

Mount Saint Vincent University
Department of Family Studies and Gerontology

**An Environmental Scan of Intimate Partner Violence Prevention Programs:
Reshaping Masculinity**

By

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Abstract

Intimate partner violence (IPV) and toxic masculinities plague our world more now than ever before. IPV is described as a series of violent acts or threats that cause emotional, physical, or sexual trauma to romantic partners (typically women), in both casual and committed relationships (Pereira et al., 2020; Webermann et al., 2022). It often involves coercion, social isolation, and reduction of freedom in the victim's public and private life, including emotional, financial, and medical control (Pereira et al., 2020). Given that men are the predominant perpetrators (Donovan & Hester, 2008), and most violent tendencies are learned in childhood (via social learning), it is imperative that young adolescent males be educated about violence prevention to support a decrease of IPV in future generations.

Through an environmental scan of 55 programs that exist to prevent intimate partner violence from occurring in the first place, and to help reshape masculinity it is clear not only that there are organizations and programs in existence already doing this work effectively. As well these programs often train their participants to become facilitators, thereby securing their sustainability. Programs also seem to be shifting towards a more unified model of education inclusive of sex education, IPV prevention, and redefined masculinities. While this is positive, more programs need to be created that not only meet the needs of their participants but encourage them to seek out new ways of thinking and avenues for positive relational and behavioral change. The overall goal is to reduce and eradicate IPV. When it comes to reshaping masculinity, what is evident is that while there may not be one set definition for what healthy masculinities look like, there is in fact a definition for unhealthy masculinities. The key is in education and curriculum that moves toward the development of masculinities that support and nurture rather than destroy and violate.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Intimate partner violence (IPV), also known as domestic violence (DV) has been referred to as a “global pandemic” (Wilcox et al., 2021, p. 701) and a “severe violation of human rights” (Abrunhosa et al., 2021, p. 12973). It is a public health issue with negative impacts throughout the life course (Jewkes et al., 2015). Given that men are the predominant perpetrators (Idriss-Wheeler et al., 2021; Donovan & Hester, 2008), it is imperative that young adolescent males be educated about violence prevention mechanisms to support a decrease of IPV in future generations. As an early intervention strategy, supporting male-identified adolescents in developing healthy masculinities is key in preventing IPV. Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the prevalence of IPV largely due to an overall increase in stress (e.g., financial impacts) combined with periods of mandated household isolation resulting in close proximity of abusers and their victims (Beland et al., 2021). As Beland et al. note, this has enhanced awareness of IPV and further increases the imperative to focus on prevention.

Research suggests that prevention programs focusing on IPV knowledge and preventative skills are effective (Fotheringham et al., 2020; Hansen et al., 2021). Positive outcomes of prevention programs include, but are not limited to, a reduction in the incidence of IPV, enhanced partner communication, and, healthy relational dynamics (Lee et al., 2021; Lorenzetti et al., 2017; Sullivan & Alexy, 2001). Little is known, however, about the mechanisms that enhance positive outcomes and how they intersect with traditional masculine ideals (e.g., demonstrations of physical toughness and aggression, unequal distribution of power) (Gage & Lease, 2021).

The purpose of this study was to conduct an environmental scan of programs targeting male-identified adolescents that focus on the prevention of IPV before it occurs, and to contribute to the conversation regarding the deconstruction of toxic masculine ideologies. Both virtual and in-person programs emphasizing the development of healthy masculinities as a conduit to IPV prevention were included in the scan. The research addressed the following questions: 1) What are the practices and processes contributing to positive outcomes for male-identified adolescents participating in IPV prevention programs and, 2) How is masculinity re-constructed in these programs? A review of related literature follows.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

IPV is described as a series of violent acts or threats that cause emotional, physical, or sexual trauma to romantic partners in both casual and committed relationships (Pereira et al., 2020; Webermann et al., 2022). It often involves coercion, social isolation, and reduction of freedom in the victim's public and private life, including emotional, financial, and medical control (Pereira et al., 2020). The occurrence of IPV is rising, and while not all acts grow to the level of a criminal offence under the Criminal Code of Canada, IPV accounted for 30% of all reported cases of violent crime in Canada in 2019 (Conroy, 2021). Given the diverse and devastating mental and physical outcomes of IPV, prevention initiatives that focus on reducing or mitigating risk factors and increasing protective factors are essential (Webermann, et al., 2022).

Prevention programs for young adult men focusing on IPV and masculinity raise awareness, and can foster stronger, healthier relationships and encourage non-violence (Braithwaite & Fincham, 2007; Exner-Cortens et al., 2019). Lorenzetti et al. (2017) contended that prevention programs are most successful if they are welcoming and educational for all participants. Programs that use a strengths-based approach that draw on the person's own resources and capabilities to promote individual change, and a focus on the potential for a positive future (as opposed to a shaming approach) are increasing (Bolton et al., 2022; Tarzia et al., 2023). In addition, Eriksen et al. (2022) suggested that program facilitators need to actively engage men in violence prevention and bystander intervention education, creating pathways for change in social norms within peer group settings. This review of literature will a) provide a general overview of

IPV, including theoretical perspectives, causes and consequences; b) explore the relationship between healthy masculinities and IPV; and c) examine the role of programs that focus on healthy masculinities in the prevention of IPV.

A General Overview of IPV

IPV is a public health issue with negative impacts throughout the life course (Jewkes et al., 2015; Shields et al., 2020). It is disproportionately high amongst young adults (Webermann, et al., 2022). For example, as Webermann et al. reported, in a study of college students (18-25 years old), 27% of respondents had experienced at least one incident of IPV in the previous year. It is damaging not only to survivors but also to children who witness their parents being abused/abusive (Leigh et al., 2022; Beck et al., 2013). Research on IPV has found that alcohol and drug abuse, socioeconomic status, the desire for power and control over a person, and mental illness (e.g., PTSD, anger issues, and trauma resulting from a previous relationship) can contribute to IPV (Prospero, 2008). In addition, as Prospero clarifies, an intersectionality lens which examines the marginalization that may result from the combined effects of race, gender, sexuality, class, and culture must be considered. For example, some women may be experiencing IPV while simultaneously feeling the effects of racism or homophobia (Baird et al., 2021). Given the diversity of victims and perpetrators and the wide range of contributing factors, it becomes complex to pinpoint one singular reason why IPV occurs.

Researchers in the field of family violence (e.g., family scientists, family life practitioners) point out that while men are most often the perpetrators and women the victims, women and individuals who do not identify as male, or female are also capable

of violence towards their partners. It is not a gender-exclusive issue; although those across the 2SLGBTQIA+ community can be victims or perpetrators, it is experienced more frequently and more severely, both mentally and physically, by female victims (Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Prospero, 2008; Wilcox et al., 2021). Regarding the impact of alcohol and drugs influencing IPV, some studies reported minimal difference in gender while others found males to be more likely to be under the influence of alcohol than female perpetrators when they engaged in IPV (Larsen & Hamberger, 2015; Stuart et al., 2013). The causes of IPV are not the same for men as they are for women. Most cases of female perpetrated IPV were a result of resistance to violence they were experiencing from their partners, a phenomenon referred to as *situational violence* or *violent resistance* (Kelly & Johnson, 2008). Wilcox et al. (2021) argue that violence that men perpetrate may be due to a desire for *coercive control*, also known as *intimate terrorism* or *patriarchal terrorism*. Rather than retaliation, this is reflective of the desire to exert power and control over another person, and as Wilcox et al. report, is most common in heterosexual couples. Ansara and Hindin (2011) found that male victims are more likely to recover more quickly from trauma than women and are less likely to report violence to the authorities (due to their beliefs regarding masculinity). While not intending to downplay the experiences of men and their unique needs for support when they are victims, the literature is clear that men are most often perpetrators and women are most often victims of IPV (Wilcox et al., 2021).

Risk Factors and Causes of IPV

Social Learning Theory: Violence Starts in the Home

Social learning theory focuses on the interpersonal behaviors influenced by positive/negative stimuli experienced during formative socialization (Chan et al., 2011; Johnson & Bradbury, 2015). This theory suggests that children learn through observation of others by noticing which actions are reinforced (positive), and which are punished (negative), and how (Fowler et al., 2016). Social learning theory can play a role in rates of violence re-occurring intergenerationally (Barnes et al., 2013). Using the Fowler et al. (2016) definition of social learning theory, it is reasonable to assume that children who grow up in violent homes see violence as acceptable and learn to use it in their personal lives. Experiencing violence as a child and observing IPV between parents has been identified as a significant risk factor for becoming a perpetrator of IPV (Haj-Yahia et al., 2019; Juan et al., 2020), as well as increasing the likelihood of victimization (Forke et al., 2021) and staying in abusive relationships (Richardson et al., 2021). As Richardson et al. (2021) discussed, observing IPV can be as harmful as experiencing it directly, and often in homes where IPV is present, the children are also abused.

Intergenerational transmission theory (derived from social learning theory) has been used to explain how the pattern of abuse is transmitted from one generation to the next (Richardson et al., 2021). Through observation, children learn that violent and abusive behaviours are acceptable ways to manage conflict in interpersonal relationships and may imitate them in adult relationships with their own partners and children (Chan et al., 2011; Prospero, 2008; Richardson et al., 2021). A person's childhood trauma may also cause them to use alcohol or drugs as a coping mechanism and to experience

mental health issues, especially when they remain untreated, possibly contributing to violence towards future partners (Fowler et al., 2016).

A multi-generational cycle of perpetuating violent tendencies becomes particularly problematic when looking at trends in reported cases of IPV (Juan et al., 2020). Fowler et al. (2016) concluded that the more an offender commits acts of violence towards their loved ones, the more exposure they may have had to variants of violence in their childhood. Generally speaking, parents with children of dating age do not communicate about issues related to IPV and are often unaware that they are modeling harmful behaviour, thus contributing to the problem (Lee et al., 2021). A cycle of violence is perpetuated creating an intergenerational transmission of violence-dependent survival; it is all the survivor and offender come to know.

Experiencing or being exposed to violence in early childhood can have a significant impact on child development, including both physical and mental health (Giesbrecht et al., 2023). As Fowler et al. (2016) assert, there is a need to address prevention regarding the violence children and youth experience in their homes, schools, and other contexts. A more positive learning environment is required whereby more efficient coping mechanisms, ways of knowing, and healthy relationship habits can manifest themselves in future generations (Fowler et al., 2016).

Masculine Ideologies and IPV Risk Factors

Jewkes et al. (2015) contend that western, power-based social norms, values, and traditions reinforce traditionally masculine values that includes displays of strength, power and dominance in relationships. As they suggested, these traditional western

ideologies are evident in the roles we assign different genders with men typically seen as the strong aggressive protector and women seen more as the homemaker, the mother, or the nurturer. These ideas, roles, and values, often assigned at a very young age, may affect how individuals (men in this instance) will act in their intimate relationships (Jewkes et al., 2015). The environment a young man is brought up in can affect how he will act in his adult life; the intergenerational cycle of violence is indicative of this, as it elevates the tendency to repeat history (Jung et al., 2019). Violent displays of masculinity, for example, as seen in the discussion on social learning theory, are common in men who have themselves been victims of abuse in their childhood home (Jewkes et al., 2015; Jung et al., 2019). Left unchecked and uneducated, these masculinities may develop and emerge in further violence by abused children in later life (Erikson et al., 2022) Healthy masculinities (those that focus on non-violent, more gender-equal beliefs and ways of being a “man”) are a cornerstone of the work that is being done in family violence research focusing on IPV, thus opposing long-held negative masculine ideologies (Casey et al., 2018; Jewkes et al., 2015).

