

Boys
to
Men
T U C S O N

**Creating Intentional Spaces to Inspire
Growth, Resilience, and Connection**

SOCIAL IMPACT LEARNINGS – PROGRAM YEAR 23-24

Our Mission

We strengthen our communities by nurturing intentional spaces for boys, men, and masculine-identified folks to practice honest and mindful relationships.

Vision

Boys and masculine-identified youth have equitable access to safe, trusted, and healthy adult male/masculine-identified mentors

Programs

- Healthy Masculinity Group Based Mentoring Program
- HIM (Healthy Intergenerational Masculinity) Initiative
- Pathways to Engagement and Empowerment
- Adventure Outings
- Outreach, Engagement and Trainings

Letter from CEO

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Partners,

As I reflect on this past year, I am deeply inspired by the dedication, perseverance, and vision that continue to drive our mission at Boys to Men Tucson (BTMT). In a world where violence and inequity challenge us daily, our work to nurture intentional spaces for boys, men, and masculine-identified individuals to practice honest and mindful relationships has proven both urgent and transformative.

Restorative work is not a quick fix, it takes time, intention, and a shared commitment to fostering change. The data and stories within this annual report reflect small but powerful shifts that ripple outward to create lasting impact. From a young person finding the courage to express vulnerability to a mentor modeling healthy masculinity, these changes are the foundation of the safe and equitable communities we envision.

Our programs, including the Healthy Masculinity Group Mentoring Program and the HIM Initiative, address some of the most pressing issues in our community: violence prevention and mental health equity. By creating safe spaces for authentic expression and nonviolent conflict resolution, we equip youth with the tools they need to navigate challenges with confidence and compassion. **Over 78% of the youth in our programs reported feeling more hopeful about their future, and 76% felt more comfortable sharing their thoughts**, a vital step in breaking the silence around mental health struggles.

Through our collaborative efforts with partners such as Tucson Unified School District, Emerge Center Against Domestic Abuse, Goodwill of Southern Arizona, and many other community partners, we are tackling the root causes of violence while promoting equity and inclusion. These partnerships amplify our ability to reach more young people, especially those in underserved communities, with culturally relevant mentorship and support. As bell hooks wisely stated, “In patriarchal culture men are not allowed to simply be who they are and glory in their unique identity. Their value is always determined by what they do.”

This insight underscores the importance of our work. Every restorative circle, every mentor-mentee connection, and every courageous conversation reinforces our belief that dismantling harmful stereotypical norms is essential to fostering healthy masculinity and emotional well-being. Thank you for standing with us in this important work. Your unwavering support fuels the small but powerful steps we take each day to transform lives and build a brighter, more equitable future.

