PRESENTS

THE

REPRESENTATION

PROJECT

PRESENTS

THE MASK YOU LIVE IN

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW
BACKGROUND & OVERVIEW

Boys are twice as likely to drop out of school as girls and four times more likely to be expelled. As early as elementary school, boys confront messages that encourage them to disconnect from their emotions, devalue authentic friendships, objectify and degrade women and girls, and resolve conflicts through violence.

The Representation Project’s *The Mask You Live In* curriculum equips K-12 and university students with the critical thinking skills to question gender stereotypes that interconnect with race, class, and circumstance. Students define masculinity and critique gender representations and norms as they create their own positive representations of boys and men. Additionally, students learn to develop healthy self-concepts and interpersonal relationships.

The goal of this curriculum is to assist students in developing their whole selves, as they learn to unpack the maze of identity issues boys and young men must navigate to become “real” men.
Dear Educators,

It is with a deep commitment to the betterment of society and to the development of healthy masculinity that we bring The Mask You Live In curriculum to you. At the onset, we want to encourage you to view the entire film with the understanding that it can be triggering. 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.

The curriculum features age-appropriate videos tailored to curricular modules. The lessons are perfect for both in school and out-of-school settings. Additionally, secondary and post-secondary educators can incorporate the entire documentary into courses such as English, health, political science, sociology, mass communications, or gender studies. In an effort to support you in bringing the documentary and curriculum to your community, we have provided a set of tools on our website including additional resources for educators, youth, parents, caregivers, and coaches. For more information, visit therepresentationproject.org.

The curriculum is designed to engage your students in three aspects of learning as students:

1) Examine concepts of media literacy and gender socialization, as well as the ways in which media shapes our culture.

2) Critique representations of manhood and begin to make positive representations of men and boys.

3) Examine how healthy self-concepts and interpersonal relationships can result in healthier forms of masculinity.

We are asking you to partner with us to extend the conversation and to help make this curriculum a living document. Please complete the online educator survey so that we can learn from your experiences with The Mask You Live In. Feel free to tweet us @RepresentationPledge and share your experiences with educators from across the United States and the globe.

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to helping young people reach their full potential. We are extremely grateful to you and are excited to work alongside you to help develop learning experiences where young people’s voices are empowered to create a healthier culture and world.

Wishing you all the best,

Jennifer Siebel Newsom
Founder & CEO

Aaminah Norris, Ph.D.
Director of Education
### GOALS

*The Mask You Live In* curriculum will introduce students to concepts of media literacy, gender socialization, and the ways media shapes our culture. Each module is grade-specific and aligned with the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Core Competencies defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2010). Students will be exposed to how American culture shapes ideas around what it means to be a boy or man and will learn ways to develop healthier self-concepts and interpersonal relationships. The short-term goals are to promote students’ self awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

These, in turn, provide a foundation for better adjustment and academic performance as reflected in more positive social behaviors and peer relationships, fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress, and improved grades and test scores. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programming is associated with multiple positive benefits.

#### SHORT TERM GOALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING CORE COMPETENCIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self Awareness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The ability to accurately recognize one’s emotion and thoughts and their influence on behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Self Management</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social Awareness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship Skills</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responsible Decision-Making</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions</td>
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### CURRICULAR MODULES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Short Term Goals</th>
<th>Long Term Goals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender in America (Module I)</td>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
<td><strong>Better Academic Performance</strong>&lt;br&gt;Achievement scores an average of 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive SEL instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mask of Masculinity (Module II)</td>
<td>Self Management</td>
<td><strong>Improved Attitudes and Behaviors</strong>&lt;br&gt;Greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender in America (Module II)</td>
<td>Social Awareness</td>
<td><strong>Fewer Negative Behaviors</strong>&lt;br&gt;Decrease disruptive class behavior, noncompliance, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to Self and Others (Module III)</td>
<td>Relationship Skills</td>
<td><strong>Reduced Emotional Distress</strong>&lt;br&gt;Fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mask of Masculinity (Module II) and Additional Service Learning Activities</td>
<td>Responsible Decision-Making</td>
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# THE MASK YOU LIVE IN