Consequences of IPV

The consequences of IPV, which include impacts on mental/emotional and physical health, are long-lasting, and can involve homicide (Abrunhosa et al., 2021). Feelings of shame, guilt, depression, anxiety, and lowered self-esteem are some of the emotional difficulties that survivors report across genders (Ansara & Hindin, 2011). Physical repercussions of IPV may include migraine headaches, trouble breathing, and lack of appetite, along with physical injuries such as black eyes, broken bones, bruises,

and concussions (Diez et al., 2009). Socially, IPV can affect someone's employment status and social connections, especially when abusers limit (emotionally and/or physically) their victims' movements, as well as harassing them in their workplace or in public spaces (Reeves & O'Leary-Kelly, 2007; Swanberg et al., 2006, Wilcox et al., 2021). Higher rates of suicide and an overall decrease in life satisfaction have also been reported in survivors harmed by abusers who maintain power over them, even after separation (Liu et al., 2021).

The impacts can be felt even after a survivor leaves their abuser. For example, in addition to the ongoing physical and mental impacts, divorce proceedings and the negative and judgemental attitudes of some service providers (e.g., refusing service based on victims, personal beliefs and choice to stay with their abuser, as well as their gender, i.e., male victims) can retraumatize survivors and their children (Cerulli et al., 2012; Kulkarni et al., 2015). Being subjected to the offender's in-trial attacks and continued harassment, and having to prove their experiences whilst testifying on the stand may cause some victims to relive their trauma, forcing healing wounds to re-open (Cerulli et al., 2012). As mentioned, children who observe IPV may also face many consequences, including impacts on emotional and physical growth and intellectual development, behavioural problems, and difficulty making friends, the impacts of which follow them into adulthood and place them at higher risk to repeat the violent behaviour (Richardson et al., 2021). Given the many potential outcomes and the risk of intergenerational transmission, efforts toward prevention are essential.

The Case for Early Prevention

Often, it is up to educators and family life practitioners (social workers, community program leaders/facilitators, and educators) to influence and encourage positive attitudes towards masculinities (Broll et al., 2015; Exner-Cortens et al., 2021). As Hansen et al. (2021) claimed, actively engaging men in the prevention of violence and changing the conversation towards positive displays of masculinity has an overwhelmingly positive impact on not only the men themselves but also to those in their environment.

While engaging men and boys in changing masculine narratives and traditions is important, there is not one set standard for what positive displays of masculinity look like. The approach to prevention may need to be individualized as participants needs may vary (Jewkes et al., 2015). For example, in a program that used digital interventions (apps and websites) to support men to connect with the "better man inside" (Tarzia et al., 2023, p. 8024), the authors found that focusing on aspects such as stress or difficulties in relationships helped to engage men in their online program, rather than an immediate focus on violence and abuse. They found that tools such as self-assessments were helpful and could enable men to see the possible legal consequences, or the risk of losing their relationships with their partners and children as a catalyst for change.

As Taliep et al. (2021) discussed, involving community leaders such as those from non-governmental organisations and grassroots community-based organisations to ensure effective program support, maintaining cultural relevance, and shifting the discourse around masculinities away from the need for violence are key considerations in support of positive outcomes. Taliep et al. (2021) also found that the use of these

strategies was effective in promoting healthy masculinity and the reduction of IPV.

Further examination of specific programs focused on the prevention of IPV through the transformation of ideologies sustaining violent masculinities will nurture ongoing efforts to address this social issue.

Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence was created in Canada out of the University of Calgary's Faculty of Social Work with the intention of developing a way for community-based organizations to engage men in conversations and education around gender-based violence and equality (Dozois & Wells, 2020). Most importantly, the goal of *Shift* is to create new avenues for change in the way we view IPV, moving men and boys towards more positive masculinities. Shifting away from violent, more abusive practices often presented in intimate relationships will hopefully lead to a decline in reported cases of IPV and empower new generations of men and boys to act non-violently towards their loved ones (Dozois & Wells, 2020). While connecting with other community organizations, leaders, policy makers etc. the *Shift* organization creates prevention programs with the intention of decreasing levels of violence in intimate relationships across Canada and internationally. Dozois and Wells (2020) indicated that the idea is to find their participants where they are at in their lives (across cultures, countries, socio-economic status, gender, and sexual identities), and educate them, not in classroom settings, but in real life situations where intimate partner violence tends to occur, removing its' potential before it grows. While their work is commendable, the program facilitators found that the impact has not been felt across the country, and much more needs to be done to advance the prevention agenda (Dozois & Wells, 2020).

Described below is a sampling of a small number of programs whose evaluations reflect positive outcomes.

Prevention Programs that Focus on IPV

Primary prevention programs focusing on IPV are significant in preventing violence from happening before it starts (Exner-Cortens et al., 2019). Lundgren and Amin (2014) found that the use of violence in relationships, particularly for young men, is reinforced through formative socialization within homes where it is normalized. If prevention mechanisms (e.g., education around healthy relationship patterns, and the signs and symptoms of violent tendencies) are introduced to young people early (ideally starting at the age of 14-16), then practitioners may have a greater likelihood of reducing the spread of IPV into future generations. As an example, Broll et, al (2015)'s study focusing on the *Fourth R Program*, a similar prevention program for 9th graders in Toronto whose curriculum was largely based around healthy teen dating strategies and violence prevention, showed an increase in critical thinking around IPV and mechanisms participants may be able to use to cope with and limit violence.

Programs that bring parents into the conversation about teen dating and IPV by giving them the skills needed to talk to their children about healthy dating habits, toxic abuse symptoms, and where to find resources for help seeking are emerging (Lee et. al., 2021). The focus here was on programs that are inclusive of all participants regardless of circumstance, and those that highlight more positive behaviors that prevention IPV (I.e. communication and bystander awareness).As Chirwa, et al. (2020) discussed, if these programs are to be effective in their prevention approaches, then they need to be as

inclusive of gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status etc., as possible.

Fotheringham et al. (2020) suggested programs that are both inclusive of gender and sexuality and helpful in preventing IPV need to meet the needs of each individual/group of participants and the circumstances that may contribute to violence in their lives. All too often, health programs that cover these issues focus primarily on the negative aspects (STDs, unplanned pregnancy, violence and aggression etc.), and do not provide substantial and inclusive educative practices (e.g., LGBTQ+* inclusive curriculum, the signs and symptoms of IPV, toxic relationship patterns etc.) (Broll et al., 2015). Below are examples of already well-established and evaluated prevention programs that can be viewed as benchmarks when conducting the analysis of programs found in this study. These examples were chosen as they have been evaluated and described in the peer reviewed literature. The relationship between masculinities, the perpetration of IPV, and the narratives that support this are explored in some examples of existing prevention programs found below already in place in community organizations, schools, and government-sponsored programs.

Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (E-PREP)

Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (E-PREP) is a 1-hour online program that was part of a control study that addressed effective communication and problem-solving skills targeting young people (ages 18-25) who were currently in relationships (Webermann et al., 2022). The program design is based on empirically researched methods for increasing the quality, function, and sustainability of romantic relationships (Braithwaite & Fincham, 2007). While its focus was on couples' awareness and ability to function in crisis (via problem solving and communication skills), it lacked focus on single individuals as well as the skills required to promote positive interpersonal skills (due in part to the brief online focus). However, as Braithwaite and Fincham found during their 8-week follow up with participants, *E-PREP* was more effective in the reduction of mental health issues among individual participants and a reduction in physical violence, with participants showing lower levels of aggression and symptoms of IPV in the post-program phase than the control group. Alternatively, compared to other prevention programs in a randomized control trial, this program showed no significant difference in mental health and relationship outcomes, but there was improvement in instances of physical IPV, shown at the 10th month post-program follow-up (Braithwaite & Fincham, 2007).

Skills for Healthy Adult Relationships Program (SHARe)

Skills for Healthy Adult Relationships Program (SHARe) is a 12-hour (8 session) group program that is significantly longer and more detailed than E-PREP. The program was designed for college-aged young adults and focused primarily on producing healthy

relationship behaviours. The program focused on the increased use of positive communication patterns and attitudes towards relationships, reducing intimate partner violence by equipping participants with skills to self-regulate and control behavior in interpersonal relationships (Webermann et al., 2022). The program is focused primarily on devaluing and reducing abusive behaviors related to IPV (e.g., poor decision making and problem solving, communication failures, irrational relationship concepts etc.) and finding alternative solutions for its participants. In a control trial of this program conducted by Webermann et al. (2022) during their examination of the effectiveness of similar programs (E-PREP, Cognitive Behavioral Analysis System of Psychotherapy etc.), researchers found respondents showed improvement in their interpersonal skills, they developed healthy, non-abusive relationships and reduced their level of risk of becoming violent after having participated in this program.

Programs that Focus on the Role of Masculinities in the Prevention of IPV

The programs described to this point focus on general practices and processes (for example, communication, problem-solving etc.) implicated in preventing IPV. There is a need for change specifically in the way program facilitators educate young men on the relationship between masculinities and partnered violence (Fowler et al., 2016). The following section reviews a variety of programs that focus on masculinities.

Australian Violence Against Prevention Programs – Direct Participation Programs Shaping Masculinity and Gender Norms

Salter (2016) examined similar programs developed in Australia that dealt specifically with shaping the perceptions of young men in regard to their own

masculinities and the way that they interact with their developing beliefs and actions around intimate partner violence. The idea in these programs is “real men don’t hit women” (Salter, 2016, p. 464). Overall, these programs directly engage their participants in open educational conversation around what it means to be a man, their experience with IPV, and other issues surrounding violence and gender. Some of the goals of these programs are to develop participants’ ability to effectively communicate with their partners when it comes to consent in relationships and sex, challenge sexist and toxic masculine attitudes by increasing bystander capacity to intervene, preventing IPV from occurring to begin with (Salter, 2016). A key focus of these programs was their target population; mostly underserved, underprivileged, disadvantaged communities where education and healthy masculine attitudes may be lacking. They also highlight involving older men whose agency would allow them to become role models for change with younger generations of men.

Salter (2016), however, argues that the majority of what is taught and talked about in these programs is theory at best, with no practical component (unlike what we have seen in previous IPV prevention programs that include follow up sessions with participants) these programs run the risk of failure. Conversation is not enough. Without the skills and techniques to not only understand one’s own actions and that of others, affecting change becomes increasingly difficult. Salter (2016) also suggests that the lack of concern for equality in gender issues is a deterrent to the effectiveness of these programs. Program facilitators typically did not take into consideration government and bureaucratic decision making when it comes to policy and programing that affect

women. If the point of these programs is to create *real men* as they claim, then that also means sticking up and defending women instead of perpetuating traditionally masculine and violent tendencies (Salter, 2016).

The Reducing Sexism and Violence Program – Middle School Program (RSVP-MSP)

This program from New England focuses on the exploration of the normalization and harmfulness of traditional gender roles when encountering intimate partner violence. Banyard et al. (2019) examined a program that consisted of four, one-hour sessions, in which middle school aged participants were split up by gender and encouraged to explore topics such as healthy relationships, emotional empathy, and signs and symptoms of IPV (including violent risk factors, and ways to safely intervene if necessary) both within themselves and when exhibited from a partner. Participants were encouraged to challenge their traditional gender roles in society, exploring new, more positive literature and activities that assert new ways of exploring masculinity and relational habits. Program facilitators drew on role play, YouTube, film clips and other multimedia formats in order to generate course content. In doing so, male participants were strongly encouraged to challenge their own perceptions on masculinity especially in a broader more social sense. While Banyard et al. (2019) found elements of IPV prevention were present in this program, the focus was primarily on challenging traditional masculine tendencies towards violence, through education of other, more positive ways of being and knowing.

