



The Man Box:

A study on being a young man in Australia

Fact sheet

Impact of the Man Box

Young men inside the Man Box are those who endorse the Man Box rules. These young men report poorer levels of mental health, are more likely to engage in risky drinking, to be involved in car accidents, and to report committing acts of violence, online bullying and sexual harassment.

<u>Responses of young men to questions on their behaviours</u>	Inside the Man Box	Outside the Man Box
Little interest or pleasure in doing things in the last two weeks.	83%*	77%*
Had thoughts of suicide in the last two weeks.	44%*	22%*
Perpetrated verbal bullying in the past month.	56%*	24%*
Perpetrated online bullying in the past month.	47%*	10%*
Perpetrated physical bullying in the past month.	47%*	7%*
Made sexual comments to women you don't know in a public place in the past month.	46%*	7%*
Experienced verbal bullying in the past month.	66%*	44%*
Experienced physical bullying in the past month.	52%*	15%*
Went along or didn't take action when witnessing guys making sexist comments or jokes.	57%*	48%*
Went along or didn't take action when witnessing guys verbally or physically harassing women.	22%*	4%*
Drinks to the point of getting drunk once per month or more.	31%*	22%*
Been in one or more traffic accidents in the past year.	38%*	11%*
Report being satisfied or very satisfied with overall physical attractiveness.	67%*	57%*

* represents statistically significant relationships at $p < .05$

Young men inside the Man Box report poorer mental health and have a variety of behavioural issues that are harmful for them and others.

There is a diversity of experiences and views among young men when it comes to norms around being a 'real man', with evidence showing that those most outside the Man Box may also experience poor mental health and wellbeing outcomes, and that the Man Box might hold some benefits for those adhering to its rules by providing a sense of belonging resulting in increased confidence levels.

However, the most striking and consistent findings of this study are that strong endorsement of the Man Box is associated with bad outcomes for young men, causing harm for them and others in the community, particularly women. This becomes evident in a more detailed data analysis which divides respondents into five groups, starting with the 20 per cent who most strongly agree with the Man Box rules ('Stuck in the Man Box') through to the 20 per cent who most strongly disagree ('Free of the Man Box').

	Stuck in the Man Box	2	3	4	Free of the Man Box
Little interest or pleasure in doing things (at some point, past two weeks)	87%*	83%*	79%*	75%*	76%*
Feeling down, depressed or hopeless (at some point, past two weeks)	81%*	71%*	65%*	67%*	70%*
Having thoughts of suicide (at some point, past two weeks)	64%*	36%*	21%*	19%*	27%*
Overall physical attractiveness (satisfied or very satisfied)	78%*	56%*	60%*	60%*	55%*
Perpetration of verbal bullying (at some point, past month)	71%*	47%*	36%*	29%*	13%*
Perpetration of physical bullying (at some point, past month)	71%*	33%*	17%*	8%*	5%*
Experiences of verbal bullying (at some point, past month)	79%*	57%*	53%*	47%*	37%*
Experiences of physical bullying (at some point, past month)	76%*	38%*	25%*	14%*	12%*
Sexual harassment (at some point, past month)	70%*	33%*	16%*	9%*	3%*
Bystander jokes (joined in/no intervention)	53%*	62%*	53%*	60%*	33%*
Bystander sexual harassment of women (joined in/no intervention)	38%*	11%*	8%*	4%*	3%*
Binge drinking (at some point, past month)	38%*	29%*	21%*	25%*	18%*
Traffic accidents (at some point, past year)	55%*	32%*	13%*	11%*	9%*

*represent statistically significant relationships at $p < .05$

