

Program H: Working with Young Men to Promote Health and Gender Equity

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Collaborating Organizations:

Pan-American Health Organization
World Health Organization
IPPF/WHR
Summit Foundation
Moriah Fund
Gates Foundation
USAID

The **Working with Young Men** Series is designed for health educators, teachers and/or other professionals or volunteers who work with young men (15-24 years) on themes related to gender-equity and health promotion. Composed of five workbooks and a video, *Once Upon a Boy*, the series includes background information and group educational activities for working with groups of young men on five major themes:

- Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Fatherhood and Caregiving
- Violence, including Gender-Based Violence
- Reasons and Emotions
- Preventing and Living with HIV/AIDS

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The Video *Once Upon a Boy*

Video Summary

Once Upon a Boy presents the story of a young man and the challenges he faces in growing up. During the video, the young man encounters machismo, family violence, homophobia, doubts regarding his sexuality, his first sexual experience, pregnancy, a sexually transmitted disease and fatherhood.

Video *Once Upon a Boy*

Duration: 21 minutes

The video is highly recommended as an introduction to the themes and activities in the manuals. It easily engages an audience and can be used with diverse groups, including adolescents or young adults of different educational levels, parents and caregivers, and professionals or volunteers that work with youth.

To ensure enough time to discuss the issues presented in the video, the ideal group size is 7 to 12 persons. It is recommended that the number of participants not exceed 40.

Tips for working with the video:

1. Watch the video before the group screening. Note how the main character adapts his behavior to conform to societal norms; pay particular attention to important passages and prominent themes for discussion.
2. Prepare for the session by researching more about the topics and preparing examples to relate the common themes to the every day life of the participants.
3. Confirm that the necessary equipment for the presentation (television, video, sockets, extension cords, etc.) is available and functioning properly.
4. Before the screening, inform the group of the title of the video, important themes, who made it, why it is being shown and the duration of the video.
5. Be careful not to make judgements or give your interpretation of the video content. It is very important that each participant is able to form and express his or her own opinion.
6. After the video, ask the participants what themes were presented. Make a list or chart on a piece of paper or on a chalkboard.

7. Use the suggested questions below as a guide to facilitating a discussion among the participants.
8. If appropriate, have the group watch the video a second time and/or extend the discussion about the video to another meeting.

Suggested Discussion Questions:

- What did you perceive in the scene when the boy was a baby?
- What was the father's reaction when the baby returned to his mother's arms?
- What was the significance of the pencil? And the eraser?
- What happened at the boy's birthday party?
- Why do you think that the pencil transformed the boy's friend into a girl? What happened when the boy wanted to play with the doll?
- Do you think there is a problem when a boy uses makeup and wears high heels? Why?
- How were the women characters portrayed in the video?
- How did the boy feel when he witnessed the fight between his father and his mother? What went through his head?
- Do you believe that men are naturally violent? Why does the boy throw a rock at the cat? Why does he go back to find the cat and take it home? How does he care for it?
- What expectations does he have for the future? What plans do young people today have for the future?

- How does a young man who is in love for the first time feel? What does he feel? How does he behave? Is it common to speak with male friends about this feeling? What do male friends usually say about those feelings? What do they usually say about women?
- What kinds of fears and expectations does a young man have regarding his first sexual experience?
- Is it true that many times young men don't use condoms? Why is it important to use a condom?
- If the boy truly enjoys being with his girlfriend, why does he go out with his friends instead of staying with her?
- What are sexually transmitted diseases? How can they be prevented?
- What do you know about HIV/AIDS? Is there a cure?
- What does the boy feel when his girlfriend tells him that she is pregnant? What does he do?
- What happens to an adolescent who drinks too much? Why might he drink too much?
- Some specialists say that drinking leaves people, especially young people, more vulnerable to violent situations. Do you agree?
- What happens to the young man when he is playing ball and sees his son in the bleachers?
- How does the story end? Do you like the way the story ends? What other endings could be possible?
- Do you think that the situations in this video resemble real life? How?