The researchers in the evaluation of this program found that while results may suggest the curriculum was effective in reducing IPV and encouraging healthy masculine

attributes, if adapted and implemented in the future, Banyard et al. (2019) argue this program should be conducted with a larger sample population of participants as well as a longer follow up schedule (baseline to two months in this case) in order to fully understand its effectiveness in a broader sense. Findings from the evaluation of the *RSVP-MSP* suggest that boys who were exposed to the curriculum showed a reduction in attitudes attributed to violence and traditional masculinity, shifting toward intervention if violence was seen in others. While overall, Banyard et al. (2019) suggested the program proved to be an effective first step towards more positive and healthy masculine attitudes, questions emerge about interpretation of outcomes given the demographic profile of the sample. The subject matter in this program was not originally designed for this age group (11–14-year-old youth) and, given their shorter attention spans, it may have been difficult for them to understand and retain (Banyard et al., 2019).

Conclusions

This literature review examined examples of work being done in the field focussing on the prevention of IPV through programs focusing on healthy masculinities. While some positive outcomes of programs that are IPV-specific and those that target masculinity are noted in this review, it is difficult to draw conclusions about efficacy given the diversity in presentation style and outcome measurement approaches. In addition, in many cases, a limited consensus regarding specific program structures (e.g., where and by whom the program is offered, what exact topics are covered, what outcomes are expected and how are they measured) is available, making the

identification of the most beneficial aspects hard to determine. It will be important to examine a wider range of programs and organizations in a systematic manner to better understand the capacity for programs to prevent IPV by shifting the masculinity discourse. An environmental scan of virtual and in-person IPV prevention programs that focus on the development of healthy masculinities in male identified adolescents will identify key program elements instrumental in ongoing development of related programs and policies.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Environmental Scanning

Environmental scanning was used to facilitate the retrieval of programs aligned with the focus of this research: prevention programs that focus on the relationship between intimate partner violence (IPV) and toxic masculinities. The method pulled into view a broad range of programs, revealing areas of emphasis, emerging issues, and other relevant information (Albright, 2004; Tam-Seto et al, 2016).

Although, the environmental scanning process was designed to help businesses adjust their marketing and sales tactics to meet the needs of their customers so as to remain competitive, the method can also be applied in other settings and for other purposes. As Albright (2004) pointed out, there is an intrinsic focus in this process on strategic thinking and planning, with value emanating from the ability to uncover flaws in business practice (or in this case program practice), allowing management to fix what is broken. That said, Albright (2004) also pointed out that the environmental scanning process is not a one-time thing; it is ongoing as there are always new developments happening in the business world, new obstacles to overcome, and new products to be developed. Due to ongoing research focusing on IPV, the same could be said for the development of programs promoting IPV prevention and healthy masculinities. Therefore, continuous strategic analysis of IPV program procedures is necessary.

Modes of Environmental Scanning

According to Choo et al. (2003), the environmental scanning process can be broken down into four different modes of analysis: 1) Undirected viewing (a broader

look at one's subject area with no specific target other than signs of change); 2) Conditioned viewing (a cost effective look at the significance of the effect that the subject matter analyzed has on an organization); 3) Informal searching (a more limited and unstructured search for information on a specific subject area to examine more effective ways forward for an organization or program); and 4) Formal searching (a structured and time sensitive scan of a subject area is conducted with the intention of uncovering significant and more refined information, including competitor intelligence, market analysis of products and patent searches). Ultimately deciding on what mode works best depends on the subject matter and the specific details investigated.

Informal Searching Procedures

For the purposes of this study, given that the intention was to find ways to analyze IPV prevention programs by finding out what makes them successful, the *informal searching* mode of environmental scanning (mentioned above) has been conducted. Given the unknown volume of IPV prevention programs that exist globally, the intention was to get an idea of the breadth of programs that fall within the inclusion criteria that will be discussed later. Albright (2004), Choo et al. (2003) and Tam-Seto et al. (2016), suggest researchers must not spend all their time on the scanning portion of this process. Instead, the process can be broken down into five steps (Albright, 2004) which were used in this study:

1) Recognize and justify the need for the scan as well as the amount of time that will be dedicated to it.

Given the lack of synthesized data regarding IPV programs, the purpose of this scan was to conduct a worldwide search for programs designed to prevent IPV and foster healthier masculinities to grasp the breadth of programs that exist in their differing varieties in accordance with the research questions. The timeline was based on the parameters of a master's thesis.

2) Collecting available information in a structured manner

To ensure a focus on the relationship between IPV prevention and healthy masculinities the inclusion criteria were:

1. The programs focused on the prevention of IPV;
2. The programs focused on the promotion of healthy masculinities (masculinities that encourage conversation and self-reflection, over, selfishness, violence and aggression);
3. The programs were designed for adolescent male-identified individuals;
4. Information about the programs could be accessed through a web-based search process;
5. The programs were implemented in Canada (With a special focus on Nova Scotian programs, whilst including other provinces), the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand (Western, English-speaking countries);
6. The programs were implemented either in-person or online.

Given the research questions the search terms that guided the environmental scan were: IPV prevention programs, Masculinity and IPV prevention education, Western

English-speaking countries (i.e., Canada, The US, The United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand.) involved in creating IPV prevention programs, IPV and masculinity.

This study utilized the internet (e.g., any organizational websites, social media posts, documents, and publications available online) as well as other media (e.g., YouTube clips and program advertisements etc.) to retrieve IPV prevention programs that met the inclusion/exclusion criteria. This informal scanning process (Choo, 2003) facilitated the identification of program practices and processes ongoing in IPV-prevention program focusing on healthy masculinities designed for male-identified adolescents. All the data collected from these programs were compiled into an Excel spreadsheet that was broken down into different categories for analysis.

3) Analysis of the collected information

Information retrieved through the scanning process was organized in an Excel spreadsheet in the following categories:

- Program name
- Length of program
- Where and by whom each program is offered (i.e., country of origin and name of organization)
- Intended participants?
- Delivery method (Virtual vs In-person)
- Goals of each program
- Subject matter
- Number of follow-up sessions
- Was the topic of masculinity included?
- Examples of how it was defined
- Average age of participants
- Paradigm
- Are the programs evidence based (How?)
- Source of supporting literature (i.e., what website, document or media source was this information collected from)
- General feedback given by staff and participants
- Curriculum retention rate (if available)

Who is sponsoring/funding these programs
Participant Cost (if available)

These categories automatically served as a coding framework when inputted into MAXQDA (VERBI Software, 2021), a qualitative data analysis software program. From there, subcodes were created as further information was revealed in the collected data. Using these codes and subcodes, based on Albright's methods of analysis (2004) which revealed issues and trends related to IPV programming, six main themes were chosen during the analysis of the data that were reflective across programs revealing factors that contributed to their success.

4) Document and communicate the findings to decision makers and stakeholders in a timely and concise manner

The information was documented within a graduate level thesis will be shared via possible presentations and reports. Program facilitators, those in charge of community organizations involved in IPV awareness and prevention, sexual assault and victim services advocates are just a few of the stakeholders that could benefit from this knowledge.

5) Making informed decisions

With this newly uncovered information, it may be possible for adaptations to be made in whatever subject area may apply (in this study that is IPV), with any gaps in knowledge, drawbacks to programs and products, and weak links in the organization now on display. Researchers and stakeholders will be able to collaborate regarding changes and ways forward for organizations based on the results presented to them

(Albright 2004; Choo et al., 2003; Tam-Seto et al., 2016). This will occur when this project is completed.

Chapter 4: Findings

The environmental scan continued until no new data emerged, resulting in the selection and review of 55 programs (See Appendix A). The programs include three from the U.K., four from New Zealand, four from Australia, 15 from the U.S. and 30 from Canada. Based on the analysis, the findings will be broken down by the 6 themes resulting from the review: Program Focus, Program Content (subject matter), Cross Country Comparisons, Evidence Base, Paradigm, and Follow Up and Evaluation.

Theme # 1 Program Focus

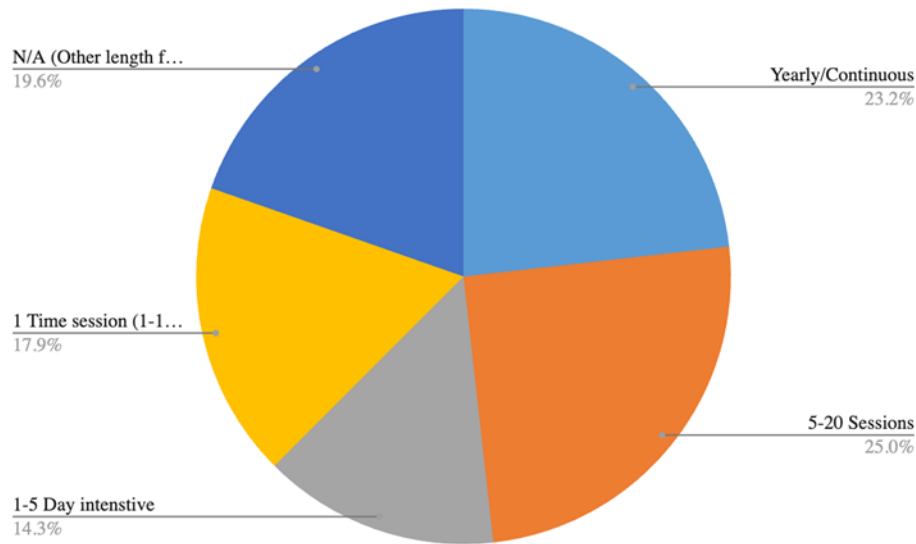
The Program Focus theme refers to trends in program structure evident through the scan; more specifically, length of program, intended participants, and delivery methods. While there is great diversity in the ways in which each of the 55 sample programs are implemented, there are noticeable patterns or similarities in the ways in which each program was organized.

Length of Programs

The programs scanned varied in length as seen in Figure 1. Subcode ranges were created to sort each program's length into more succinct and understandable categories.

Figure 1

Program Length



The subcodes and their percentage weights are as follows: Yearly/continuous (23.2%), 5-20 sessions (25.0%), 1-5 day intensive (14.3%), one time session (1-10 Hours) (17.9%), N/A (other length format) (19.6%). A brief look at these statistics presents a virtual tie between the most common lengths per program. Most programs studied tended to be longer in duration, which could account for the level of detail in the curriculum and the time needed for participants to complete it. Alternatively, the next highest category (the N/A – Other length format) corresponds directly to programs that were neither in person nor held virtually but were instead presented in virtual asynchronous curriculum, allowing participants to move through the course at their own pace. Lastly, making up the remaining 14.3% percent were 1–5-day intensive experiences.

This data may indicate that programs were less likely to hold intensive courses, favoring more long-term sessions, potentially allowing participants and facilitators to connect and bond, allowing for more effective learning (Jewkes et al., 2015). What is clear in these data is that participants and facilitators prefer sessions where they can take the time to become comfortable with the information and with their peers. Rather than forcing participants to take part in long drawn out one session discussions, participants may require shorter, more consistent sessions that allow opportunities to grow and digest the information in their own time.