## K-5 & MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

### GRADE LEVELS

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<th>Kindergarten - 2nd / 3rd - 5th Grade</th>
<th>Middle and High School</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognize ways that individuals develop positive self-concepts and healthy interpersonal relationships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make positive and empowering gender representations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn about different types of media.</td>
<td>Learn how beliefs and cultural norms about gender are shaped.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand that media communicates ideas and impacts individuals.</td>
<td>Identify positive gender representations in the media.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify the ways media and advertisements portray gender.</td>
<td>Understand how gender identities are shaped by society and culture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognize that media portrayals of gender can limit the options available for both boys and men.</td>
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### CURRICULAR MODULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender in America (Module I)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships to Self and Others (Module II)</td>
<td>The Mask of Masculinity (Module II)</td>
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### ADDITIONAL FEATURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten - 2nd / 3rd - 5th Grade</th>
<th>Middle and High School</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aligns</strong> with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Best Practices.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Links</strong> to Common Core Standards for English Language Arts K-5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Make</strong> Media including visual art, commercials, and poetry.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engage</strong> in Social Media Campaigns.</td>
<td><strong>Participate</strong> in service learning activities.</td>
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OVERVIEW

The University Curriculum is designed for the full documentary film and aims to help students:

Pay conscious attention to the ways mainstream media reinforces gender stereotypes that shape our cultural norms and attitudes.

Understand that boys and men are limited by a narrow definition of masculinity that equates “being a man” with physical force, sexual conquest, and economic success.

Think about ways positive representations of manhood can support social-emotional growth.

TIPS FOR USE (EDUCATORS)

Incorporate the film and study guide into your political science, sociology, history, mass communications, english, or gender studies course.

Watch the film and lead a discussion over several courses.

Encourage students to talk about their personal experiences while using “I” statements.

Highlight and respect student’s different perspectives.

Assign a service-learning project and ask students to report on the results.

TIPS FOR USE (STUDENTS)

Host a screening of The Mask You Live In.

Use the curriculum and other tools from therepresentationproject.org to lead discussions about how the issues in the film impact boys and men.

Discuss how the issues raised in the film impact campus life.

Participate in the service-learning activities included in this curriculum and brainstorm other ways you can take action on campus and in your community.

Visit therepresentationproject.org for additional resources including conversation starters for youth leaders and a reference list of national organizations that support youth.
SAMPLE LESSONS
OVERVIEW

The following module introduces students to concepts of media literacy and gender socialization, as well as the ways in which media shapes our culture. *The Mask You Live In* documentary instructional clips are used to expose students to concepts of how American culture shapes ideas around what it means to be a boy or man.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Pay conscious attention to the way media represents boys and men.
- Define key terminology relating to concepts of gender socialization including gender identities, stereotyping, masculinity, and femininity.
- Identify positive representations of male characters in film and television.
- Understand that when representations of boys and men are repeated over time, they can become accepted as reality.
- Understand how gender identities are shaped by society and culture.
KEY VOCABULARY

**Gender Identity** - A person's private sense of and experience with being a boy or man, girl, or woman, or a gender that may or may not correspond with the individual's biological sex

**Stereotype** - A generalization, usually exaggerated or oversimplified and often offensive that is used to describe or distinguish a group or an individual from that group

**Social Construction** - Social phenomena that are created, institutionalized, and made into tradition by communities. Over time, these constructs become accepted as reality