In solidarity and gratitude,

Erica Smith, MA

Chief Executive Officer, Boys to Men Tucson

Community Impact

Advancing Mental Health Equity and Preventing Youth Violence

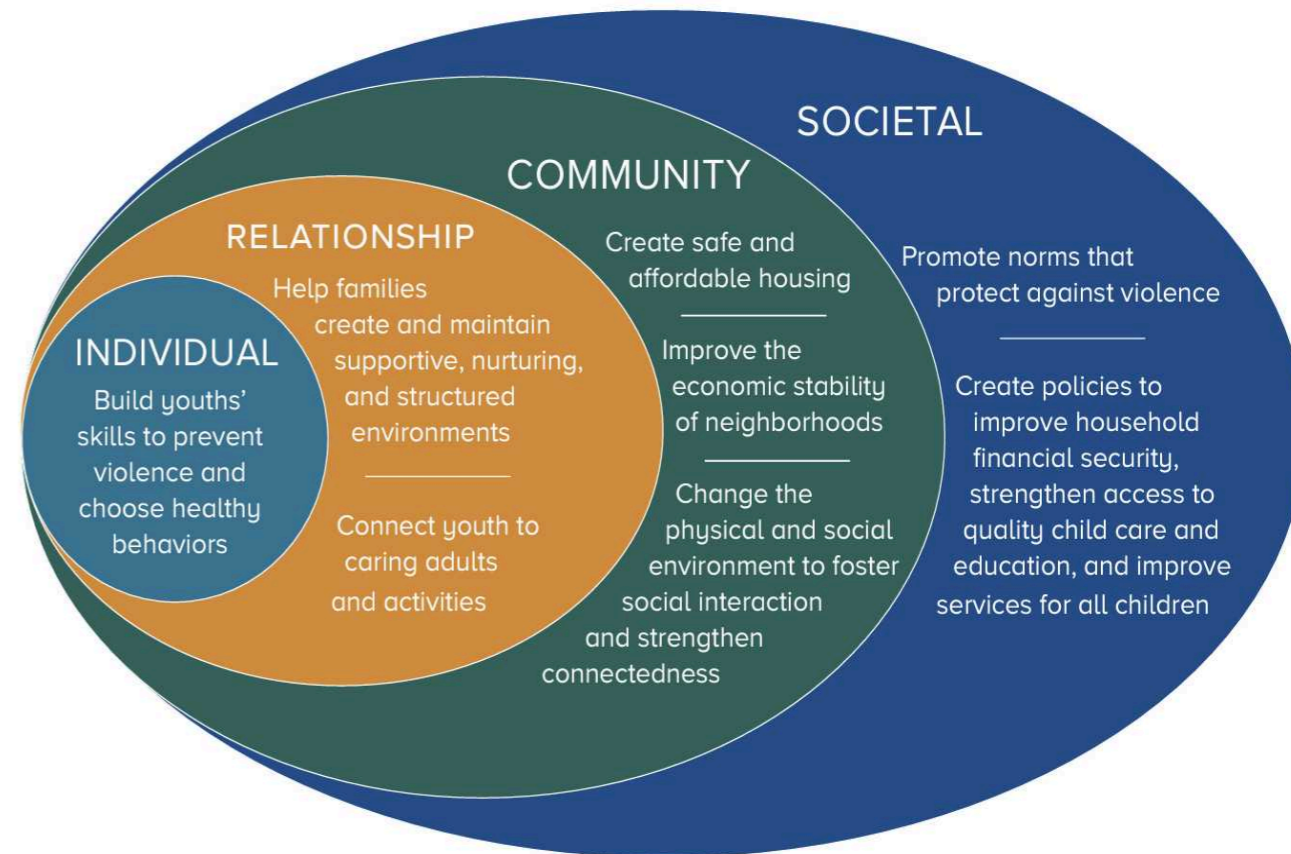
Youth violence remains a critical public health issue, ranking among the leading causes of death for adolescents and young adults. Its impact extends beyond immediate victims, leaving lasting emotional and social scars on families and communities. However, there is hope, youth violence is preventable through intentional, community-driven approaches that address both root causes and systemic inequities, including mental health disparities.

At the core of prevention is the commitment to equipping young people with the skills to navigate life's challenges, manage emotions, and build positive relationships. Awareness of accessible, equitable mental health resources is a vital protective factor, reducing risks and fostering resilience. At Boys to Men Tucson, we challenge harmful norms, promote emotional literacy, and encourage boys and masculine-identified youth to embrace vulnerability, empathy, and respect.

Research shows that school-based and community initiatives, including mentoring and restorative practices, reduce youth violence while improving academic engagement and social-emotional health. These programs are especially impactful when they connect youth with trusted adults and provide skill-building opportunities. By addressing systemic factors, such as inequities in mental health access and support, prevention strategies also contribute to broader community well-being.

Aligned with Healthy People 2030 objectives, Boys to Men Tucson integrates restorative practices, social-emotional learning, and healthy masculinity into every aspect of our programming. These efforts support national violence prevention goals, enhancing academic outcomes and increasing access to mental health services.

Together, we strive to empower youth, foster trusted relationships, and build a resilient, equitable future where every young person has the opportunity to thrive.



BTMT works at individual and relationship levels to bring community-level change.

Youth violence affects all communities and community members. It is a leading cause of death for adolescents and young adults. The impacts of youth violence can be devastating and last a lifetime, but preventing youth violence is possible.

Protective Factors

Young people's coping with life challenges skills, emotions & relationships, and increased awareness of support systems can provide significant buffers against violence.

