to **Session Eight** and read the FINAL QUESTION:
 - *As a Man of Honor, what is one step you will take this week toward achieving your stated goal?*
- 2 Pass the talking piece around one last time and invite the young men to share their responses to this final question.



CLOSING RITUAL

Thank everyone for their participation. Complete the session with your chosen closing ritual.

ⁱ Excerpts from “Win,” by Michael Brandon Barnes and Brian Mcknight, retrieved 2/01/15, MetroLyrics, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/win-lyrics-brian-mcknight.html>

ⁱⁱ Child Trends. (2013). High school dropout rates. Available at: <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=high-school-dropout-rates>

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Census Bureau, 2012: <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0232.pdf>