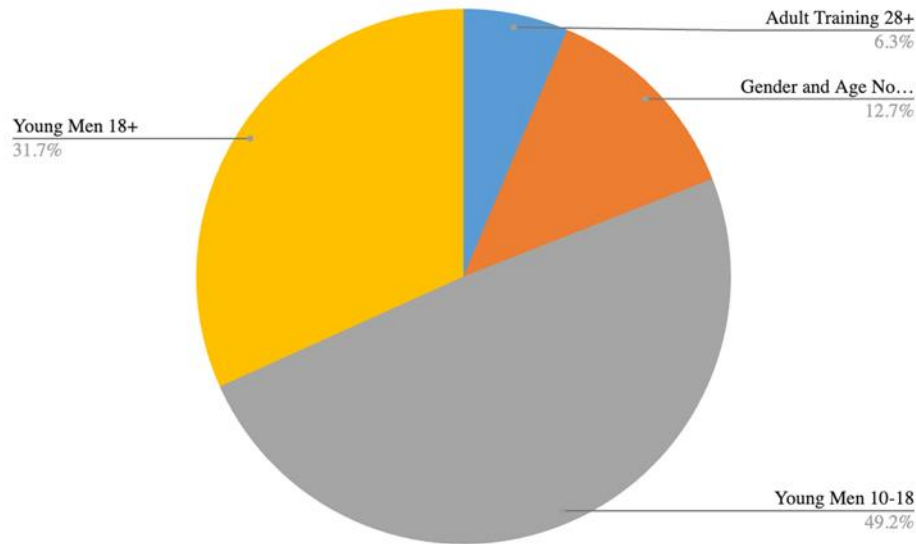
Intended Participants

One of the many interesting observations in this environmental scan was the wide range of individuals who participated in these programs. Information regarding the recruitment of participants (whether voluntary or mandated) was limited, but most reflected voluntary participation. The inclusion criteria for this research stated a search for adolescent male identifying participants. While much of the sample reflected this demographic, in some cases, women and male identifying individuals were noted. A discussion of demographics (participant age and gender) follows.

Overall, most programs in this sample fell in line with the search inclusion criteria, but some overlap between subcodes was observed, e.g., some programs being both for younger men 18 years of age and under as well as adults of either gender who were seeking to learn and eventually teach these programs in the future. A full range of data is shown below in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Intended Participants



It is apparent through the environmental scan that there is a concerted effort in the prevention programs to educate young men and boys to reduce and recognize intimate partner violence before it happens. As mentioned previously, however, programs such as *Man Made and Smart Alice Training* also prioritize the training of facilitators to help ensure the success of these programs. As well, many of the programs that fall within that collective 12.7 % of adults and gender/age nonspecific participants, did so to ensure this curriculum was distributed to as many youth as possible. On the other hand, there were a few in that group where the age and gender of the target audience was not specified on the website. However, of that 12.7%, there were four programs (6.7%) where adult men, often those who committed violence themselves or showed signs of aggression towards their partner, who chose to take part as a way to change their behaviour. While most of these programs were designed for male

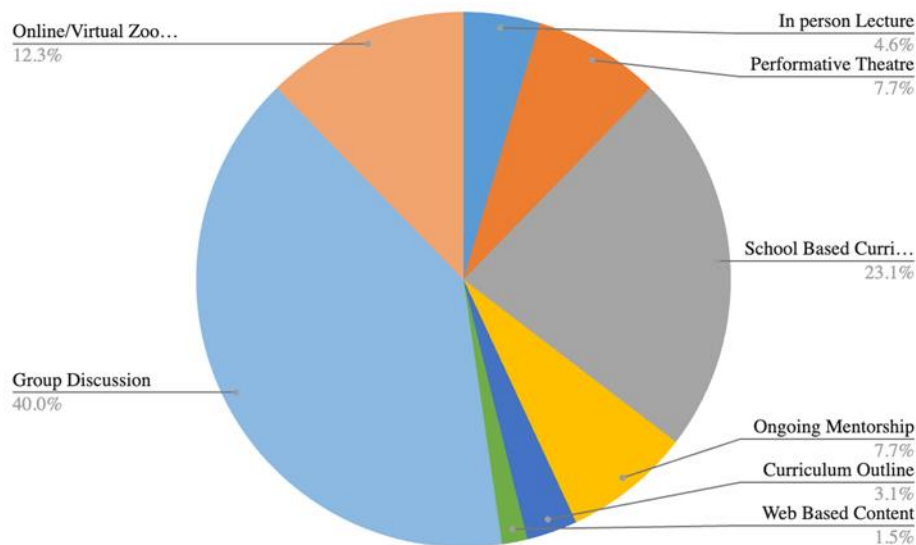
identifying participants specifically, the scan indicates there are no restrictions on participation regardless in many of these programs, particularly the ones where sexual health and relationships were included.

Delivery Method

Programs scanned varied in implementation methods employed (refer to Figure 3).

Figure 3

Delivery Methods



The most prominent methods in the sample were group discussion-based sessions either virtual or in person (40%) wherein participants were asked to engage in critical self-reflective discourse around ways masculinity and IPV are present in their lives and how that may change for the better. In programs such as *UBC SASC Healthier Masculinities Program (Men's Circle)* and *MVP Strategies (Mentors in Violence Prevention)* participants are challenged by facilitators and other participants to think about these issues and the way they have reacted to them or perpetrated them, leaving

the door open for masculinity narratives to change, thereby challenging societal norms. In addition to group discussions, school-based lectures typically ranging from grade 8-9 to university age participants were also found through the scan. In lecture-based programs, including *Youth Violence Prevention and Healthy Relationships Project* and *Engaging Young Men in Gender-Based Violence Prevention*, participants are taught healthy relationship skills, how to recognize and prevent signs of abuse and toxic relationships as well as ways in which they can advocate in response to these issues. While this is not dissimilar to the previous grouping in many ways, some of the feedback from these programs indicates that the group discussions were more effective in that participants felt less like students and were given more opportunities to speak up and out about issues they have experienced. The group setting also provided an opportunity for discussion offering participants the chance to ask questions about themselves they wouldn't have otherwise been able to ask. On the other hand, the school-based lectures were more information-focused, providing students with opportunities to learn about the bystander phenomenon, thereby potentially decreasing rates of violence in the future.

Not surprisingly, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a shift to virtual methods of program implementation. Approximately 14% of the programs scanned were web based, implementing either Microsoft Teams, Zoom meetings, or video based informative lectures available on the program's website. In 2021-2022 as the pandemic restrictions lifted and people returned to in-person interaction, some programs (*Healthy Masculinities Training institute, Sensitive Caring Workshop, Man Made, Preventing*

Sexual Violence and Responding to Disclosures etc.) adopted a hybrid approach offering participants the flexibility to participate either in-person or online (via information on their websites).

Performative theatre (programs that utilized theatrical performances in teaching their curriculum) and ongoing mentorship (one on one partnerships between facilitators and participants wherein the participants can learn directly from their facilitators) was used in 7.7% of the scanned programs. While programs such as *InterACT Performance Troupe*, *Kids on the block*, and *I'm the boss of me* were not as curriculum or conversation heavy as the group discussions or school-based lectures, it appears as though they are meant to engage the creative mind and connectedness of participants. These creative methods were used as a more direct and interactive way to educate participants rather than having them think critically in a group discussion setting or lecture where attention spans and emotional availability may be strained. Typically shorter in length, targeting younger populations and more person to person, these programs cut straight to the heart of the participant engaging their right brain, allowing a different, more artistic form of critical thought (Broll et al., 2015; Jewkes et al., 2015). Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, many of these programs were interrupted or scaled back due to public health protocols and may have influenced the scanning process.

Lastly, 3.1% of programs were designed for teachers and program facilitators to use at their own discretion. This content was curriculum-based and could be purchased and supplied to schools and their teachers to educate students. This is the only grouping that does not involve an outside facilitator, and while in most cases the curriculum was

adequately detailed for students to unpack, it did require teachers feeling comfortable enough to discuss such sensitive and complicated topics as IPV, masculinity and healthy relationship models.

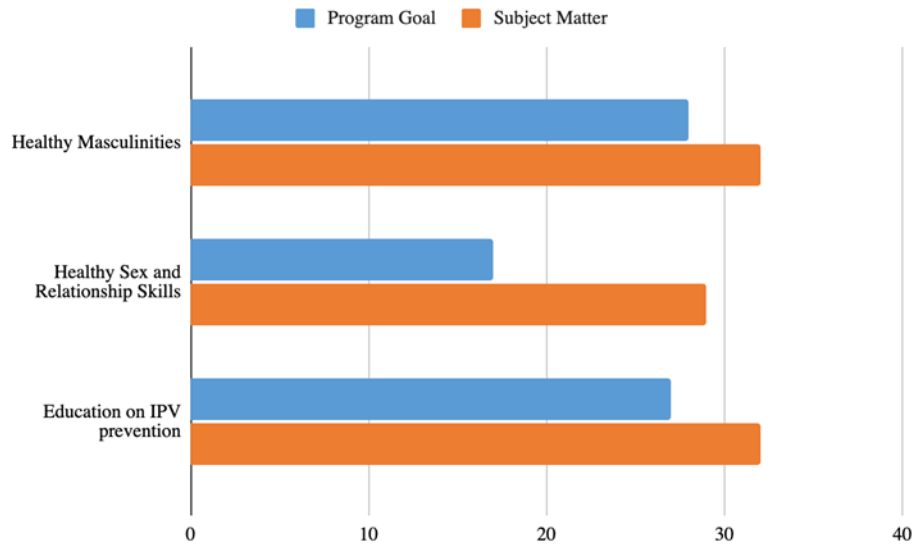
Considering the current state of the world whereby instances of IPV are on the rise (Beland et al., 2021), this environmental scan of programs focusing on the prevention of IPV, and masculinities may present some hope for the future of prevention mechanisms. This breadth of variety in programing presentations suggests that more creative and innovative ideas for implementation are possible. In fact, some of these ideas in the sample blended into other codes. For example, some of the online programs started in person but because of pandemic restrictions were forced to go virtual.

Theme #2: Program Content

The environmental scan reveals that while the structure and length programs scanned varies significantly, the subject matter and program goals are remarkably similar, so much so that they can be categorized into three subcodes, Healthy Masculinities, Healthy Sex, and Relationship Skills and Education on IPV prevention, as seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Program Goal and Subject Matter Comparison



When comparing the weight of each subcode against their presence in program goals and subject matter, it is clear that content focusing on healthy masculinities and education and IPV prevention remain the most common subject areas within the programs scanned. While these areas of emphasis are less apparent in the goals statements of programs, they are equally evident in the subject matter of these programs. This is not surprising considering the objective of these programs is to prevent IPV by supporting male-identified youth in developing healthy masculinities. It is incumbent upon the facilitators to include similar content within their curricula. However, the presence of healthy sex and relationship curriculum in the program sample, even though it appears less significant in overall program goals, is suggestive of its perceived significance to program developers. While sex and relationship education

programs were not included in this scan, they were apparent as components of programs also emphasizing IPV prevention and masculinity.

Masculinity

As noted, the programs reviewed are similar in content and subject matter; however, how the programs are designed and delivered varied. The same can be said about definitions of “masculinity”. Multiple definitions of masculinity were apparent in the programs scanned. As Rogers (2022) noted, programs focusing on masculinity are not intent on changing men themselves but rather the culture that raises these men, providing education and an environment for them to talk about healthy versus unhealthy masculinities and how they relate to issues of violence in intimate partner relationships. While it was traditionally understood that unhealthy masculinities included anti-feminine, status seeking, violent and aggressive behaviors (Kaplan & Offer, 2022), the programs in this scan shift to curriculum emphasizing diverse healthy masculinities i.e., men who would nurture and protect rather than abuse and close themselves off from help. While the programs scanned did not define masculinities positively or negatively, there is evidence to suggest that inclusivity is valued for its capacity to transform normative gender roles. Inclusivity in this sense refers to the willingness to move beyond traditional ideas and interpretations of gender roles. As an example, most of the programs in this study, in their descriptions of intended participants, included terms like “man” or “male-identifying” which opened the possibility for trans-gender and gender non-conforming individuals to take part in this educational practice.