<https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/main/prevention-information/>

Our Why

Restorative mentoring has proven to be a powerful tool in reducing youth violence and improving mental health. This approach focuses on building strong, supportive relationships that guide youth toward positive behaviors and away from violent tendencies. Data from the Arizona Youth Survey (AYS) indicates that mentoring programs contribute to a decline in youth involvement in criminal activities and foster improved mental health outcomes. The positive changes instilled through restorative mentoring are enduring, with outcomes often becoming more pronounced over time. Sustained engagement in mentoring relationships is vital for maintaining these benefits, highlighting the necessity for ongoing support and dedication to such initiatives.

According to the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 19.9% of Arizona high school students reported being involved in a physical fight within the past 12 months, with male students exhibiting higher rates than their female counterparts. These statistics underscore the urgent need for interventions that address the root causes of youth violence.

Traditional notions of masculinity often discourage emotional expression and seeking help, contributing to adverse mental health outcomes and a propensity toward violence. The American Psychological Association notes that “traditional masculinity ideology” is associated with negative effects on mental and physical health. By fostering healthy masculinity, which encourages emotional literacy, vulnerability, and empathy, restorative mentoring plays a pivotal role in reducing violent behaviors and enhancing mental well-being among boys, young men, and masculine identified youth.

Boys to Men Tucson incorporates restorative mentoring into its programs to challenge harmful masculinity norms and provide youth with the tools to develop healthy relationships, emotional literacy, and conflict resolution skills. By prioritizing these approaches, Boys to Men Tucson creates safe, trusted spaces for boys and masculine-identified youth to thrive emotionally and socially while contributing to a healthier, more equitable community.



Evaluation Methodology

In collaboration with community partners, Boys to Men Tucson (BTMT) provides training and programming that create safe spaces that foster healthier and more resilient youth. This impact report, a testament to our collective efforts, assesses the program's effectiveness by collecting and analyzing data at the beginning and end of each semester. The study utilizes qualitative and quantitative data to observe changes in youth's development of positive relationships, awareness of personal and community resources, identification with healthy masculinity, and acquisition of essential life skills for coping with challenges and achieving emotional stability.

Objectives:

- Maximize youth impact through continuous program improvements.
- Foster continuous learning to build new initiatives.
- Optimize resource allocation and invite diverse mentors.

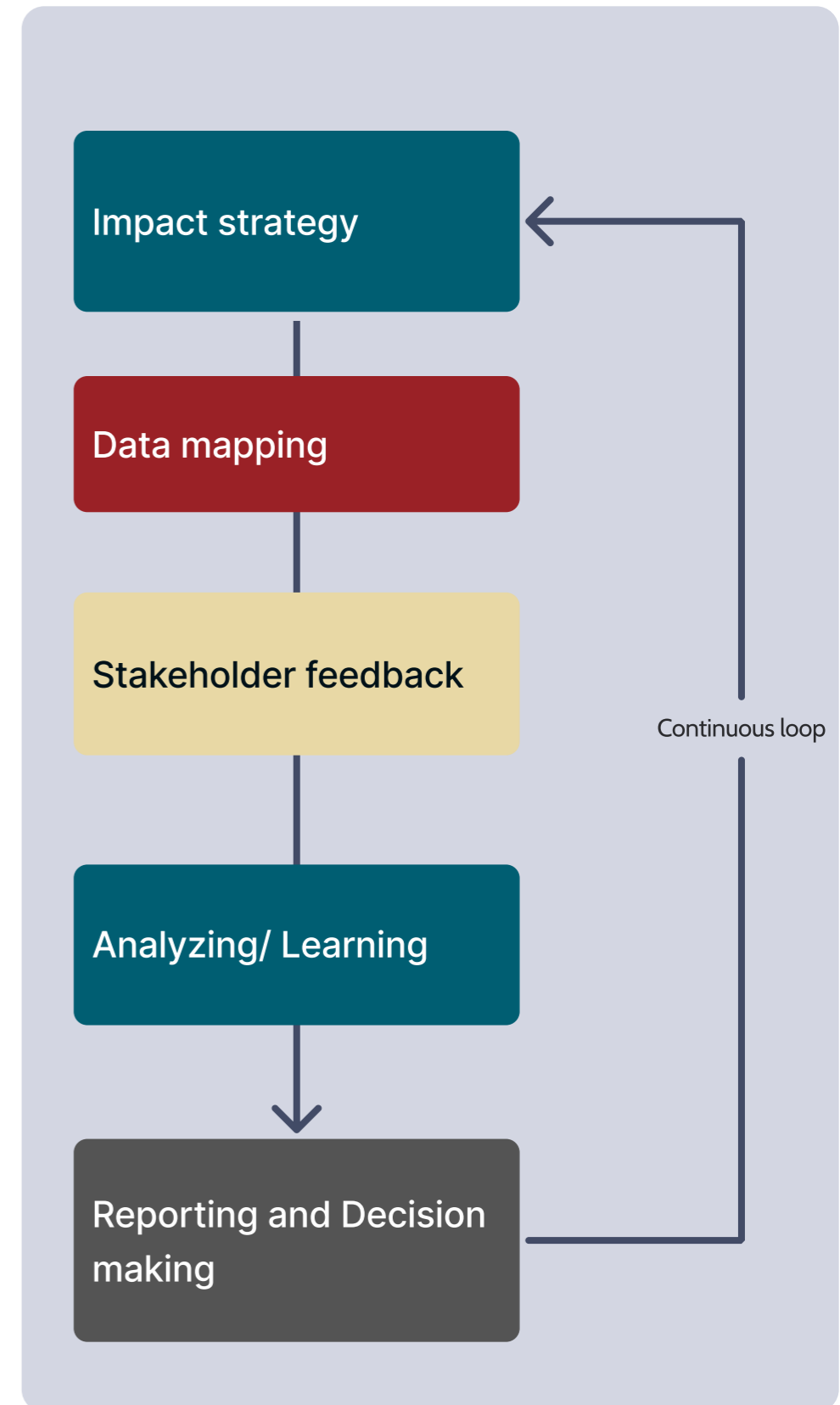
Stakeholders:

