

## **MAINE BOYS TO MEN LAUNCHES TRAINING INSTITUTE IN RESPONSE TO NATIONAL EPIDEMIC OF MALE VIOLENCE**

PORTLAND, Maine [August 6, 2019] – Maine Boys to Men (MB2M) is responding to statewide and national interest by training others to use its Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP). Its first [Modern Masculinity Training Institute](#) will be held on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in Portland, Maine.

“We receive a lot of inquiries with the prevalence of male violence, so we’re now providing an efficient way for communities across Maine and beyond to benefit from our programs,” says Matt Theodores, executive director at MB2M. “Over the past year, we began training parents, coaches, educators, and youth-serving professionals to deliver our program within their communities. We served 5,700 middle school and high school students over the past two years and are extending our impact by sharing our knowledge and curriculums with others.”

Findings of a [study](#) led by Rutgers University and The University of New Hampshire found that MB2M’s program shifted attitudes of male participants in areas including male power, gender equity, and the use of coercion and violence in relationships. The program also changed existing beliefs that violence, including sexual harassment and dating violence, is acceptable.

“The students at Camden Rockport Middle School continue to benefit from our multi-year partnership with Maine Boys to Men”, said Matthew Smith, assistant principal at Camden Rockport Middle School. “Through MB2M’s train-the-trainer offering, we now deliver their program independently as part of our character education program. Middle school is such a critical time to guide boys toward a healthy version of masculinity and this is some of the most valuable learning they can do.”

Communities are recognizing that boys encounter rigid definitions of masculinity that lead to self-harm and violence. Increasingly schools, youth-serving organizations, and parents are looking to MB2M for related guidance.

“Portland Community Squash has made RSVP a permanent part of our wellness program which serves an intentionally diverse group of students in Portland,” said Barrett Takesian, executive director at Portland Community Squash. “MB2M trained us to use their curriculum, giving us the tools and confidence to create safe spaces and open up the most important conversations with the students we serve.”

“I am honored to bring this impactful program to middle schools and community organizations in the Kennebec Valley.” said Mike Griswold, recreation coordinator for the City of Augusta. “I first participated in MB2M’s train-the-trainer program while working at the Kennebec Valley YMCA and saw the importance of investing in the healthy development of boys to benefit them and those around them.”

For Information on MB2M and its Modern Masculinity Training Institute, please visit [www.maineboystomen.org](http://www.maineboystomen.org).