An important commonality in the programs scanned was their shared focus on questioning traditional masculinity and transforming masculinities through behaviors deemed to be communicative, feminist, and less violent (Waling, 2019). This includes program content focusing on respect, anger control, compassion, honesty, and self-acceptance. For example, *Manhood 2.0* a Prevent Connect program based in California focuses specifically on emotion control and working with young men on their understanding of gender norms and their potentially harmful impacts. Another example is the 10 *Dialogues* program in the U.K. produced by Manchester Women's Aid. This program focuses on how sexist and misogynist beliefs and behavior can be addressed in school environments, and aims to elicit behavioral changes, while creating an empowering, exciting, and freeing experience for the participants, through lecture and discussion-based classes.

While there is no universally accepted definition for healthy or unhealthy masculinity, the core values mentioned above suggest that a consensus within program facilitator communities is forming. As an example of this, information from these programs suggests that many programs are open to men and male-identifying individuals regardless of sexual orientation or physical appearance. In this sense one size does in fact fit all. Waling (2019) suggests the majority of participants who sign up for these programs must be ready to accept masculinities that turn away from oppressive violence and explore healthier forms of masculinities. Other participants in the scanned programs were either registered for the programs involuntarily by their parents or mandated to attend through the courts.

Programs scanned do not favour one experience with masculinity over another. For example, the only requirement for participation in the *Man up* program hosted by Lethbridge family services is that individuals are male identifying; what that looks like does not seem to matter. Additionally, Peretz and Lehrer (2019) examined *The Men's Story* program from California which is similar to *Man up* in that they both include masculinity and IPV prevention education subject matter in their curriculum. The facilitators of *Man up* work with young male-identifying individuals to change their behavior using critical reflective thought and discussion as a mechanism for education. Meanwhile the participants of *The Men's Story* are encouraged to share with an audience (via artistic visual/theatre performance) personal stories and narratives that express a variety of struggles with identity (e.g., racism, HIV/AIDS, transphobia etc.) in an effort to self-reflect, show personal resilience in their manhood and grow in positive and different ways (Peretz & Lehrer, 2019). Thus, the programs reviewed in this study and my Peretz and Lehrer support a shift away from traditional masculinities and toward more diverse and positive healthy masculinities as they work towards reducing the prevalence and incidence of IPV in slightly different ways.

IPV

Programs scanned focus significantly on IPV prevention and masculinity education in their curriculum. However, one of the more interesting and important points revealed through the environmental scan was that many programs weighted the importance of IPV prevention differently as reflected in their program goals and curricula. An example of the IPV only curriculum is shown in the *Violence is Preventable*

(VIP) program developed by the British Columbia Society of Transition Houses. This program focuses on intimate partner violence prevention. Specifically, the program emphasizes the development of skills required to speak out and report IPV. What is evident from these examples is the flexibility of program design and the commitment to improving policy and practice in prevention strategies.

The majority (80%) of the sample programs selected balanced prevention and masculinity training in their curricula. For example, *Man Made*, a program facilitated by Anova (based in Ontario), and Mount Saint Vincent University in Nova Scotia, focuses on both masculinity transformation as well as bystander intervention (the process by which an individual intervenes when observing an act of violence to prevent it) with respect to intimate partner violence (Abbott & Cameron, 2014). Another example was *The Men's Project*, developed and implemented by Jesuit Social Services in Australia. In this program targeted to younger participants, positive aspects of masculinity are reinforced.

Wolfe et al. (2009) evaluated one of the programs scanned, the *Fourth R: Skills for Youth Relationships* program. They found the integration of IPV prevention, masculinity and sex education into one singular program curriculum was beneficial in moving the field of prevention closer to a more streamlined approach to health promotion (sexual and relational). Support for introducing this subject matter at an early stage of education may reduce the likelihood of violence was also evident from this evaluation. O'Leary and Slep (2011) concur but indicate there may an issue with including this content in early school years, as other important subjects (math, science, social studies etc.) may be prioritized.

Prevention

A focus on prevention was apparent through analysis of the 55 programs scanned. Whether it was prevention of intimate partner violence or prevention of unhealthy masculinities that lead to violence, prevention practice was key. *The Sensitive Caring Workshop* and *Preventing Sexual Violence and Responding to Disclosures Workshop* conducted by Family Services of Eastern Nova Scotia both focus on bringing in participants who have previously demonstrated aggressive tendencies and actions towards their loved ones educate participants on ways to reduce and self-recognize violence before it happens. While both programs have a focus on community outreach and engagement to ensure best practices for prevention, their focus is on young men predisposed to violence in the home. These programs act as a form of family and youth therapy whereby participants are encouraged to ask themselves about violence they have committed or experienced in the home and in other relationships. Further, they are encouraged to reflect on how they might change their behaviour in the future and how they may have acted as a more engaged bystander in these situations.

Recruiting and training participants as facilitators helped to ensure the sustainability of program outcomes over time (Kajula et al., 2019). There were four programs in the environmental scan whose participants were trained and then went on to become future facilitators of other programs, furthering the longevity of prevention curriculum and strategy. In fact, some of those programs were designed to ensure that would happen, developing leadership skills and training while also continuing to educate the young men. The *Man-Made* program conducted at Mount Saint Vincent University in

Nova Scotia is an example of this, as the program is designed for young men as a dialogue around masculinity, IPV prevention, the issues with pornography and the sexualization and objectification of women in the mainstream media and other related topics. This program intended for young men aged 18+, runs once a week for 3 weeks and participants are asked questions to encourage self-reflection and discussion in a safe and welcoming environment. While this program is designed as such, at the end of the final session participants are asked if they would like to be further involved and trained as facilitators, having just undertaken the very program they would be facilitating. This suggests the need for continuous training not only for participants but also for present and future facilitators. As current facilitators continue to age, the need for education and prevention remains as urgent as ever.

Diversity in Programming

While the goal of this research is to understand the ways in which IPV prevention programs across the selected countries focus on IPV and masculinity, each of the 55 programs scanned are structured differently in terms of the way facilitators presented them. Examples of this include a focus on male-identifying participants (inclusive of trans and other gender non-conforming individuals), IPV and masculinity-based programming, and program elements prioritizing inclusive and positive forms of masculinity and IPV prevention practice (i.e., how to communicate effectively in a relationship, self-reflection, anger management etc.). This section will provide a description of programs that focus on the diverse intersection of masculinity and IPV, in accordance with the research questions.

Most of these programs in their advertising are shifting from blaming and shaming offenders to inclusive and supportive invitations to participate and learn. This approach to participant recruitment is conducive to prevention, creating welcoming spaces for participants regardless of gender identity and social status. In order to carry out this approach program websites were created as an avenue for connecting with a more diverse and inclusive audience, utilizing large font sizes with a wealth of information and resources for their prospective participants, enough to draw them in and remain interested. Visually there was a notable use of bright and warm colors and little use of black or darker tones. Also, some programs included pictures and reviews, highlighting previous iterations of the program and comments offered by past participants. While this is not uncommon in most advertising strategies, it seemed well suited for participant engagement and recruitment as it allowed for transparency and openness to be fostered from the outset of participation, regardless of individual circumstance. See Appendix B for examples of this.

An examination of each individual program and their corresponding advertising revealed that there was a positive correlation between the inclusion of IPV and masculinity, their target audience (typically young male identifying individuals) and the move toward a focus on healthy positive relationships. As expected, based on the search terms previously mentioned, the topic of men and boys in relation to violence prevention dominated these programs.

The focus was clear: prevention and change in relation to IPV and masculinity. All 55 programs are uniquely structured in the way many of them challenge and educate

male-identified youth to develop positive approaches to relationships as a conduit to the prevention of IPV through healthy masculinities. Many of the factors contributing to the success of these programs were intersecting and aligned with multiple codes and sub-codes. For example, many of the programs that dealt with masculinity and IPV also dealt with healthy relationship skills and communication as a focus of their work. That said, there were some cases where different programs in several sample countries favored one curriculum over the others. The majority (80%) of the sample programs selected had curricular elements of both IPV prevention and masculinity training involved. Those that had one or the other could be traced back to primarily two countries out of the five selected for this study, New Zealand, and Australia.

Theme #3: Cross-Country Comparisons

A comparison of programs scanned by country of origin (Canada, U.S., U.K., Australia, and New Zealand) yields insight on the practices and processes conducive to IPV prevention through the transformation of unhealthy masculinities. An examination of programs offered in Nova Scotia will also be in focus. This section focuses on the ways in which programs in these areas are conducted and what methods of education are employed and where priorities are placed in terms of curriculum. The examples of countries where IPV only and Masculinity only programs were in focus (New Zealand, Australia and Canada) are shown below.

Masculinity in New Zealand and Australia

Programs ongoing in Australia and New Zealand primarily focus on masculinity education followed by an emphasis on IPV prevention. Three out of four of the

Australian programs scanned focused on supporting participants in unlearning aggressive behaviours. The *Man Cave* program, for example, emphasizes masculinity education as an early intervention strategy. This is perceived to be imperative in a country where men are socialized to be strong, stoic, and traditionally masculine, attributed, in part, to Australia's history as a penal colony (Baranov et al., 2023). Similarly, programs implemented in New Zealand prioritize masculinity education but aligned there with an interest in sport and athleticism, commonly associated with male strength and physical prowess (Hokowhitu, 2004). For example, the *Men Being Real* program and its follow up *Men Being Bold* hosted by the Essentially Men Education Trust are two programs that highlight the significance of a move towards more positive notions of masculinity with undertones of IPV prevention woven into the mix. One of the central goals of these programs is "learning how to break patterns that are holding you back" (n.p.) patterns in this context referring to toxically masculine traits, as well as improving meaning making and emotion expressions as they relate to loved ones (Essentially Men Education Trust, 2023). Their tagline is "become a better partner, lover, parent, friend and man" (n.p.) which strikes to the heart of the purpose of this study as it is programs such as these that will revolutionize what it means to be a man as well as work to eliminate IPV (2023).

The tonal shift in the way New Zealanders understand masculinity was supported through the example of former Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern. Not only was she a female liberal feminist leader of the country for six years (2017-2023) but because of this, she inadvertently introduced new approaches to masculinity, not only in the way

she led the country, but by shifting gender roles while serving in office. Her husband Clarke become a stay-at-home father, further reinforcing new narratives about masculinities (Galy-Badenas & Sommier, 2022). Media reports were overwhelmingly positive and affirming of the changes apparent in the practice of masculinity and parenting (2022). Hokowhitu (2004) suggests that any resistance from mainstream society to accept this and other progressive images of masculinity should encourage participants and other more progressive and forward-thinking men to move even further beyond these narrow viewpoints, as loudly and as proudly as possible.

Programs scanned through this study support the development of healthy masculinities as an end in itself and as a means to an end – the prevention of IPV. The need for the transformation of masculinity is pressing. Baranov et al. (2023) suggests continued allegiance to toxic masculinities will impact healthcare, labor markets and the well-being of equity-seeking groups (women, migrants etc.) who are particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of masculinity. Moreover, transformative masculinities enable male-identified youth to achieve their full, human potential (Essentially Men's Trust, 2023).