- Masculine-identified youth of age 13-24
- Mentors
- Schools
- Community-Based Partners and Programs
- Funders

Data Collection and Learning: The BTMT team implemented a robust data collection and learning methodology through carefully designed surveys administered at three different stages:

- 1. Intake Information:** The BTMT team collected demographics and zip code data at enrollment.
- 2. Youth Circle Survey:** Conducted at the beginning of the circles and at the end of the year, gathering participants' perceptions of support, comfort levels for sharing, coping skills, and conflict resolution approaches. Mentors administered updated questions from the previous year.
- 3. Data Verification and Analysis:** The BTMT team collected data on paper, verified it, and assigned a unique ID to each participant to track progress while maintaining confidentiality. The Sopact system aggregated intake, beginning, and end-of-year data, analyzed and visualized it, and categorized open-ended questions. Additionally, mentors' observations were collected to provide further insights.

This comprehensive impact learning methodology ensures continuous improvement and effective program delivery, contributing to the well-being and growth of the youth served by BTMT.





Healthy Masculinity Group Mentoring

Youth wants a safe place where they can grow with confidence, find someone to understand them and learn how to solve problems. Boys to Men Tucson is providing that safe place where they are not judged while they express their feelings.



Healthy Masculinity Group Mentoring Program Overview

Impact Goals

- Individual Impact: Develop social-emotional skills, emotional intelligence, empathy, respect for boundaries, and non-violent conflict resolution.
- Community Impact: Reduce violence, enhance mental health outcomes, and promote gender equity.

Program Design

We use restorative talking circles to provide a safe space for youth (ages 13–24) to explore identity, build healthy relationships, and develop conflict resolution skills. Culturally relevant mentors model positive masculinity, creating an inclusive and supportive environment for personal growth.

Participant Recruitment

Our program emphasizes inclusivity, partnering with schools, community organizations, and juvenile justice systems to recruit a diverse group of BIPOC and masculine-identified youth.

Mentor Training and Selection

Mentors complete comprehensive training, including trauma-informed care, cultural sensitivity, and youth mental health first aid, and undergo rigorous vetting to ensure safety and quality.

Program Implementation

Weekly 45-60 minute talking circles and dynamic activities such as outdoor adventures and community service enhance trust, engagement, and skill-building. Youth insights drive program adaptation, ensuring relevance and impact.

Evaluation and Community Engagement

Pre- and post-surveys measure shifts in attitudes and behaviors, while ongoing feedback refines program delivery. Partnerships with donors, businesses, and organizations sustain and expand our reach, fostering a safer, healthier community.

