

---

Boys Only Toolkit



Enter the circle



**Gender Violence**

---

## Boys Only

© Michael Auden 2017

**MONED**

[www.moned.net](http://www.moned.net)

[moned@iprimus.com.au](mailto:moned@iprimus.com.au)

PO Box 288

Rye Victoria 3941



**Discussion Summary:**

This exercise is a visually powerful way for participants to see they are not alone and that others may share their life experiences. Knowing they have an ally amongst their peers may save someone from feeling their life is isolated or that they are an outcast.



1. Create a circle on the floor.
2. Have all participants stand on the outside of “the circle.”
3. Explain that you will read a question starting with, “Enter the circle if...” and that if it applies to them, they should step into the circle. Remind the students to be as honest as they are comfortable with and that the space is non-judgmental and safe. Explain there should be no talking during the game, except for the person asking the question and that there will be a discussion afterwards. Ask if there are any questions.
4. Begin the game. Read a question beginning with, “Enter the circle...(you have brown hair; you have blue eyes; you have a brother).” Participants step into the circle if it applies to them and remain on the starting side of the circle if it does not. Pause and ask the students to silently look around to see who is standing with them. Then ask them to go back to the starting side of the

---

circle.

5. The following is a list of sample questions. The questions should be tailored to the needs of the age and populations you are working with.

6. Continue asking questions. Pause briefly before saying “next question.” After each question the students return to the starting side of the line.

7. After asking several questions, ask if anyone else has a question they would like to ask. Have volunteers ask their questions.

8. After several rounds of questions and entering the circle, have participants sit comfortably. Debrief/discuss. Ask the participants to share: How did it feel to cross the line? How did it feel when you didn't cross the line? What surprised you the most during this game? What did you learn? What lessons can you take away from this game?



## **“Enter the circle if...”**

- A female in your family been assaulted?
- You believe men are more violent than women?
- You have ever been hit by a girl?
- You have ever hit a girl?
- Your Dad protects the females in your family from unwanted attention?
- You think gender-based violence is a problem in your community?
- You think teen girls invite unwanted attention by the way they dress?
- You think films encourage violence towards women?
- You have stopped other guys harassing girls at school?
- You have told a joke that puts down girls?
- You think women are better suited to home duties than men?
- You believe a woman should obey her husband?

- 
- You believe men are more likely to revert to abuse of a partner than women?
  - You believe your Dad is a positive role model for you?
  - You have been pressured to put down girls at school?
  - You have yelled at or sworn at a girl?
  - You seek ways to behave from males outside of your home?
  - You have more than one adult male to set you good examples of behaviour?



## Sitting in a circle

The stepping into the circle exercise may have generated an environment suited to exploring issues through discussion or reflection.

The next step in exploring boys' attitudes to the topic being investigated is inviting them to share and explore their responses to the questions raised in the stepping into the circle session.

First, you will need to create a safe space and some rules.

The starting point may be to get all participants seated inside the circle. Use a length of hose or a long extension cord to create your circle.

Reinforce the rules and invite boys to contribute any rules they feel will make the space safer and comfortable. The rules should reinforce the following qualities:



---

Warmth, closeness, connectedness, caring, respect for others, confidentiality, constructive feedback, cultural sensitivity, non-judgmental responses and inclusivity.

## Boys Only Circle Cards

The pack of 173 Boys Only Cards and the pack of Boys Resilience Cards give you over 300 questions, statements and ideas to stimulate conversation. Use them as appropriate to get conversation started.

## Reflection

The final activity of the Boys Only Circle can involve boys having the opportunity to reflect upon the session privately and to record their thoughts and experience. Boys are usually less interested in journaling than girls. You may prefer to use different terminology e.g. keeping a logbook.

A sample Boys Only Circle Logbook is included in the toolkit.



## **Boys Only**

© Michael Auden 2017

**MONED**

[www.moned.net](http://www.moned.net)

[moned@primus.com.au](mailto:moned@primus.com.au)

PO Box 288

Rye Victoria 3941