**Manhood** - Being a man, male maturity

**Maleness** - Characteristics of a male person

**Masculine** - Exhibiting characteristics associated with being male

**Feminine** - Exhibiting characteristics associated with being female

**Reactive** - Showing a response to a stimulus

**Gender Differences** - Presumed differences between males and females

**Bifurcate** - To divide into two branches

**Hyper-masculinity** - Exhibiting fanatical or obsessive characteristics associated with being male

**Hyper-femininity** - Exhibiting fanatical or obsessive characteristics associated with being female

**INTRODUCING TERMS**

(The Representation Project Definition)

“BEYOND THE MASK”

An action or behavior that exposes and expands the narrow definition of what it means to be a man
MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL
SAMPLE UNIT 1

#BEYONDTHEMASK

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

THE MASK YOU LIVE IN INSTRUCTIONAL CLIPS
Man Up: Masculinity is a Performance

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS
#BeyondTheMask Quiz
SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS CAN BE FOUND AT THE END OF THIS UNIT

SUPPLIES
Student Journals
Pens

ADDITIONAL
Key Vocabulary Terms
Resource List (therepresentationproject.org)
OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this lesson is for students to identify positive representations of male characters in film, television, and video games. Students begin to understand that when representations of boys and men are repeated over time, they can become accepted as reality.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

ASK your students to go online to therepresentationproject.org to complete the #BeyondTheMask quiz and rank male characters. If students do not have web access, they can complete the hard copy of the quiz located in the supplementary materials.

REMINDE your students that media teaches us about gender identities.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS

Ask your students what the media teaches us about men.

Ask them to think about the ways their male character is represented and how that informs gender identities.

1) Do you know the definition of the term “gender identity?”

2) What does the media teach us about men’s identities?

3) Is the male character you selected a leader?

4) How did he obtain his leadership position?

5) Does he have a family? Children?

6) Is he the sole provider for his family? Is he affectionate towards his children? His spouse or partner?

7) How does he overcome difficult experiences that occur in his life?

8) Who does he go to when he experiences difficulties?

9) Does he solve the problem alone or with the help of others?

FACILITATE

Have your students identify a male character that they have seen either in television or in film.

Review the quiz responses with your students.

Have students think about the ways their male character is represented and how that informs gender identities.

Have students share their characters. Are there commonalities in the ways these males address difficulties? Do students respond to difficult situations in similar ways to their characters?

What does the character teach them about male norms? How are males to behave according to the character?

Did your students find any of the characters’ actions to be stereotypical?

Have they seen any films or television shows recently that stereotyped men and boys? Women and girls?

If they found the character to be stereotypical, did this make them feel uncomfortable? Why or why not?

Share available resources with your students.
#BeyondTheMask Quiz: Grading Male Characters as Role Models

Favorite character’s name: ____________________________

Film or television show he is in: ____________________________

Questions [check all that apply]

☐ The male character is open about his feelings.

☐ The male character nurtures those around him.

☐ The male character is affectionate.

☐ The male character does NOT use violence to solve his problems unless it is in self-defense.

☐ The male character does NOT use drugs and/or alcohol to numb his pain.

☐ The male character does NOT pressure, coerce, or intimidate his sexual partners.

☐ The male character does NOT get his sense of worth from dominance or aggression.

☐ The male character is a person of color or underrepresented minority and is not reduced to a racial stereotype.

☐ The male character has a disability but isn’t defined by that disability.

☐ The male character is gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or transgender and is not reduced to a stereotype.

(Everything is worth one point and there are ten points possible)

Urban Dictionary defines to “man up” as to “take control of a (the) situation, be strong, rise to the moment.”

At The Representation Project, we define “Beyond The Mask” as an action or behavior that exposes and expands the narrow definition of what it means to be a man. Join us by taking the #BeyondTheMask quiz!
#BEYONDTHEMASK QUIZ: SCORING GUIDE

**POINT TALLY**

- **A** | 7+ POINTS
  Congratulations, your favorite male character received an A! This male character positively represents manhood because he is caring, affectionate, and doesn’t use violence to solve problems.