Impact Strategy: Healthy Masculinity Group Mentoring Program

Impact Goals

Individual Impact: Increase social-emotional development, emotional intelligence, empathy, respect for others' boundaries, and non-violent conflict resolution.

Community Impact: Reduced rates of violence, improved mental health outcomes, and increased gender equality.

Activity

- Facilitating restorative talking circles that foster safe spaces for personal growth.
- Forming and maintaining partnerships with schools and community organizations.
- Recruiting, training, and supporting mentors, with a focus on cultural competence and lived experience.
- Providing mentorship opportunities and non-violent conflict resolution training.

Output

Youth Participation:

- Metric: Number of youth enrolled and participating in restorative program.
- Metric: Number of youth completing the program.

Mentorship and Partnerships:

- Metric: Number of school partnerships formed.
- Metric: Number of active volunteers and trained BIPOC mentors.

Outcome 1

Youth develop positive relationships with peers and adults, understand their emotions, and access community resources when needed.

- Metrics:
 - Percentage of youth reporting increased awareness of support systems and community resources.
 - Percentage of youth reporting improved understanding of available resources.
 - Percentage of youth reporting feelings of hopefulness and confidence.

Outcome 2

Youth embrace healthy masculinity and demonstrate reduced participation in violent behaviors.

- Metrics:
 - Percentage of youth showing fewer incidents of bullying, aggression, and violence.
 - Percentage of youth reporting improved emotional health and comfort sharing their feelings.

Outcome 3

Youth develop essential skills to cope with life challenges and maintain emotional stability.

- Metrics:
 - Percentage of youth recognizing their strengths and opportunities.
 - Percentage of youth reporting improved academic performance.

Alignment to Impact Standards + Frameworks

The Healthy People 2030 initiative outlines specific objectives to enhance public health across various domains:

Violence Prevention

- Reduce physical fighting among adolescents — IVP-11
- Objective IVP-12: Reduce gun carrying among adolescents. Adolescents who carry guns are more likely to be involved in high-risk behaviors, such as physical fighting, substance misuse, crime, and gang violence. Comprehensive violence prevention strategies that address these behaviors are essential for reducing gun carrying among youth.

Adolescent Health

- Objective AH-03: Increase the proportion of adolescents who have an adult they can talk to about serious problems.
- EMC-01: Increase the proportion of children and adolescents who communicate positively with their parents.

Social Determinants of Health

- Objective SDoH-04: Increase the proportion of adolescents who participate in extracurricular and out-of-school activities.
- Objective SDoH-02: Increase employment in working-age people.

By addressing these objectives, the program empowers youth to build resilience, improve mental health, and strengthen community connections, ensuring healthier outcomes for individuals and society.

Social Determinants of Health



Status: Improving (+)

[Learn more about our data release schedule](#)



Most Recent Data:
77.9 percent (2023)



Target:
78.4 percent ¹



Desired Direction:
Increase desired



Baseline:
74.2 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 years had an adult in their lives with whom they could talk about serious problems in 2021 ²

Status: Getting worse (-)

[Learn more about our data release schedule](#)



Most Recent Data:
62.0 percent (2020-21)



Target:
73.0 percent



Desired Direction:
Increase desired



Baseline:
68.5 percent of children and adolescents aged 6 to 17 years had parents who reported that they and their child can share ideas or talk about things that matter in 2016-17

Participant Expectations, Engagement, and Diversity in Action

Healthy Masculinity Group Mentoring Satisfaction:
85% of the youth reported that circles met their expectations.

73% Hispanics/Latinx (+ 15% more than 2023)
47% Of youth participated in previous circle sessions
94% Identify themselves as Male
97% Do not live alone
53% Youth is new to the circle

85%

Youth reported that the program met their expectations

Top 5 expectations from BTM circle sessions at the beginning of the semester.

1. Provide a safe space to express my feelings
2. Improve my self-confidence
3. Find someone who understand me
4. Teach me how to solve problems without getting in trouble
5. Improve my grades

The recent data have shown a significant increase in engagement and diversity among participants, with a notable 73% identifying as Hispanic/Latinx, a 15% increase from 2023. This is a promising sign for the future. Almost half (47%) of the youth had previously participated, indicating sustained interest and involvement, which should encourage all stakeholders about the impact of our work.

