

## » Activity One: 'Attitudes to Violence' Continuum

- ⊙ Read out the statements below and ask participants to move to the place on the continuum that represents their beliefs regarding the statements.
- ⊙ One end of the room represents "strongly agree" with the statement or "true" and the other end of the room represents "strongly disagree" or "false".
- ⊙ Afterwards, discuss participants' choices, and read out the information provided in Global Bits (especially pages 12 – 13). As a result of the additional information, or of other people's explanations/discussion responses, repeat the continuum and encourage participants to readjust their position if they wish.

1. People make a big deal about domestic violence, but it's not that common.
2. If a woman is abused, she asked for it or probably deserved it.
3. Women who stay in violent relationships must really like the violence or they'd leave.
4. If a woman being violently abused stays in the relationship, it will eventually get better.
5. Middle-class women are not the victims of violence as much as working-class women.
6. Women in violent relationships are uneducated.
7. Women in violent relationships are crazy.
8. Children need fathers no matter what.
9. Drinking causes violence.
10. Religious men are not violent.
11. Violent men are unsuccessful and without resources to cope in the world.
12. Violent men are not loving partners.
13. Violent men cannot control their violence.
14. Domestic violence is a heterosexual thing and is rare in lesbian and gay relationships.
15. There are just as many women who beat up on men.
16. At least one out of every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex or abused in her lifetime.
17. Up to 70 per cent of female murder victims are killed by their male partners.
18. In global conflicts, women and children account for nearly 80% of casualties.
19. Of the 40 million people displaced by armed conflict, up to 80% are women and children.
20. Having unprotected sex with a virgin will protect you from HIV/AIDS.

## Activity Two: Boxed in by Stereotypes

Through the creation of two 'stereotype boxes', participants are able to explore their commonly held beliefs about the characteristics and expectations surrounding being a 'man' or 'woman'.

### 'Act Like A Man' Box

- Write **Act Like A Man** on the top of a flip chart and record responses (from both male and female participants).

**ASK:**

- What does it mean to act like a man?
- What words or explanations come to mind?

- Draw a box around the list.** This is now the *Act Like A Man* stereotype box.

**ASK:**

- Where do we learn these gender roles?
- Who teaches us these stereotypes? Parents? Media? Entertainment? Sports? Advertising? Magazines? Music Videos? (Seek specific examples)
- What other people influence our learning of gender roles?

- Write these responses** (and those from the questions below) on the flip chart, to one side of the box.

- Draw arrows** to illustrate how these influences reinforce the wall of the stereotype box.

**ASK:**

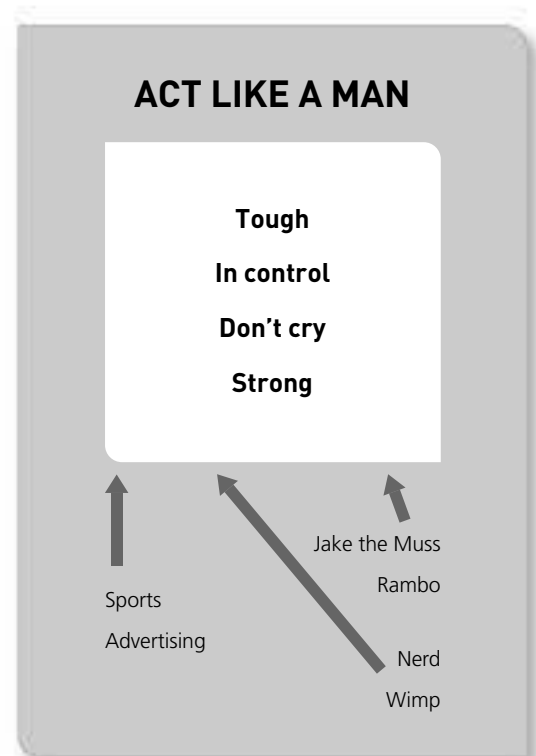
- What names or put-downs are boys called when they don't fit the box?
- What do they get called when they *step outside* of the stereotype box?
- How do these labels and names reinforce the stereotype box?
- How does it feel when we are called these names? Why?
- What do you think the person who is using these put-downs is feeling?

- Discuss** the potential dangers in allowing such rigid gender stereotypes to persist how we can free ourselves and others from these stereotype boxes.

### 'Act Like A Woman' Box:

- Repeat the activity above, with the emphasis on women.

Based on an activity from 'Men For Change'.



## Activity Three: Going Global on Women's Rights

Have participants use the Internet links below to research for this globally-focussed activity. The activity can be completed either individually, or in small groups. There are additional links in the back of the current issue of Global Bits.

⊙ **Scenario:** *You are a UN Human Rights Inspector in charge of investigating the status of women's rights in a particular country, including the particular human rights issues that women face in that country (genital mutilation, for example.) Choose your country, research it, and write a report that defines:*

- *The problems and human rights issues in this country;*
- *How these problems affect the women who live there?*
- *How severe these problems are?*
- *What, if anything, is being done (and by whom)?*
- *Your recommendations for the country – in order to help address these problems;*
- *What action Aotearoa New Zealand citizens could take to help address the problems you have identified?*

⊙ **Suggested methods of report presentation:**

- **Written** – with diagrams, charts or images to support text;
- **PowerPoint** – including text, images, charts and diagrams;
- **Radio Documentary** – tape record report and include interviews or readings from others;
- **Visual documentary** – use a video-recorder to produce a short documentary that expresses the relevant findings;
- **Photo essay** – with static images and short text notes;
- **Oral** – present a speech with supporting visual material;
- **Musical** – create a song or rap that expresses your findings.