Canadian Connections

The distribution of other programs across the provinces and territories is as follows:

Canada (province not specified), three; Nova Scotia, seven; Prince Edward Island, two; New Brunswick, two; British Columbia, three; Ontario, five; Alberta, two; Saskatchewan, five; and Yukon, one. Programs in Nova Scotia comprised nearly one third of all the

Canadian programs scanned (n=30). Between April 18th and 19th of 2020, the province of Nova Scotia witnessed the worst mass shooting in the history of Canada. Domestic violence and unhealthy masculinity, exacerbated by the first COVID-19 lockdown (Moffitt et al., 2020), are alleged to be instrumental in inciting this horrific mass casualty. Furthermore, according to Statistics Canada, between 2020 and 2021, family violence increased by 3% on average, which is likely due to the implementation of pandemic restrictions which required victims to live and work within close proximity to their offenders (Statistics Canada, 2022). This may have prompted the provincial government to fund and advocate for the creation of more programming and intervention strategies. The key here as mentioned earlier in the thesis is the education of participants at an age as early as possible. Furthermore, given that Nova Scotia is made up of a number of rural communities (not unlike the one where the shootings happened) where resources are limited, this form of education in schools and community centers is an essential component as it has the potential to save many lives (Wrathall & Herron 2021).

Masculinity was a major curricular focus in the Nova Scotian programs scanned. *The Sensitive Caring Workshop* operated by Family Services of Eastern Nova Scotia works directly with male-identifying participants to not only address their unhealthy masculine traits but also makes room for the idea that men are often victims too, providing supports and resources for men who have experienced violence in the home, as well as safe place to disclose their trauma. As well, while not removing accountability, facilitators attempt not to shame men who disclose that they themselves have been abusers (Knight et al., 2012). Men regardless of social status need to be able to feel free

to express their feelings and needs in order to move to a place in life they may come to step away from unhealthy masculinities and their history of enacting IPV. This may allow healing for all parties involved and encourage these men to begin to work towards healthy masculine pathways. As exemplified by the Nova Scotian programs sampled in this study, while there is significant progress being made in terms of prevention education, more still may need to be done, the research in this particular region regarding masculinity and IPV education programs is limited particularly in rural communities (Wrathall & Herron, 2021).

One program that already exists in a rural setting is the Antigonish Women's Center and Sexual Assault Services *Healthy Relationships for Youth (HRY)* program. In keeping with many of the curriculum formatting suggestions outlined earlier in this study, their fundamental goal is to teach participants to become facilitators while also giving them the IPV prevention and healthy relationship skills they need to become better men. However, it remains fundamentally important to ensure that in these programs, participants are taught to recognize and take accountability for their choices during various stages of their development into adulthood so that they might continue to do so later in life (Knight et al., 2012). What seems promising here is that while all these programs, across the different countries examined in this study may be different in terms of overall structure, Nova Scotian programs stand as a significant example of the way forward. Most of these programs have already implemented the most suggested recommendations discussed in the next section. Alice House for example has two programs, *Smart Alice* and their *Youth Education program*, that not only teach sex

education, IPV prevention and masculinity education under one unified model. They continue to encourage and train their participants to become future facilitators and stay involved with the organization (Knight et al., 2012).

As evidenced in the scan, and as suggested by Wrathall & Herron (2021), it could be argued that programs in this province are meritorious, however, there are not enough of them, more of a focus needs to be paid to innovative curriculum and opportunities for engagement in wider communities for young men (2021). A byproduct of this is being able to establish a connection and avenues for resources and programs to be put in place in rural areas, particularly in Nova Scotia. Due to poor internet connectivity and the social distancing requirements that were imposed for the last few years, and reduced funding opportunities, victims and participants in these areas have had little access to anything other than virtual interventions, and limited availability of immediate support (Moffitt et al., 2020). While a sizable portion of Nova Scotian programs have roots in rural communities, the search did not reveal enough to assume considerable progress had been made outside of what has previously noted.

Theme #4: Evidence Base

Programs scanned were reviewed to discern whether or not they are based on theoretically or research-based evidence. Only a few of the programs scanned explicitly indicated an evidence base. For example, the *Healthy Relationships for Youth* program is informed by a strengths-based and sex and relationship-based education evidence. These approaches focus on establishing the skills and strengths of their participants, as well as increasing their knowledge about sex and relationship curriculum (Oliver &

Charles, 2015). On the other hand, most programs did not directly specify the evidence, if any, utilized.

Theme #5: Paradigms of Program Practice

The programs in this sample were reviewed to attempt to determine the paradigm to which they are aligned as a means of better understanding the metrics and indicators of those that are most successful. Morgaine (1992) defined paradigms as “patterns, frameworks or guiding ideologies shared by members of a professional or scientific community... [and] the bonding element which cements together an otherwise disparate group of individuals” (p. 13). Morgaine (1992) and Humble and Morgaine (2002) outlined three paradigms: a) the critical emancipatory model; b) the interpretive model; and, c) the instrumental/technical model. Because Morgaine’s work in family life education focuses on these three paradigms, they were chosen as a relevant framework under which to review the programs in this scan. However, this process proved to be challenging as key features were difficult to discern based on the information provided, and the scanned programs often appeared to align with more than one paradigm; the facilitators of these programs most likely did not develop them with this framework in mind.

As Humble and Morgaine (2002) clarify, the critical emancipatory paradigm highlights the need for insight as participants are supported to move away from traditional oppressive knowledge and ways of being. It considers how a person’s social context can affect their life experiences and helps to translate personal experience into social action. Therefore, in this study, programs were thought to reflect a critical

emancipatory paradigm if they contained both lecture content and the opportunity to self reflect and engage in conversation with others to personalize the material with a few toward using these new insights as a platform for social change.

In this environmental scan, the critical emancipatory paradigm was most commonly seen, with 30/55 programs reflective of this approach. The use of this paradigm provided a direct way for facilitators to redirect and reshape IPV prevention and masculinity ideologies. Where the critical emancipatory model was apparent in programs, there was a mix of facilitator-led lecture as well as self-reflective discussion. Participants were encouraged to shift away from traditionally unhealthy forms of masculinity associated with violence toward new, more welcoming, and safe knowledge. An excellent example of this is the *Violence is Preventable* (VIP) program, where the focus was on educating whole families about unhealthy relationships and facilitating discussion regarding the applicability of the material to each family. Through their extensive domestic violence prevention curriculum as well as group intervention training and support groups, this program has provided thousands of people with the agency and opportunity for participants and their families to grow (Government of Canada, 2012).

The interpretive paradigm is focused on the human need to understand self and others while developing an interpretation of social reality (Morgaine 1992; Humble & Morgaine, 2002). As Morgaine and Humble expand, it views individuals as having different perspectives and supports people to critically reflect on their past actions, values, emotions and experiences to facilitate change. Without this, the new knowledge presented in these programs may not be integrated into everyday life. In this study,

programs were thought to reflect the interpretive paradigm if they provided an opportunity to be insight oriented and reflective, and allow participants to come to their own understanding regarding the experiences. Unlike programs closely aligned with the critical-emancipatory program, the interpretive programs did not emphasize social change.

In this scan, indicators of the interpretive paradigm were evident in 13/55 programs. A good example was the *I'm the Boss of Me* program. This program allowed participants to think critically about themselves and their peers as they learned to understand and interpret violent actions and the ways they might affect the participants' lives, and the lives of others particularly where sexual assault is concerned. This program used puppet theatre to allow participants to create their own understandings and definitions behind these actions. In keeping with Morgaine's (1992) work on the interpretive paradigm, the fundamental assumption is that that controlling and manipulative behaviors are unethical. Participants are invited to discuss this assumption and relate it to their own lives.

The instrumental/technical paradigm asserts that life changes can happen as a result of the giving and receiving of knowledge (Morgaine, 1992). It is concerned with satisfying human needs and controlling life situations and environments (Humble & Morgaine, 2002). These needs can be better understood by using curricula that focus on learning the laws of human behavior. The central assumption here is that knowledge can be helpful in changing behaviors. In this study, programs were thought to reflect the instrumental/technical paradigm if the focus was solely on sharing knowledge with

participants with the intention of reducing violent and unhealthy masculine acts post-program, enhancing agency in their environments.

This paradigm was reflected in 12/55 of the programs. In the context of the programs scanned, an example of the instrumental/technical paradigm is seen in *No is a Full Sentence*. This program uses a multi-session lectures and workbooks to instill non-violent preventative education, personal boundary control and bystander awareness as youth navigate a variety of interpersonal relationships. This multi-session model reflects the assumption that knowledge can be helpful in changing behaviors. It allows for knowledge retention and social conditioning as each session reviews the previous session before continuing, reinforcing the previous week's educative experience. Morgaine suggests that doing so would provide an opportunity for these lessons to take an active role in the shaping of future generations towards positive change (1992). This paradigm was seen the least in the environmental scan, likely due to the paradigm's use of a pre-determined curriculum rather than allowing participants to come to their own self-actualized conclusions. This, Morgaine suggested, is not always successful in achieving facilitators' desired outcomes of reducing violence (1992).

While programs were sorted into the paradigm they most closely aligned with, it must be noted that in some cases, it was not a clear-cut decision. For example, *MVP Strategies*, *InterACT Performance Troupe*, and *Manhood 2.0* contained critical reflective thought exercises and interactive activities that could place them in either the critical emancipatory or interpretive paradigm, but they were sorted into the critical emancipatory due to the combination of relevant information and interactive activities

that allowed them to personalize the material and consider opportunities for social change. The 55 programs scanned reflected a balance between instilling course content and allowing students to make their own interpretations and develop understandings about their place and histories within the context of IPV and masculinities. The critical emancipatory paradigm appeared to be used most often used in these programs because it provided participants with these freedoms (Morgaine, 1992). Using elements of all these paradigms (self-interpretation, pre-determined curriculum, critical thought and personalizing of information) in future programs would allow for informed decisions to be made regarding program development.

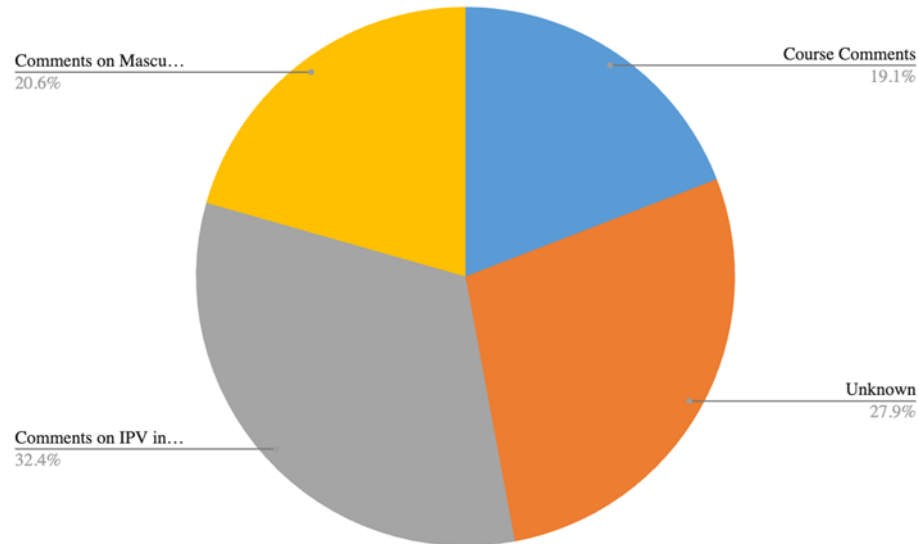
Theme #6: Follow ups and Evaluation

To discern program efficacy, it is important to understand whether any follow ups with participants and evaluations were undertaken. If they were completed, what kind of responses were provided and how did these programs adapt based on feedback received? Moreover, this theme focuses on two areas of interest: in what ways do participants respond to these programs after they have taken part? How are they able to retain and apply the information they have acquired in their interpersonal and romantic relationships as they get older?