Key areas of focus for the youth include:

- Improving self-confidence.
- Finding someone who understands them.
- Having a safe space to express their feelings.

The program continues to offer essential support, teach problem-solving skills, and cultivate a nonjudgmental atmosphere. **85% of youth reported that the program met their expectations**

Racial Identity

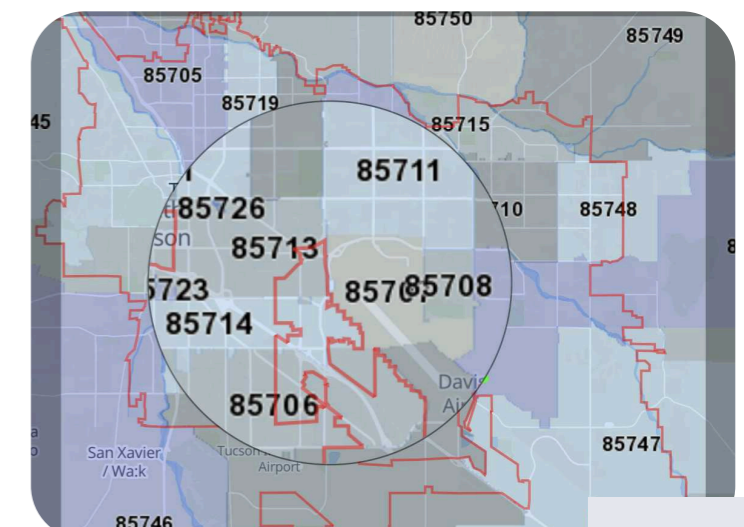
Multiracial	28%
Other	25%
White	22%
Black/African American/African	15%
American Indian/Alaska Native	7%
Asian	2%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	2%

Grade

8th	27%
10th	21%
7th	19%
11th	13%
9th	9%
12th	7%
6th	3%
Other	1%

Zipcode

85706	23%
85713	11%
85711	8%
85716	6%
85705	6%
85712	5%
85745	4%



WHAT is changing and HOW MUCH?

8 out of 10

Outcome 1: Youth develop positive relationships with peers and adults, understand their emotions, and access community resources when needed.

Youth feel hopeful and confident about future

What change are we looking for?

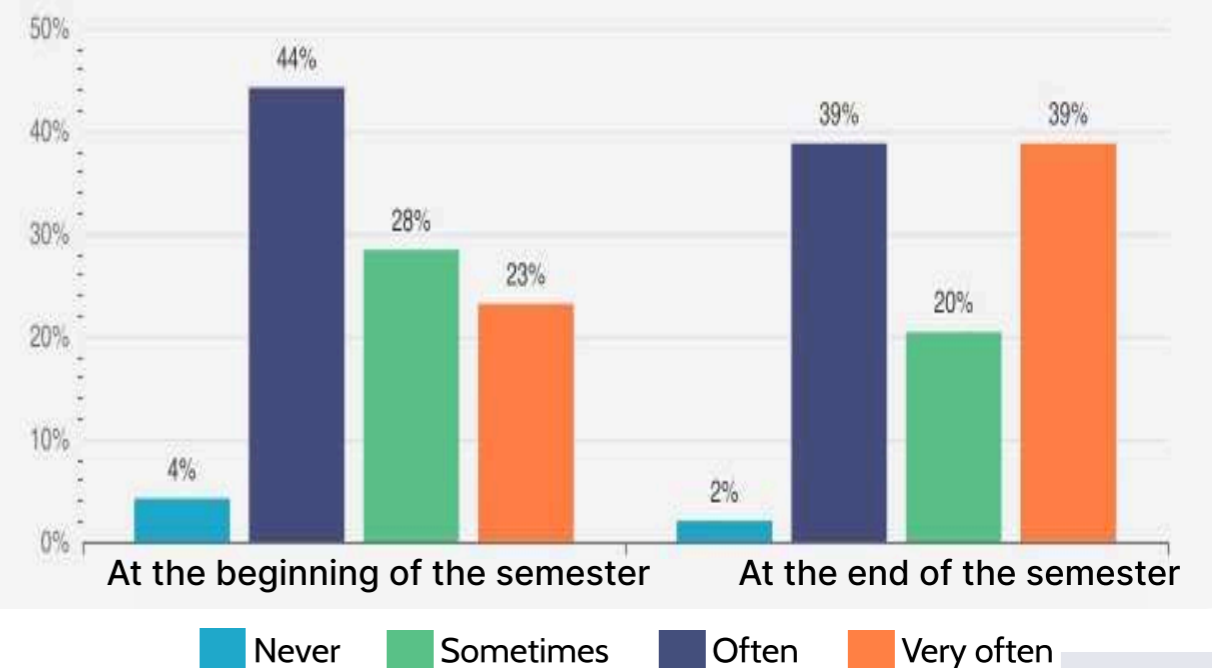
- Percentage of youth reporting increased awareness of support systems and community resources.
- Percentage of youth reporting improved understanding of available resources.
- Percentage of youth reporting feelings of hopefulness and confidence.

