

Family Violence Prevention Fund



GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Family Violence Prevention Fund implemented a “Coaching Boys Into Men” program after conducting research on men’s impressions of domestic violence, their familiarity with it and their willingness to get involved in efforts to stop it. The formative research, which consisted of a national survey and focus groups, showed that the majority of men think domestic violence is a problem and that more than 50 percent have had domestic violence touch their lives in some way. The focus groups also indicated men’s willingness to get involved in efforts to stop domestic violence, especially if efforts involved mentoring boys.

Coaching Boys into Men partners with high school coaches across the country to prevent violence against women and girls. Athletic coaches play an extremely influential and unique role in the lives of young men, often serving as a parent or mentor to the boys they coach. Coaches have special relationships with their athletes and are poised to positively influence how young men think and behave on, and off, the field. From working with coaches, we’ve learned that whether it’s in speeches to the team, practice sessions or simply casual conversation, coaches have many opportunities to impart their philosophies to athletes. Through CBIM, we help give coaches the tools they need to talk to their boys to prevent violence against women and girls.

In partnership with the National High School Athletic Coaches Association (NHSACA), the FVPF created the **Coaching Boys into Men Playbook**. The *Playbook* is a straightforward manual that motivates coaches to and instructs them on how to talk with boys about the importance of 1) respect for women and girls and 2) violence doesn’t equal strength. The *Playbook* was an instant success with high school coaches. Upon release, the FVPF received calls from local, regional, and statewide Coaches Associations and schools throughout the country; many requested hundreds of copies of the *Playbook* at a time. The FVPF was invited to coaches’ conferences, seminars and workshops to discuss the *Playbook* and CBIM overall.

The Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM) Kit provides high-school coaches with a clear program comprised of useful information, coaching advice, and messages to help teach male athletes the importance of respect for themselves, others, and particularly the women and girls in their lives.

Over the course of a season, CBIM coaches lead their players through brief weekly activities that address themes such as personal responsibility, respectful behavior, and relationship abuse. Teams are encouraged to involve fans, parents, faculty, other students, and school administrators in support of CBIM’s respect message.

The materials include the following resources:

CBIM Playbook – This tool is a resource guide for coaches. It explains the importance of addressing violence against women, helps coaches understand the dynamics of the problem, and provides concrete strategies and activities that coaches can adopt to address it.

CBIM Card Series - This set includes four Prep Cards, eleven Training Cards, one Teachable Moment Card, and three Overtime Cards.

Prep Cards guide coaches on key actions to take in order to prepare for implementing a CBIM campaign. This includes involving team captains, gaining community support, working with school officials, understanding school policies, and preparing for the facilitation of weekly team discussions.

Training Cards have different topics for the coach to address with his team. Each topic includes a fairly brief statement from the coach, a few questions for team members, and a few concluding “wrap-up” remarks. The topics for weekly discussion include:

- Respect for women
- Personal responsibility
- Standing against demeaning language
- Ending bragging about sexual reputation and speaking disrespectfully about a girl’s sexual reputation
- Addressing disrespectful behavior towards women and girls
- The responsibility of physical strength
- Managing aggression
- Refusing to abuse or be violent
- Standing up against other friend’s inappropriate behavior
- Modeling respectful behavior towards women and girls
- Signing a pledge to respect women and girls

The Teachable Moment Card helps coaches respond when they see or hear harmful behavior or language.

Overtime Cards provide opportunities for coaches and teams to achieve greater exposure for the program.

EVALUATION

A quasi-experimental study was developed to refine and test the “Coaching Boys Into Men” training program and estimate effects on coaches as well as their high-school age male athletes. Coaches and high-school age male athletes completed baseline surveys prior to coaches receiving the training. Follow up surveys were completed at the end of the athletic season. Coaches and athletes from a neighboring school district without exposure to the training served as the comparison group.

Coaches who participated in the training reported high levels of agreement with positive gender-equitable attitudes. Following the training, coaches reported increased self-efficacy to respond to male athletes’ disrespectful and harmful behaviors. Youth reported more instances of coaches intervening when witnessing disrespectful behaviors.

A separate study of the Coaching Boys Into Men campaign’s mass media public service announcements showed that men who saw the PSAs were more likely than those who did not to say that violence against women was an important problem.

STRENGTHS

- CBIM provides an innovative and refreshing model for engaging coaches - a key and underutilized group of middle-school influencers.
- The materials are well developed, clear, concise and appear easy to adopt by coaches.
- The CBIM program has been endorsed by the National High School Coaches Association and many high-profile college and professional athletic coaches.

- Thousands of coaches have already signed up in support of the campaign.
- The program uses an ecological model, which moves beyond only working with team members by engaging in other complementary activities that influence the larger community.

WEAKNESSES

- Some coaches may not be the best spokespersons for this issue. It is possible that some coaches may unknowingly reinforce the harmful norms that the campaign is trying to address.

BOTTOMLINE

- This is a very innovative campaign with promising evaluation findings that could be perfectly suited for an ecological intervention targeting middle school boys. I would seriously encourage sites to consider this model.

For more information on Coaching Boys into Men, please contact:

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Please visit <http://www.coaches-corner.org>.

The Family Violence Prevention Fund (FVPF) is a non-profit based in San Francisco whose mission is to end violence against women and children. The FVPF employs a broad based approach to violence prevention that encompasses grassroots organizing, professional training, public education, public policy advocacy and implementation, and leadership development. For more than two decades, the FVPF has lead the way in violence prevention and continues to break new ground by reaching new audiences including men and youth. For more information, please visit <http://www.endabuse.org/>.