



# **“Committed Men”**

## **Media Literacy Tool Kit:**

### ***Engaging Men & Boys to Prevent Dating & Domestic Violence***

*This Media Literacy Toolkit serves as a guide to encourage our community to commit to violence prevention by analyzing consumption, challenging the messages and creating change through media.*

Created by: Aid to Victims Abuse, Inc. “Commit to Change” Prevention program. 2018

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### **Why Engage Men and Boys with Media Literacy:**

Gender based violence in the forms of domestic, dating, and sexual violence has impacted our culture and need for effective prevention in our society. As women are most likely to become victimized by these types of violence, the responsibility for men to commit to addressing the culture norms that support violence is crucial to prevention. The cultural norms that normalize harmful behavior, beliefs and attitudes of men are reinforced through various media messaging. The adverse impacts to our relationships, community and society hurts young men and boys, as well as women and girls. The pressures to maintain the dominant story of men and masculinity don't include narratives to hold men accountable. These choices can be based on how society has created a culture that has normalized violence against women. As we recognize the negative impact on men, it is up to the majority of men to help create a culture in which masculinity is defined by healthy manhood. Men must challenge the harmful aspects of gender socialization that has led to the culture of violence against women and girls. A large part of our socialization is taught and reinforced through the numerous forms of media we have access to everyday. If we can understand the messages of media on gender and how they create the culture where violence is accepted and even expected in relationship roles and interactions, we can then begin to commit to change.

Facilitator notes/discussion:

3 of the top 10 reasons to work with Men and Boys (Futures Without Violence)

- Gender violence needs to be approached as a men's issue. Overwhelmingly it is men who hurt women. It is through work with men and boys that we can end violence against women.
- Men can stop violence! They can choose not to perpetrate acts of violence and challenge those men who do. Men can also challenge ideals and attitudes which support violence against women.
- Men and boys listen to their peers – we need to mobilize men and boys to talk to each other about respect for women and girls, and share information about violence prevention with other men in their families, workplaces, and communities.

Find the other reasons at:

<http://engagingmen.futureswithoutviolence.org/why-men-boys/top-10-reasons/>

## What is media literacy?

Media literacy is an essential skill in the 21st Century. Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media. Messaging from media comes in many forms and literacy has expanded over time to include visuals and audios aside from reading and writing. As technology has advanced, media messaging has a prominent platform to influence society and cultural norms. Media literate youth and adults are better able to understand the complex messages and commit to change.

Media literacy skills can help youth and adults:

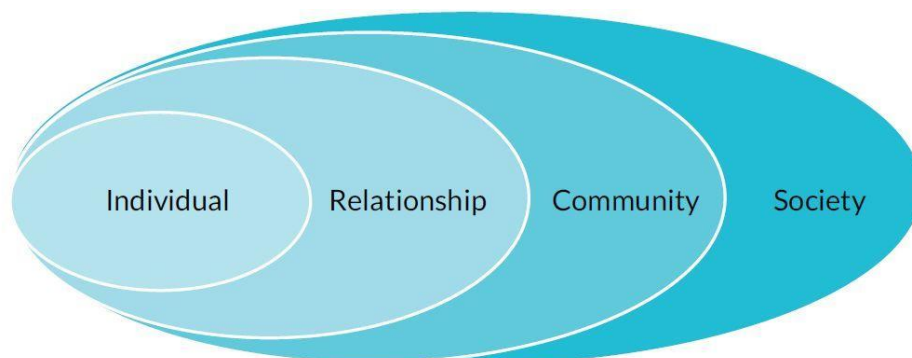
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Understand how media messages shape our culture and society
- Identify target marketing strategies
- Recognize what the media maker wants us to believe, while shaping attitudes
- Recognize bias, misinformation, and perpetuation of harmful stereotypes
- Discover the parts of the story that are not being told
- Evaluate media messages based on our own experiences, skills, beliefs, and values
- Create and distribute our own media messages
- Advocate for media justice

### What's Your Commitment?

Commitment is a choice and an act. We encourage everyone people to deconstruct media and make informed choices on the media they consume, while encouraging creation and promotion of positive messaging.

