



The Man Box:

A study on being a young man in Australia

Fact sheet

Recommendations

The following recommendations are informed by our research and the analysis of Associate Professor Dr Michael Flood, including the framework for action that he identified in order to break down the man box norms. The recommendations contain actions that, if implemented, will begin to unpack the Man Box norms at the societal, community and individual level.

Recommendation 1: that the Commonwealth, state and local governments ensure that relevant policies explicitly recognise the harmful impacts that the Man Box norms can have.

Programs and initiatives under these policies should focus on ways boys and men can live positive alternatives to the Man Box norms. This should be guided by a public health approach and be part of policies and initiatives in the following areas:

- mental health and wellbeing;
- alcohol harm reduction;
- road safety;
- crime and violence prevention; and
- the prevention of family violence.

Recommendation 2: that governments, philanthropy, business and community groups partner in developing, testing and evaluating new interventions focused on:

- building awareness, understanding and skills of family and peers (role models) to support young men to understand, critique and negotiate the rules of the Man Box; and
- engaging young men in settings where they are (education, work, sport, community) and providing activities/interventions that support them to live positive alternatives to the Man Box norms.

Recommendation 3: that government, academia and organisations working with boys and men should partner in further detailed research into the attitudes and behaviours of Australian men, particularly in the following areas:

- where social pressures around masculinity are generated and reinforced;
- the experiences of those outside the Man Box, to understand the influence of social pressures around masculinity on their lives;
- the interactions between Man Box rules and social harms including body image, online bullying, alcohol and drug use, and violence against women; and
- intersectional experiences and interactions with Man Box rules, and how these might operate differently within diverse communities.

Recommendation 4: that organisations working with boys and men come together to share knowledge and build capability in undertaking work that promotes positive alternatives to the Man Box. This could include practitioner networks and forums, as well as new tools for working with boys and men.

Recommendation 5: that efforts under the recommendations outlined above be pro-feminist and align with existing women's rights processes; are non-discriminatory and accommodating of diversity; and engage men from a positive perspective.