



MAINE BOYS TO MEN NEWSLETTER | FALL 2015

Message from Matt Theodores, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

At Maine Boys to Men, it is a rewarding time as we begin our school based programming for the 2015-16 school year! This newsletter is largely focused on the many significant updates to our **Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP)** which allow us to engage youth and entire communities around the issues of gender justice and gender based violence.

We have made significant program enhancements and formed important partnerships to reach significantly more students. In fact, our **Reducing Sexism and Violence Program will serve more students this school year than the prior nine years combined!** We are also reaching further across the state and working in collaboration with community partners to reach large populations of Maine's most vulnerable youth. The Reducing Sexism and Violence Program is at the core of our work and there is tremendous momentum around it. As we are reminded daily, there is also tremendous need. We could not have achieved this momentum without your support, so thank you for being part of something special!

Our other programs are also going strong. **Boys Outdoor Leadership Development (BOLD)** program reached 50% more boys this year and **Boot Camp for New Dads** is now serving men three weekends each month in partnership with Maine Medical Center, Mercy Hospital, and Mid Coast Hospital.

I hope you will join us next week on October 22nd for our free community screening of "The Mask You Live In" in partnership with South Portland High School. This 2015 documentary explores challenges facing boys and examines elements of our culture that encourage boys to detach emotionally and engage in self-destructive and violent behaviors. Details are provided below, and you can reserve your seat [here](#).

I am also pleased to share that we have been recognized nationally by the **Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)** for our unique ability to engage boys and men, to stand up alongside girls and women, in support of gender justice and against gender based violence. This three year partnership with OVW builds on our current momentum to engage entire communities around these critical issues.

Thank you for your interest and support, we cannot do it without you!

Matt

Matt Theodores
Executive Director

The Mask You Live In - October 22nd, 6PM
Free Community Screening - So. Portland



On Thursday, October 22nd, Maine Boys to Men and South Portland High School will be hosting a screening of the film "The Mask You Live In", at the South Portland High School Auditorium. The Mask You Live In follows boys and young men as they struggle to stay true to themselves while negotiating America's narrow definition of masculinity. Pressured by the media, their peer group, and even the adults in their lives, our protagonists confront messages encouraging them to disconnect from their emotions, devalue authentic friendships, objectify and degrade women, and resolve conflicts through violence. These gender stereotypes interconnect with race, class, and circumstance, creating a maze of identity issues boys and young men must navigate to become "real" men.

Please note that because of mature content, this film is recommended for audience members who are 17 and older. [Click here for film trailer.](#)

Space is limited so register [HERE](#) to get your ticket!!

National Recognition DOJ: Office on Violence Against Women

On September 8th, Maine Boys to Men received a \$350,000 grant through the Department of Justice, Office on Violence against Women. This grant provides the opportunity to deepen our engagement with youth and adults within Greater Portland and expand our work with homeless and runaway youth. We are thrilled to collaborate with Family Crisis Services, Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine, South Portland High School, and Preble Street, as well as other schools and communities across Greater Portland. I am equally excited to leverage our focused work to better serve schools and communities across Maine!

Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP) Extending our Reach and Impact

Our Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP) will reach as many participants during this school year as we've served in the past 9 years combined, and 30% will begin working with us while in middle school!

Through partnerships with **Jobs for Maine Graduates, Long Creek Youth Development Center, Preble Street Teen Center**, and alternative education programs, we are increasingly serving Maine's most vulnerable youth. In collaboration with several Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault agencies across the state, we are also building capacity to reach our most rural communities.

Work is underway or scheduled at the following schools:

High Schools: Deering, Lewiston, Machais Memorial, Madison,

Monmouth Academy, Portland, Shead (Eastport), South Portland, Washington Academy.

Middle Schools: Maranacook, Memorial (So Portland), Mahoney (So Portland), Mt. Ararat (Topsham), Whittier (Poland).

In partnership with Family Crisis Services, we have begun a six-week pilot at **Long Creek Youth Development Center**, running a young men's group for incarcerated boys, based on our RSVP curriculum.

Please contact matt@maineboystomen.org if you are interested in bringing RSVP to a

high school, middle school, or youth serving organization in your community.

Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP) Extending work with Jobs for Maine Graduates

We are very excited to be collaborating with **Jobs for Maine Graduates (JMG)** to extend the delivery of our **Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP)** in the 2015/16 academic year. Through their 79 school programs, JMG serves more than 5,000 students who have been identified as having barriers to education. We worked closely last year with **Arthur Mosen, JMG Specialist at Portland High School**, to create a set of RSVP workshops that fits specifically into the JMG classrooms.