⊙ **Take the plunge!**

Now participants have compiled this report, encourage them to 'take the plunge' and deliver their report to a small group to help raise awareness of the issues they have explored.

⊙ **Links:**

[http://www.research.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/links\\_intl.html](http://www.research.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/links_intl.html)

Site that has links to numerous websites for women's organizations around the world  
International Women's Web Sites

<http://www.womenwarpeace.org/conflict.htm>

UN Development Fund for Women site with profiles of women's issues for particular countries

<http://www.hrw.org/women/>

Site that discusses a number of issues related to women's right internationally

<http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2004/english/ch1/index.htm>

UN Report on the state of the world population, including challenges faced by women

<http://www.madre.org/articles/index.html>

Site with links to numerous articles and fact sheets related to women's issues around the world

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/women/index.do>

Amnesty International USA's home page about women's human rights

## Activity Four: The River

This group activity looks at the pressures teens face in developing appropriate gender roles.

- ⊕ **Materials:** A blindfold, masking tape, several pieces of newspaper, index cards, newsprint and markers
- ⊕ **Time:** 20 to 25 minutes
- ⊕ **Planning Notes:** Prepare index cards with suggested character roles (as provided below). Depending on the size of your group, use as many or few of the characters as appropriate. Be sure that one person gets the "Young Person" role.
  1. **Young Person** – Listen to all those who are trying to guide you down *the river*.
  2. **Father/Father Figure** – You are the great Male Chauvinist. You know best. Tell the Young Person what to do, keeping his/her best interests in mind. Use phrases like, "*When I was your age ...*"; "*Act like a man and...*"; "*Don't be a girl by...*" Feel free to be creative in your role!
  3. **Mother/Mother Figure** – You are the stereotypical Down-trodden Housewife – scared of your husband; unsure of your status; low self-esteem. Use phrases like, "*Do what your father says*"; (if to female) "*Act like a lady*"; "*Don't make a fuss.*" Feel free to be creative in your role!
  4. **Grandparent** – You know best. Tell the Young Person what to do, keeping his/her best interests in mind. Use phrases like, "*When I was your age ...*" Feel free to be creative in your role!
  5. **Minister** – You are the moral guide for the Young Person – within the traditional constraints of male/female role models. Feel free to be creative in your role!
  6. **Friend** – You are the "good" friend. You truly care about the Young Person. Encourage them to be who-ever they want to be, and to behave in a non-violent way at all costs. Feel free to be creative in your role!
  7. **Teacher** – Stress the importance of school. Give guidance where you see fit. Reinforce gender stereotypes! Feel free to be creative in your role!
  8. **Social Worker** – Give advice to the Young Person around issues such as drug use, sex, family, school, etc. Try to deconstruct gender stereotypes. Feel free to be creative in your role!
  9. **Media** – Think of all the influences in the media (TV, movies, magazines, etc.) Some examples of media messages may include sex, violence, money, etc. Promote strong gender stereotypes. Feel free to be creative in your role!
  10. **Friend** – You are the "bad" friend. You are a bad influence on the Young Person. Encourage Young Person to behave in a violent and confrontational way. Feel free to be creative in your role!
  11. **Health Care Provider** – Give advice to the Young Person regarding his/her health and general well-being. Some examples: talking about smoking, sex, nutrition, weight. Feel free to be creative in your role!

### Procedure:

1. Explain that, too often, a teenager is bombarded with competing pressures and influences in their lives.
2. Set up **the river**, laying out two long pieces of masking tape to form it.
3. Ball up several pieces of newspaper and scatter them throughout *the river* to form barriers. Be creative, calling them alligators, lava, white water, etc.
4. Ask for volunteers for the role-play. Select up to 10 volunteers and distribute an index card with a character role to each participant.
5. Give volunteers about two minutes to think about their roles.
6. Explain that there are many conflicting influences in the lives of youth, today more than ever. These influences may affect the decisions that young people make, including decisions about gender roles, stereotypes, violence and sexuality.
7. Ask all of the volunteers to come up to the front of the room and stand on either side of *the river*.
8. Ask the Young Person to come forward and blindfold him/her.
9. Explain that the various characters must guide the Young Person *down the river*, helping her/him to avoid the danger spots (alligators, lava, white water, etc.). Give the other characters about 10 minutes to guide the Young Person *down the river*. All the characters shout out their instructions as loudly and persuasively as they possibly can – all at the same time!
10. Conclude the activity using the discussion points below.

### Discussion Points:

1. What did you think of this exercise? Was it realistic? Why? Why not?
2. How did it feel to be the Young Person? What were the problems? Pressures?
3. Have you ever faced with similar pressures and influences as a teen?
4. How do these influences and pressures affect our ability to make decisions?