Stereotypes of race, class, genders, among other social norms, are harmful to the individuals who identify within these groups and to those who don't. Harmful messaging can limit our identity, influence our relationships, and impact our community and society.

Understanding media's influence through media literacy is a practice we can utilize to prevent violence. Using the Social-ecological model, also used by the CDC when looking at public health, we can see the impact of media on the four levels of society. The four levels found in the SEM are the individual, relationship, community and societal level.



Source: Heise 1998

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## Practicing the 3 “C’s” of your media usage: Consuming, Challenging, and Creating

*“Because children have high levels of exposure, media has greater access and time to shape young people’s attitudes and actions than do parents or teachers, replacing them as educators, role models, and the primary sources of information about the world and how one behaves in it.”*

— American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Communications and Media

### What are you Consuming?

We are all exposed to messaging in different formats and through various platforms. Our everyday surroundings are full of visuals and audios that send a message to us about who we are, who we should be, what we should wear, and what is expected of us. These messages target our genders, our relationships, our education, our cultures, our religions, and reflect an expectation of gender roles in our society. Media is a powerful tool utilized to construct our culture. The media we consume reinforces the narrow stereotypes of gender roles and identity.

*Check your consumption (Facilitator Questions/Discussion):*

*What songs and artists are popular right now?*

*What movies are considered classics?*

*What magazines directed at men and women are sold in your local stores?*

*What ads or billboards are posted in your neighborhood?*

### **Millennials Rack Up 18 Hours of Media Use Per Day**

Average time millennials in the U.S. spend interacting with media per day (hh:mm)\*



\* media activities are not mutually exclusive; based on a 2014 survey among 839 U.S. adults aged 18-36

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Source: Crowdtap, Ipsos MediaCT statista

We have gathered information to identify how much media is consumed by us through all the levels of the SEM. This information allows us to understand how our consumption supports and participates in media messaging.

### **Individual level –**

- A national survey reported teenagers spend, on average, 8.08 hours a day using various forms of media, not including time spent doing school work or talking or texting on a cell phone. This includes television, commercial or self-recorded video, movies, video games, print, radio, recorded music, computers, cell phones, and the Internet. (1)

### **Relationship Level –**

- 90% of 13-17-year-olds have used some form of social media and 75% have a profile on a social networking site. (2)
- 38% of youth share photos, stories, videos and art. (3)
- 47% of teens have uploaded pictures where others can see them. (4)
- According to research from Pew Hispanic Center, 65% of young internet users have been suffered online harassment, and young women aged 18-24 are particularly vulnerable as they experience certain severe types of harassment at disproportionately high levels.

### **Community/Societal Level –**

- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a 2007 report on violent programming on television, and noted that there is “strong evidence” that exposure to violence through the media can increase aggressive behavior in children. (5)
- Many (video) games have violent content and studies have shown a significant association between violent content with increases in aggression, desensitization to violence, decrease in positive social behaviors, and increases in delinquent behaviors. (6,7,8)
- Content analysis has shown that in music videos more than 80 percent of violence is perpetrated by attractive people, and that it depicts acts of violence mainly against women and minorities. (9)
- Studies have found that 91 percent of movies on television contained violence, even extreme violence. (10)

\*\*\* Video games, music and music video as well as movies are all accessible through our phones and promoted through social media sites. \*\*\*

## BOTTOM LINE: MEN DOMINATE MEDIA



Gender inequality is evident in print, on television, and online across all media outlets and in all news topics. Overall there has been little change since last year.