In addition to working within JMG classes, we will participate in their three-day **Leadership Education Conference (October 20-22)**, serving nearly 500 students from schools across Maine. We are pleased that **Hardy Girls, Healthy Women** has accepted our invitation to collaborate on this important programming!

The continued delivery and enhancements to RSVP has been made possible by the generous gifts granted to us by Unum, Lincoln and Therese Filene Foundation, The Maine Women's Fund, Rines/Thompson Fund, TJX Foundation and Virginia Hodgkins Somers Foundation, as well as generous support from many of you.

Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP) Newly Released Offering for Middle School Boys

In May of 2015, Maine Boys to Men spent three days working with a wonderful group of 125 8th grade boys from **Lewiston Middle School**. This pilot allowed us to develop a series of workshops designed specifically for 7th and 8th grade boys. We have combined age appropriate exercises and activities from our **Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP)** with film clips from **The Mask You Live In**, a 2015 documentary that explores the unique challenges boys face as they navigate the narrow and often confusing definitions of masculinity.



Our RSVP workshops for middle school raise awareness of how social and cultural pressures shape understandings of gender and masculinity. Additionally, we encourage students to think critically about their personal experiences and how these pressures influence their own attitudes and behaviors. Lastly, the program introduces specific ways these boys can become leaders of positive change.

The middle school program is delivered in (3) one-hour sessions, typically spread over several weeks. By empowering boys to form healthy notions about their own masculinity during these critical middle school years, we provide the foundation for a life of healthy relationships.

Please contact **Sam Eley, RSVP Program Assistant**, at sam@maineboystomen.org to discuss bringing RSVP to your middle school.

Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP) 20 New Facilitators Trained for 2015/16 Expansion



None of this happens without the dedication and focus of our trained facilitators! On July 21st Maine Boys to Men held training for **20 new RSVP Facilitators**, the people on the front lines of this important program. This training was held at the Goodwill

Industries Boardroom and facilitated in partnership with **Family Crisis Services and Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM)**, two organizations that have partnered with Maine Boys to Men in the delivery of RSVP since its inception in 2007. This training included educators from Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault agencies across other regions in Maine, giving Maine Boys to Men an even broader reach.

Please contact matt@maineboystomen.org if you are interested in future facilitator training's or bringing RSVP to your community.

Boys Outdoor Leadership Development (BOLD) - 2015



This marked our 5th consecutive year running our **Boys Outdoor Leadership Development (BOLD)** program. The boys focused this year on discovering their "**True Strength**" and leadership traits including Respect, Trust, Tolerance, Bravery and Loyalty. We reinforced these traits throughout each day, tying them in and discussing them during many fun activities. This year, we reached 50 % more boys than prior years, including 15% who attended with

scholarships.

We had many special guests at BOLD this year! **Jen Fox**, a yoga instructor (**Living Om**) came and talked to the boys about mindfulness, being present and using yoga and breathing as a way to do this. **Mike McCarthy**, a pitcher from the **Sea Dogs** also visited BOLD. He talked with the boys about being present and focusing on your own personal goals, aspirations and individual strengths. Lastly, (**Wind over Wings**), a nonprofit bird rehabilitation center in central Maine, brought several of their friends to visit us. Each bird had an amazing story of resiliency and strength.

Our last day of the program was spent at **Wolfe Neck State Park**. One of the most powerful parts of the program was the closing circle on Friday where the boys shared what they felt their "**True Strength**" was and what the "**True Strength**" of the person sitting next to them was. The boys truly opened up and shared their emotions and feelings about themselves and their peers, it was very moving.

We would like to thank the **Lerner Foundation, Agnes Lindsey Trust Foundation, Walmart Foundation, and Delorme**. With their support, along with individual donors, we were able to offer this unique opportunity. Maine Boys to Men is planning community service events for this Fall and the coming year where we will bring the alumni of BOLD and their families together - **stay tuned for more information!**

Dick Hallstein Building Strength Fund Clam Festival Race Tribute

On a rainy Saturday morning this summer, close to 50 friends and family of Dick Hallstein came out to pay tribute to him by running in the Yarmouth Clam Festival 5 mile race. It was a beautiful sight to see the sea of bright yellow hats and polka dot socks all running and walking to remember this amazing man who worked so closely with Maine Boys to Men.



Maine Boys to Men would like to thank those of you that have already made donations to the **Dick Hallstein True Strength Fund**. Donations to this fund are generously doubled by the friends of Dick Hallstein who started this fund to honor Dick and support our Reducing Sexism and Violence Program.

To learn more about this fund, or make a donation, please click on this link:

[Donate Now](#)
Secure donations through
Network for Good

Stay Connected:

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