Beginning with the first question an examination of programs scanned reveals the following as shown in Figure 5: Comments on the way each course was run (19.1%), unknown or non-existent feedback (27.9%), comments on the way IPV has been presented in the course (32.4%) and comments on the way masculinity was presented (20.6%).

Figure 5

Types of Course Feedback



Firstly, and most apparent, is one of the largest sections (27%) of programs that had little to no participant feedback associated with their programs on their websites. In these cases, the feedback provided was minimal (e.g., “this course was positive, and I liked it” or “great program”). As seen in Appendix C, this typically was coupled with program websites that focused more on advertising course content and images from previous iterations rather than reviews and comments from participants.

Participant reaction to the presentation of IPV prevention materials in each course was significant for both evaluation and promotion to future participants. This is not unexpected considering the content and nature of these courses was centered around IPV prevention. Some examples of these comments found on the program websites include: *“My father should be here. I want to do this work now, so that my son never does what I did to get here.”* *“I was blaming my wife for the violence. I couldn't*

make progress until I took responsibility for what I was doing.” “The guys helped me start a new life. I’m happy for the first time. My new partner trusts me. I recommend it” (excerpts from the *Living Without Violence-Owning It* program reviews). One of the more insightful feedback comments shown in this sample was from the *Healthy Relationships for Youth (HRY)* program:

I found the cycle of violence most meaningful; I feel that it's important to recognize those signs and be able to see what that looks like if I were to find myself in one. This way I could remove myself from the violent relationship...Honestly, this is one of the things that is useful to every student no matter where they go. I think it's important we have programs that prepare students for life outside graduation.

Feedback of this nature was prominent through this section of the data, and while it may seem obvious that programs would only want to highlight the good things said about them, based on the data collected this does not seem to make these comments any less true or significant. This was no less true in cases where masculinity course content was discussed. As seen in the following two examples, while the feedback publicly presented was mostly positive, the of detailed feedback shows that these programs do well in providing education and training in healthy masculinity ideologies:

Thank you immensely for the privilege of being part of Modelling Respect and Equality. It leaves its mark on me – indelibly. It shapes how I train educators in Respectful Relationships because I have experienced personal growth and new

awareness of and optimism around what may be possible! (Anonymous testimonial on *The Men's Project (Modeling Respect and Equality* program website)

These conversations have helped me, and maybe I can use them to help others if they have problems or questions on the same topics. The best thing to do is to share knowledge, not just keep it for yourself, so I'm happy to take it back." When it comes to the most interesting part of the conference, Ahmed pointed towards the pre-conceived notions of what it means to be a man. "The concept of a man—how he should be tough, strong, nice looking, not show emotion—this was interesting to challenge my thoughts and understand the role of a man within the concept of gender-based violence." (Anonymous testimonial on the *Engaging Young Men in Gender-Based Violence Prevention* program website)

While each of the examples noted above showcase the success of these programs and the important work they are doing towards educating and increasing IPV prevention strategies, these are primarily examples of one time/short term programs and for the most part do not represent programs that are more long term, ongoing or on a repetitive basis (i.e., programs that cycle through participants quickly). For these, the feedback was limited as to what could be found on the websites searched. Below are some examples of what was present, but for the most part participant feedback was hard to find.

The Man Cave program presented out of Australia surveyed a sample of 30,000 past participants of their program and found that 95% would recommend their program to other young men, 98% think their program facilitators are “awesome”, and 94% of the participants rate their workshops “4 or 5 out of 5”. *The Kids on the Block* program highlights an example of feedback from a teacher whose class participated in their interactive theatre puppet show with content that revolved around IPV and masculinities. She said, “It is truly amazing to see how puppets can engage kids and be such good ‘teachers.’ They contribute to a safe and open environment that allows children to engage in conversations about vitally important topics.”

So then how is all of this applicable to program evaluation, participant retention and their ability to prevent and reduce violence, and change the way they contextualize masculinities? In a follow-up study done by the *Guys Work* facilitators after their program had been completed, retention of information was illustrated by data showing how it was applied in a real-world setting. Over 20% of participants stepped up to ask for help either in order to leave a violent situation or to stop themselves from creating them after having participated in their program. *The Violence is Preventable (VIP)* program website indicated that after having participated“ youth reported high levels of learning regarding the signs of violence and abuse, the understanding that everyone deserves to feel safe and the availability of resources for victims; and through participation in group interventions, children indicated positive growth throughout the group in the areas of: getting along with other children, listening skills, solving problems without the use of

physical aggression, and adult support.” (Statement from the *Violence is preventable (VIP)* program website via Government of Canada, 2022).

Furthermore, there were many programs in the programs scanned wherein knowledge retention and action on the part of the participants was high due to their future involvement in the program as a facilitator. For example, the *Men’s project (Modeling Respect and Equality)* out of Australia encouraged its participants to become future leaders and many of the participants in these programs are now teachers and community leaders whose focus is on reducing violence in their districts. More directly, the *Masculinity Peer Education Program* conducted at Brown University, is intentionally designed so that participants would become facilitators after their first year in the program. This allows future facilitators to take on leadership roles in the program, keeping the curriculum learned top of mind as they continue to help educate future generations. Programs like this would not be successful if retention of subject matter were not maintained.

While not all the programs in the sample were designed as such, there is a clear indication that participants were pleased with the ways the programs they participated in were run, and were, for the most part, able to maintain and apply the skills they learned to their lives. Moving into the discussion portion of this thesis, findings like these will be key as conclusions and ways forward in terms of programming are uncovered.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to conduct an environmental scan of programs focusing on intimate partner violence (IPV) prevention and the reshaping of masculinities among male-identified adolescents. This study addressed the following questions: 1) What are the practices and processes contributing to positive outcomes for male-identified adolescents participating in IPV prevention programs and 2) How is masculinity re-constructed in these programs? These questions will be the focus of this section.

Returning to Social Learning Theory

Fundamental to the interpretation of the results of the environmental scan is a theoretical focus on social learning significant in substantiating claims that IPV can be prevented through transformation of toxic masculinities in male identified youth. Social learning theory, as introduced in the literature review, contends that children learn positive and negative behavioral attributes from the environments they are born into. If these children experience violence in the home and are not told it is negative, then they are more than likely to repeat it as they grow older (Fowler et al., 2016). Breaking the cycles of intergenerational violence enshrined by traditional notions of masculinity and violence is essential to the health and wellbeing of the young men involved in the programs scanned, as if this is not done, no change can be made and toxicity continues (Richardson et al., 2021). What is abundantly clear based on the findings, is that all 55 programs examined were reflective of social learning theory as they acknowledge the impact of early learning on attitudes and behaviors and create environments in which

participants are taught the differences between positive and negative masculine behavioral attributes thereby breaking cycles of IPV. Men in these programs come to understand the negative impacts their aggressive behavior can have on those around them (Tarzia et al., 2023). Giving male participants the opportunity to express themselves and think critically creates an opportunity for them to develop healthy behaviors, while not restricting them to one form of masculinity (Richardson, 2021). Given the rise in reported IPV cases particularly in Canada during the last 3 years, the need for programs that continue to institute social learning theory ideology into the framework of their programs has never been so high (Haag, 2022). This could counterbalance the impacts of IPV.

Curriculum Confidence and Comfort

As discussed in the findings section of this study, most of the training conducted for those who intend to run IPV prevention and masculinity education programs were designed to teach only the organizational facilitators how to run the programs. Facilitators were required to attend training events in 59.3% of programs. This is in direct contrast to the 29% of programs that were co-led by facilitators and schoolteachers, wherein the facilitators were training the teacher while course was occurring (usually on a trial run basis). This suggests a certain level of discomfort when teaching about subjects such as IPV prevention, basic sex education and any mention of masculinity as many of these teachers may not have wanted to receive any negative feedback from students and their parents as a result of the ways they were presenting this content (Greenan, 2019). Ultimately, this could be the result of a lack of relevant education and

training or as a report from Action Canada for Sexual Health (2022) on the state of sex education in Canada suggests, this discomfort could emanate from the personal and political beliefs of those teachers whose job it is to educate. They would simply ignore it based purely on their own personal bias and lack of understanding. This may be why there is such a high volume of facilitator led programs occurring in the sample. Because of this ignorance, many communities suffer due to the inconsistencies in training and content provided to participants, forcing many school systems to fall below the national standards of practice leaving youth exposed to alternative methods of education as mentioned above (2022).

Although both the federal and provincial governments devoted over \$300,000 in funding to support and build infrastructure to protect victims and implement programming for IPV prevention strategies, it will be some time before the results of these investments are seen (Nova Scotia Provincial Government, 2023). This was reflected in programs across the scan as some funding opportunities are available, but much effort was required to access the funding through grant applications. It should also be noted that much of this funding was for intervention-based strategies rather than prevention, it seems to be independent organizations that primarily run and fund early prevention strategies with minor financial assistance from the government. Because the long-term outcomes remain unknown, resources must be allocated to long-term follow-up to determine the efficacy of these programs.

If there is to be a move towards more unified and successful sexual and relational health education, inclusive of IPV prevention and masculinity narrative change, there

needs to be more of a consistent and firm standard of practice in terms of presenting course content as well as training of facilitators (Greenan, 2019). Given that the majority of the programs in this study were presented differently in terms of format and given the variation in standards set out by each program region responsible for their own educational practices, the desired uniformity has yet to be reached (Action Canada for Sexual Health, 2022). While the above is concerning, it is important to recognize the larger percentage of programs that were being run outside of school systems, in community settings, thereby removing the need for teachers entirely. This is a positive alternative avenue for change as it provides organizations the opportunity to set their own, often more expansive curriculum, and understanding of the societal and behavioral factors that contribute to IPV in young men (Mackowiak & Scoglio, 2018). While presenting these programs in schools continues to be tradition in terms of education practices, there seems to be a significant move towards community and facilitator led programs. In theory, this takes the pressure off significantly inexperienced and over pressured teachers and puts it in the hands of professional program coordinators. This occurs when experienced facilitators work with participants to develop a more well-rounded and educated world view in terms of their own masculinity and the ways in which they might be able to prevent violence in their relationships before it occurs (2018).

Cultivating Future Leaders and Facilitators

One of the more interesting findings in this study was the leadership and knowledge retention potential associated with these programs. Many of these programs

are designed to allow present participants to become future facilitators, carrying on the work necessary to educate and reduce IPV. Kajula et al. (2019) highlights the popular opinion leadership model (POL) that has been used in their study program (as well as in several programs in this sample) to encourage well respected individuals (in this case, program participants) to become agents of change, spreading the importance of health and wellbeing in their social circles. In this study's context, these change agents are the participants being trained in, and tasked with, future program facilitations.

Arguably, the most crucial point here is that the information participants gain can be effective but also taught to future participants by present participants. Kelly et al. (2017) highlighted these continuing aspects and their healing qualities of self-reflection as these participants move on from the program to become facilitators and advocates for change. Mount Saint Vincent University's *Man-Made* program (a three-hour, three session masculinity and IPV prevention program) provides past participants the opportunity to be trained and become part of the facilitation team for future installments of the program. I was able to take part in this program and can testify to the quality of information and facilitation. Each weekly session was divided into subjects (pornography's effect on men and the female form, bystander intervention, sexism, and misogyny etc.) where participants are led into conversation and self-reflection upon each subject and how has shown up in their lives, they were provided the opportunity to share with the group and discuss their experiences with other male peers. There were other handouts and activities, but the focus was on togetherness and trust within the group, creating a shared and welcoming space for growth to occur. The facilitators did an

excellent job of creating this safe space and delivering content that was engaging and thought provoking for participants. At the end of the final session participants were asked to reflect on their time in the program and personally I learned a lot about myself and my history observing IPV and how I view my own masculinity. I am also scheduled to be trained in facilitation before completing this study. Another program, *Masculinity Peer Education*, a 1-time workshop, conducted at Brown University was designed to recruit and train participants to carry out satellite programs with the dual purpose of educating and onboarding other young male and male-identifying participants in the ways of IPV prevention and masculinity ideological change.