62.1% 37.3% 0.6%

unknown

To learn more about The Status of Women in the U.S. Media 2015, please visit: <http://j.mp/2015-wmc-gender-gap>

To download the WMC Divided 2015 The Media Gender Gap infographic, please visit: <http://j.mp/2015-divided-infographic>



@womensmediacntr

*Check in (Facilitator Questions/Discussion): How much media are you consuming? How is the consumption of all the messages impacting us as individuals? How is it impacting the relationship we have with others including our partners, friends, and family? Is the consumption supporting healthy or unhealthy behaviors?*

## Where's the Challenge?

Analyzing media – All media images and messages are intentional constructions. Ads and other media messages have been carefully crafted with the purpose to send a very specific message. Media messaging perpetuates or challenges both positive and negative ideas about individuals, groups and issues. We must critically think about the messages of media, not passively absorb, in order to challenge the ideology that leads to harmful attitudes and behaviors.

### How challenging the message can help end violence against women while benefiting men and boys:

Gender stereotypes – harmful gender norms and roles are at the root of violence against women and girls while limiting men and boys development. By challenging the messages through media that reinforces the harmful stereotypes we can reduce violence and build healthy men and women by expanding the narrow and limiting definition of “masculine” and “feminine.”

Normalized Violence – Media messaging normalizes violence against women and girls by portraying women as objects and values them in a “less than” human view. When we see someone as less than human, violence against them is more generally accepted. Media messages also normalize unhealthy behaviors in relationships. Jealousy and obsessive behavior is normalized as part of a dynamic of relationships. Red flags and controlling behaviors are romanticized as passion, caring, and love.

### *Challenge check (Facilitator Questions/Discussion):*

1. *What messages do popular lyrics tell you about expressing emotions?*
  - *What is the representation of gender by the lyrics/artist? (i.e. men cheat, women are goldiggers, women are liars, physical attraction is important, men are cold hearted)*
2. *What messages do movies give you about relationships?*
  - *What are the gender characteristics displayed by the actors? (i.e. Men are tough, jealousy is part of love, and women are in danger),*
3. *What messages do magazines tell you about gender?*
  - *What are the images and messages about gender? (i.e. Women want to lose weight, men want to gain muscle, men have expensive things, women gossip, men have careers, and women have relationships)*





### **Additional Questions to Consider -**

What assumptions does the ad make about gender? (*i.e. Women are powerful when they hold a hair dryer in their hands. Men like to drink beer. Women are primary caregivers, etc...*) Are these assumptions realistic? Why or why not? Do these assumptions reinforce or challenge stereotypes about gender identity?

What assumptions does the ad make about race (*i.e. African Americans are excellent athletes. Latinos are sensual and passionate. etc...*) Are these assumptions realistic? Why or why not? Do these assumptions reinforce or challenge stereotypes about racial identity?

What assumptions does the ad make about class (*i.e. Wealthy people are happy and trouble-free. Poor people are always looking for a handout, etc...*) Are these assumptions realistic? Why or why not? Do these assumptions reinforce or challenge stereotypes about class?

(Questions from [www.MediaEd.org](http://www.MediaEd.org) "deconstructing an Ad")



## Creating for Change

We cannot eliminate all the harmful or negative messaging that is out there but we have a choice in the media we consume, share and create. Once we have the understanding of the power of media messaging to influence our attitudes, beliefs and behaviors, we can choose to create our own. We can influence all levels of the SEM as media consumers. We can create the message we want through pictures, meme's, music, art, etc. and share that on the relationship level. We choose who and what to follow, watch and share from the community and societal level to create change.

Local Community Action work:

In 2017, Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse, Inc. (AVDA) worked with youth in Palm Beach County, FL participating in the Engaging Men & Boys project to create positive messages. Through mentoring groups focused on healthy masculinity and violence prevention, the youth learned skills to build and maintain healthy and equitable relationships. Keychain cards were created in partnership with the youth, mentors, professional partners and violence prevention educators to enhance the "Commit to Change" programming efforts to prevent gender-based violence in our local communities. Keychains were created and distributed to youth to support positive messaging campaign efforts.