- **B** | 5 OR 6 POINTS
  Nice work, your favorite male character received a B! This male character does a good job of representing positive ways to be a male character.

- **C** | 3 OR 4 POINTS
  Your favorite male character received a C. He has some work to do to positively represent manhood.

- **D** | 1 OR 2 POINTS
  Sadly, the male character got a D. Although he may be entertaining, he probably needs to be less violent or stop using drugs and alcohol to solve his problems.

- **F** | 0 POINTS
  Unfortunately this character gets an F because he fails to positively represent masculinity. He probably relies on aggression and dominance to accomplish his goals.
OVERVIEW

The following module introduces elementary students to concepts of media literacy and gender socialization, as well as the ways in which media shapes culture. *The Mask You Live In* documentary instructional clips are used to expose students to concepts of how American culture shapes ideas around what it means to be a boy or man. Lessons are tailored so that they can be used with early elementary and primary aged students. This curriculum includes information about ways that lessons can be adapted and made suitable for grades K-2nd/3rd-5th.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Learn about different types of media.
- Understand that media communicates ideas that become normalized and impact individuals.
- Identify the ways media and advertisements portray gender.
- Begin to recognize that the way media portray gender can limit the options available for both girls and boys.
- Make positive and empowering gender representations.
**Media**
Instruments used to communicate information, including television, magazines, books, movies, music, and the Internet

**Maleness**
Characteristics of a male person

**Feminine**
Exhibiting characteristics traditionally associated in our culture with being female, such as sensitivity or gentleness

**Gender Identity**
A person's private sense of and experience with being a man or boy, woman or girl, or a gender that may or may not correspond with the individual's biological sex

**Stereotype**
A generalization usually exaggerated or oversimplified and often offensive, that is used to describe or distinguish a group or an individual from that group

**Man Up**
(Urban Dictionary Definition)
To take control of a (the) situation, be strong, rise to the moment

**Beyond the Mask**
(The Representation Project Definition)
An action or behavior that exposes and expands the narrow definition of what it means to “be a man”
KINDERGARTEN-2ND / 3RD-5TH GRADES

MODULE 1

UNIT 1

BEYOND THE MASK
SAMPLE LESSON: BEYOND THE MASK

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Vocab
- Pencils
- Construction Paper
- Colored Markers
- Student Journals
- Resource List*
- The Mask You Live In Instructional Clips: Masculinity and Relationships
OBJECTIVE
The purpose of this lesson is for students to identify the way media and advertisements portray gender. Students will begin to recognize that the way media portray gender can limit the options available for both girls and boys.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN
EXPLAIN to your students that they are going to draw a picture of their favorite male character solving a problem. For example, the character has a sick friend that is in need of help or the character is lost and needs to find his way back home.

FACILITATE
Identify your favorite male character that you have seen either in television or in film.

Ask your students what the media teaches us about men.

Ask your students if they know the definition of the term “gender identity.” If they say no, or are unable to provide the correct definition, tell your students that someone’s gender identity is that person’s private sense of and experience with being a man or boy, woman or girl, or a gender that may or may not correspond with the individual’s biological sex.

Ask them to think about how they are going to portray him. What is he doing in the picture?

ASK YOUR STUDENTS
Have your students consider the following before they draw the picture:

1) Is the male character a leader?
2) Is he alone or with others? If he is with others, who is he with and what are they doing? Does he have a family? Children? Is he being affectionate towards his children? His friends? His spouse or partner?

3) What is the problem that the character solves?
4) How does this individual solve the problem?

FACILITATE
Does he solve the problem alone or with the help of others?

Have students share their drawings of their characters. Are there commonalities in the ways these men solve problems? Do students respond to difficult situations in similar ways to their characters?

Once the drawings are complete post them in an area in your classroom.
Thank you for using *The Mask You Live In* Curriculum

Please take the [Educator Survey](#) and provide feedback on the curriculum.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: THEREPRESENTATIONPROJECT.ORG