It is important to note that when talking about facilitation and advocacy in this way, it refers not only to who is running the programs but also anyone who may engage in prevention and education in any way as it relates to IPV (Kelly et al., 2017). However, while these two examples illustrate how participants can become facilitators, both programs desire to produce and continue the work being done in IPV prevention for future generations. This speaks highly of the work and the desperate need in western society to reduce violence and instill more healthy ways of masculine being and knowing. That said, while many of the facilitators, particularly in the masculinity education focused programs, were male identifying, there is a growing need, according to the literature, for more male facilitators to be trained so that they can educate in ways that align with diverse masculine identities (Bell & Stanley, 2006). The findings explored in this section were unexpected at the outset of this analysis; however, the effort to ensure and train future facilitators regardless of the roles they may take on, is a

positive factor as it assists in the fight against toxic masculinity and violence.

Recommendations for Future Program Practice

Recommendations for future program development and implementation have been developed from insights gained from this environmental scan as well as the literature review. These recommendations pertain to programs focusing on the prevention of IPV through an emphasis on transforming toxic masculinities in male-identified youth.

- 1) Multiple definitions of masculinity, as indicated in the literature (see for example Casey et al., 2018; Jewkes et al., 2015; Rogers, 2022) and within the results of this scan, should be kept in focus in program development and implementation. Given the wide range of masculinities that exist, future programs should be open to accepting any person identifying as male, by creating a space in which these individuals feel comfortable learning ways in which to express themselves and feel heard. Emphasis should be placed on strategies supporting participants as they grow into themselves and learn to think critically about how they are behaving in their intimate relationships. The focus here needs to be on positive and uplifting behaviors (i.e., sensitive caring, emotional expression and non-violence etc.) rather than abusive negative behaviors.
- 2) Training provided to schoolteachers, health care workers, community leaders and program facilitators responsible for teaching sex education and healthy relationships is imperative. Often it is the case where those in the teaching role either feel underqualified or not confident in teaching these sensitive and challenging topics (Greenan, 2019). In a school-based context, these subjects should be taught under one

unified model inclusive of IPV prevention and masculinity curriculum. The sooner this healthy relationship education is taught, the better. As noted in this thesis, social learning theory supports the claim that youth can learn healthy masculinities at an early age.

3) More collaboration with non-school based programs needs to be encouraged. This has the potential to strengthen program offerings and create a platform for the training of future facilitators.

4) More funding allocated to IPV prevention programming and evaluation is essential. Otherwise the light from these programs will dim and eventually go out (Nova Scotia Provincial Government, 2023).

5) In order to be as inclusive as possible, programs should continue to meet participants where they are at upon entering the program, adjusting for any eventuality. As the findings indicated, all male-identifying participants (including those from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community) should be welcome to participate in these programs. As well given, that many participants come from rural areas, facilitators should find ways of engaging that move beyond what works in urban centers, by increasing funding and resource allocation and connecting with community groups to ensure no one who is interested in participating is left behind. In that sense, more intense and widespread advertising should be implemented as most potential participants would be otherwise unaware that programs like this exist. It is important to understand that many of the programs exemplified in this study, as well as those beyond this study's scope, have

made a concerted effort to implement these suggestions; the issue is that there needs to be more.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Due to the time constraints implicit with thesis work, an extensive search of programs was conducted but is not comprehensive. It reflects a moment in time (within the last ten years) and new and more innovative programs are emerging on a regular basis that may not be covered in this study.

Future research in this area would do well to incorporate longitudinal studies to determine long-term impacts on IPV. There is also a need to bring to light culturally diverse practices that would aid western countries as they continue to diversify. Also, future research may place special emphasis on how parents, female/other gender identifying individuals and adults in general are educated about IPV. It should also focus on obtaining more information about pathways into the programs (mandated versus voluntary participation), as well as evaluation of overall outcomes based on the different pathways. Lastly given the shift towards more conservative politics and governance in recent years particularly in Canada, future research should examine the role that masculinity plays in education when factoring in more right-wing ideals, and how the shifts discussed in this study may be affected.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Teaching participants from an early age to recognize and protect themselves from violence in their partnered relationships is and should continue to be, an essential part of any program that focuses on IPV prevention. Furthermore, across all five countries examined in this study, contributors of positive outcomes include but are limited to creating spaces in which participants feel safe talking about their experiences with IPV and their perceptions of masculinity and are encouraged to think critically about their place in that. Ensuring facilitators (organizational employees, teachers, community leaders etc.) are adequately trained and feel comfortable educating participants on these sensitive and often difficult subjects is another factor to the success and sustainability of effective programming. A successful program will take the time to not only focus on the standard sex education curriculum but also include topics related to IPV and masculinity education including the recognition of signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as unhealthy masculinities and how to get out of an abusive relationship.

Nowhere in this study was there provided, one strict and exact definition of what masculinity should look like, rather what was found was a need for inclusivity. Given that no one's masculinity is the same, but rather equal, most programs, while focused strictly on male participants were open to anyone identifying as male, remaining inclusive to all. What was found was a need and work being done to reform masculinity, moving beyond the unhealthy and toxic towards more diverse and positive ideas of masculinity. The focus in this topic, while centered on healthy relationship development and

maintenance as well as education provides excellent outlets and opportunities for male participants to look at their history with masculinity and what tradition and social learning theory may have taught them. This allows them to course correct and become better men. Further training previous participants to become facilitators is also key to the success of this reformation of ideals. Training participant facilitators ensures the future of these programs and their work in building more healthy futures for men and their views of masculinities by breaking down the walls of tradition.

While considerable progress has been made in the fight against Intimate partner violence and its unhealthy masculine companion, this is not enough. The war has not yet been won. More programs that defend and educate against these issues need to be created, and more facilitators trained. We cannot hope to eradicate IPV from the planet if work stops now. Adult men need to think about and recognize their place in shaping more healthy masculinities. Young male identifying individuals need to be educated at an early age before violence takes root in their lives. The consequences continue to allow traditional understandings of masculinities to twist too many men towards violence and aggression, leaving too many relationships, too many families fractured by trauma. IPV needs to end!

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Appendix A

Scanned Programs

Program name
Guy's Work
Engaging Young Men in Gender-Based Violence Prevention
Making Waves
Forth 'R': Strategies for Healthy Relationships
Safe Dates
Healthy Relationships Training Modules
Healthy Youth Dating Relationships
Youth Programming
Engaging Men to Prevent Gender Based Violence
Man Cave
Healthy Masculinity Training Institute
Living without Violence - Owning It
Exploring Masculinities
Violence is Preventable (VIP) Program
Youth Violence Prevention and Healthy Relationships Project
Man Made
UBC SASC Healthier Masculinities Program (Men's Circle)
MVP Strategies (Mentors in Violence Prevention)
InterACT Performance Troupe
Manhood 2.0.
Bringing in the Bystander
Sensitive Caring Workshop
Preventing Sexual Violence and Responding to Disclosures Workshop
Man to Man
Engaging Men in Violence Prevention
Challenge the #Outdated
Men being Real
Men being Bold
10 Dialogues Programme
Man Up
Smart Alice Training
Youth Education Program
Domestic Violence Restorative Circles
Men & Masculine Folks Network
Man Made
ReAct: Youth Healthy Relationships Program

Respectful Relationships Education
The Men's Project (Modelling Respect and Equality)
Modern Masculinities and Mindfulness
The Progressive Masculinity Program
Healthy Relationships for Youth (HRY) Program
STOP Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
Kids on the Block
Supporting Survivors of Sexualized Violence Training
I'm The Boss of Me
No is a Full Sentence
True Man
PAVE Prevention Education for Covid-19
Youth Community Educators Program (YCEP)
Masculinity Under Construction: Building a WRAP
Masculinity Peer Education
Education in New Forms of Masculinity
Engaging Men and Boys to End Violence in the family (ToolKit)
Moose Hide
AMAZE

Appendix B

Examples of Program Websites

MAN CAVE

Book Program Donate Menu

REDEFINING THE JOURNEY TO MANHOOD

We fundamentally believe that these early intervention programs can limit toxic masculinity and reduce rates of anxiety and depression that often lead to the prevalent outcomes of suicide and domestic abuse we see in our society.

The programs below bring our vision to life, and equip boys with the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours necessary for them to realise their full potential, build healthy relationships and take positive action in their communities.

Workshop 1 - Realising my Potential

Boys create their own unique version of healthy masculinity by understanding how gender norms have shaped their perspectives to this point, before being given the choice to grow beyond that. Exploration of personal identity, their unique strengths, how to care for themselves and what their values are, all add up to them understanding how they can reach their full potential. In the full-day workshop, boys will:

- Learn how gender stereotypes impact their attitudes and behaviour
- Meet our diverse male and non-binary facilitators
- Learn to constructively express their thoughts and feelings
- Connect to their values and strengths
- Leave with tools and resources to support their personal wellbeing
- Define values-based vision for the man they want to become

Workshop 2 - Building Respectful Relationships

This workshop guides boys on how to build healthy relationships across all domains of their life. This section explores how to support others, empathy, conflict resolution, expressing needs, power/privilege and integrity. In this workshop, boys will:

- Explore what defines a respectful relationship, especially with women
- Consider the quality of their own relationships

REDEFINING THE JOURNEY TO MANHOOD

MAN CAVE

Book Program Donate Menu

Our Programs

Right now, there is no clear Rite of Passage for boys into manhood. Because of this, boys often initiate themselves into manhood, which usually results in risk-taking behaviour to prove their masculinity (eg: binge drinking, objectifying women or train surfing).

The purpose of our programs is to fill this gap. To provide boys with a safe, healthy and contained Rite of Passage into manhood. Our programs are designed to be transformational, and to support the psychological and emotional development of a boy, so he can become a healthy young man. This is how we're redefining the journey to manhood.

We have taken more than 30,000 boys across Australia through our full-day workshops using playful, inclusive and collaborative tools and approaches that fully engage boys in the program.

96% of all the boys we have worked with would recommend our program to their mates. That's pretty amazing for a program that asks boys to talk openly about their emotions and is the result of our approach and the presence of our facilitator role models.

You'll find more information about our programs below.

**We currently deliver programs in Victoria and NSW. If you are outside these areas, please visit Man Cave Academy and find out how we can train you to run your own programs.*

Appendix C

Examples of No Program Feedback or Reviews

projectpave.org/programs

2023 Luncheon

WHO WE ARE PROGRAMS GET INVOLVED NEWS CONTACT

DONATE

TRUE MAN

True Man is a healthy masculinity program designed to help boys and young men develop healthier ideas, values, and practices of 'manhood'. Young men who complete the True Man Program will develop supportive relationships, encourage each other to express themselves authentically and be equipped to interrupt problematic thoughts and behaviors that impact gender based violence.

Designed as three, 90-minute sessions to middle and high school sports teams with their coaches but can be adapted to other groups of boys/men and scheduling formats.

True Man participants will:

- Deconstruct gender stereotypes and archetypes
- Develop personal and social identities through introspection and reflection
- Practice self-acceptance and compassion
- Learn mechanisms for personal transformation and help-seeking

BRING THIS PROGRAM TO YOUR SCHOOL

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Youth Violence Prevention and Healthy Relationships Project

<https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/fv-vf/annex-annexe/p78.html>