**Learn more from other agencies and join the team!**

AVDA: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0Datzl4B\\_7D2LG2lQAWfmA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0Datzl4B_7D2LG2lQAWfmA)

Twitter/Instagram: @AVDA\_C2CLeaders

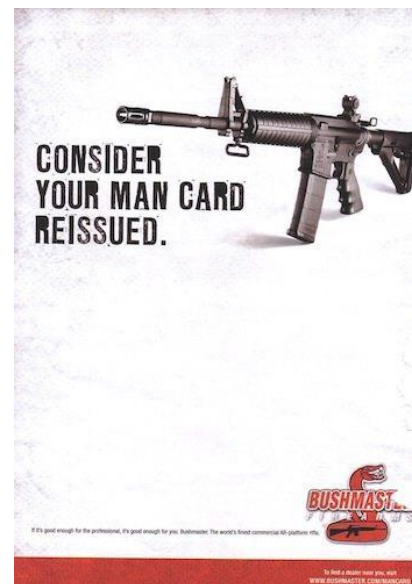
Men Can Stop Rape: <http://www.mencanstoprape.org/> / @mencanstoprape

Break The Cycle: <https://www.breakthecycle.org/> / @BreaktheCycleDV

### What's your Commitment?

We all have the power to create positive messages and recreate our societal beliefs and culture. As we are the consumers, we have the ability to shift attitudes and beliefs to drive media to meet our interests. Domestic and dating violence has been supported through media in the forms of misogyny, sexism, toxic masculinity, racism, classism and other roots of violence structured through power dynamics. Media literate youth become media activist who seek change and bring awareness to justice issues. Check in with your media consumption, analyze and challenge the messages, and create social change.

### Examples of Harmful Ads:



## **References:**

1. (Rideout, V. J., Foehr, U. G., & Roberts, D. F. (2010). Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8-18-Year-Olds. Menlo Park, CA: Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/8010.pdf>)
2. (Rideout, V. (2012). Social media, social life: How teens view their digital lives: A Common Sense Media Research Study. <http://www.common sense media.org/sites/default/files/research/socialmediasociallife-final-061812.pdf>)
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5. Federal Communications Commission. In the matter of violent television programming and its impact on children. 2007.
6. Brockmyer JF. Playing violent video games and desensitization to violence. *Child Adolesc Psychiatr Clin N Am.* 2015;24(1):65-77.
7. Exelmans L, Clusters K, Van den Bulck J. Violent video games and delinquent behavior in adolescents: a risk factor perspective. *Aggress Behav.* 2015;41(3):267-279.
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More Stats:

<https://www.guardchild.com/social-media-statistics-2/>

<http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/social-media/>

<https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/violence-media.html>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2704015/>

## Media Literacy Commitment Worksheet

Fill out the following worksheet on the 3 “C’s” discussed in the toolkit. You will begin to understand your own consumption, challenge the message and move to creating change.

**Consume:** What goes in, comes out...

### Individual Level:

What device/devices do you use?

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How many times a day would you say you check your device?

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Your 3 most visited app/site? (i.e. social media, YouTube, etc.)

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### Relationship Level:

Top 5 friends/family you follow?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_

Your 5 most recent posts?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_

Your 5 most recent viewed/liked of others (pics, meme’s, status updates, etc.)?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_

### Community Level:

Do you follow or view your community (school, local gov’t, business, news or culture) list any?

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### Society Level:

Your top/last 5 celebrities or brands you follow/viewed?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_

The last 3 songs you listened to from device?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Last 3 shows, movies or videos you viewed?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Challenge:** What's the message...?

1. Based on your answers from the "Consuming" section. On each level what is the message of your media around race, gender, sex and relationships? Does the message reflect your reality in everyday life? What do you consider healthy or unhealthy?

Individual Level:

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Relationship Level:

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Community Level:

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Societal Level:

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Peer Check-In (Partner or Group)

What similar messages are you receiving?

What messages are different?

What's healthy?

What needs to be changed?

**Create:** My commitment...

Write down your ideas for each level to create positive change.

Individual Level:

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Relationship Level:

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Community Level:

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Societal Level:

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