

Webinar 6: Men, Boys, Trauma and Substance Use

December 8, 2017

When looking broadly at men's health, the overall lower life expectancy for men as compared to women can be understood by looking at cardiovascular disease, suicide, motor vehicle accidents, infection disease (including HIV), and liver failure (often secondary to alcohol misuse). All of these issues are amenable to intervention, including in the areas of prevention, health promotion, and harm reduction. Data on life expectancy also reveals inequities between groups of men, e.g., socio-economic status, Indigenous groups.

One area of focus in the men's health field is addressing "cultures of masculinity." Masculine norms and ideals include toughness, intensity, strength, competition, discipline, courage, sacrifice, and aggressiveness. These ideals can create barriers or opportunities when considering how to support behaviour change.

Men's Depression, Suicide, and Substance Use

In Canada, men die by suicide up to four times more often than women, but are half as likely to be diagnosed with depression. Many men stay silent because they fear being judged and stigmatized for not living up to ideals of strong and invulnerable manhood. The *Man-Up Against Suicide* research project used photos and narratives to explore men's depression and suicide. Many issues for men are linked, e.g., substance use may lead to depression or substance use may be a way of addressing depression. Issues such as feelings of belonging or a sense of being burdensome can influence both suicidal thoughts and substance use.

Men, Boys, and Smoking Cessation

Men smoke at higher rates than women in every age group, nationally and globally. Developing men-specific quit smoking programs requires attending to gender-related factors (e.g., smoking as "masculine cool", "Marlborough Man" marketing messages, opportunities related to shifting masculinities when becoming a father or supporting partner during pregnancy).

The *Dads in Gear (DIG)* program was developed based on men-centred principles: strength-based, masculine ideals, shared challenges, positive role models, autonomous decision-making, and emotional connections. DIG includes three integrated components: fathering, physical activity, and smoking cessation. The program has also been adapted to working from a cultural perspective with Indigenous men.

These programs were developed through extensive consultation and pilot testing with men. Key learnings:

1. Provide opportunities for men to inform approaches/programs;
2. Pay attention to the ways men prefer to engage;
3. Create men-friendly spaces, e.g., familiar settings, activity-based programming that appeals to men, male facilitators and role models; and
4. Playing on men's strengths and shifting masculinities.

Links

How to Build a Healthy Baby (Men's Information)

www.beststart.org

Fatherhood is Forever: A resource booklet about fathering for First Nations and Metis Men in BC

www.fnha.ca | www.nccah-ccnsa.ca

"This Is Why I Support Her Not to Drink" campaign

www.skprevention.ca

Alcohol, Pregnancy, and FASD Prevention: What Men Can Do to Help

www.canfasd.ca

Man Up Against Suicide and Still Here Projects

www.manupagainstsuiticide.ca

Couples and Smoking: What You Need to Know When You Are Pregnant

www.facet.ubc.ca

The Right Time the Right Reasons ... Dads Talk about Reducing and Quitting Smoking (booklet)

<http://facet.ubc.ca>

Dads In Gear Program

<http://dadsingear.ok.ubc.ca>

Dads In Gear Indigenous Program

<https://www.dadsingearindigenous.ca>

Smoke Free Men

www.smokefreemen.com

Presenters:

John Ollife, School of Nursing, University of British Columbia

Joan Bottorff, UBC Okanagan-Institute for Healthy Living and Chronic Disease Prevention

Facilitator:

Lorraine Greaves, Centre of Excellence for Women's Health

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