Fostering strong, positive emotions and nurturing relationships with peers and guardians are important, but the role of mentors in the support system is crucial. They help young individuals leverage their support systems effectively, providing guidance and wisdom.

Youth strengthen connections with peers and adults, gain a clearer understanding of available support systems and community resources, and report increased hopefulness and confidence. Through mentorship and guidance, they develop the skills and awareness needed to access help and navigate challenges effectively.



Feeling hopeful and confident



Outcome 1: Youth develop positive relationships with peers and adults, understand their emotions, and access community resources when needed.

12% More

Youth find themselves in a supported group

Youth feel

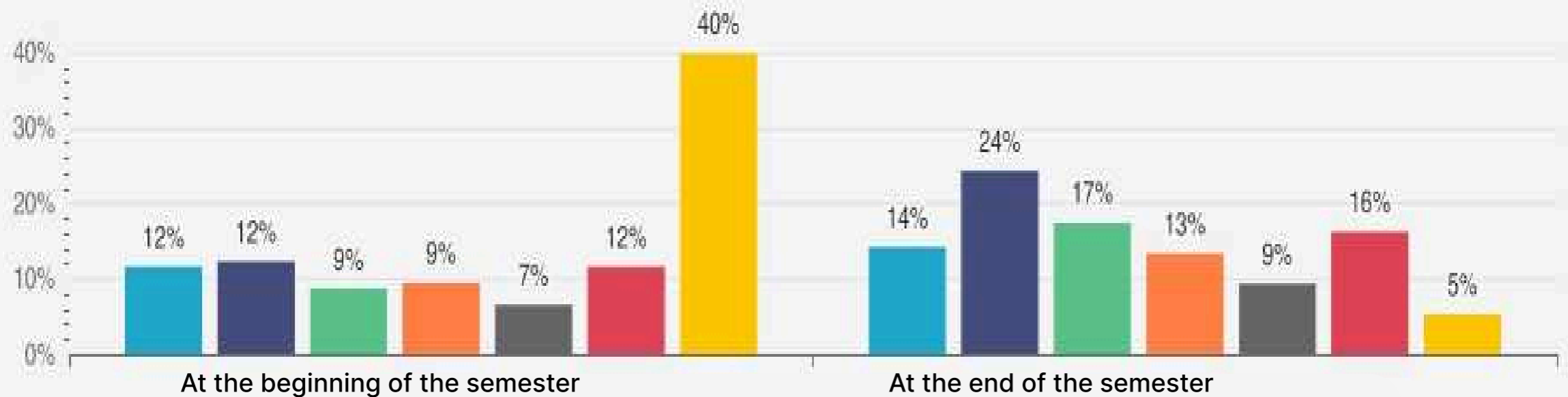
- More confident to confront the controllable situation (+2%)
- Understand which situation is controllable (+4%)
- Found to be in a supported group (doubled, +12%)
- Improved relationships (doubled, +8%)

- Mental health care provider awareness (+4%)
- The community resource awareness (+2%)
- Improved understanding of support (+35%)

8% More

Youth feel that they have improved relationships

How Current Support System is helping Youth?



- I feel confident to confront the situations that I can control
- I have a group where we can all help each other
- I have improved my relationships
- Other

- I know I can reach out to a mental health care provider if I need it
- I know that I can reach out to county provided help agencies
- I understand which situations I have the control to change

Outcome 2: Youth embrace healthy masculinity and demonstrate reduced participation in violent behaviors.

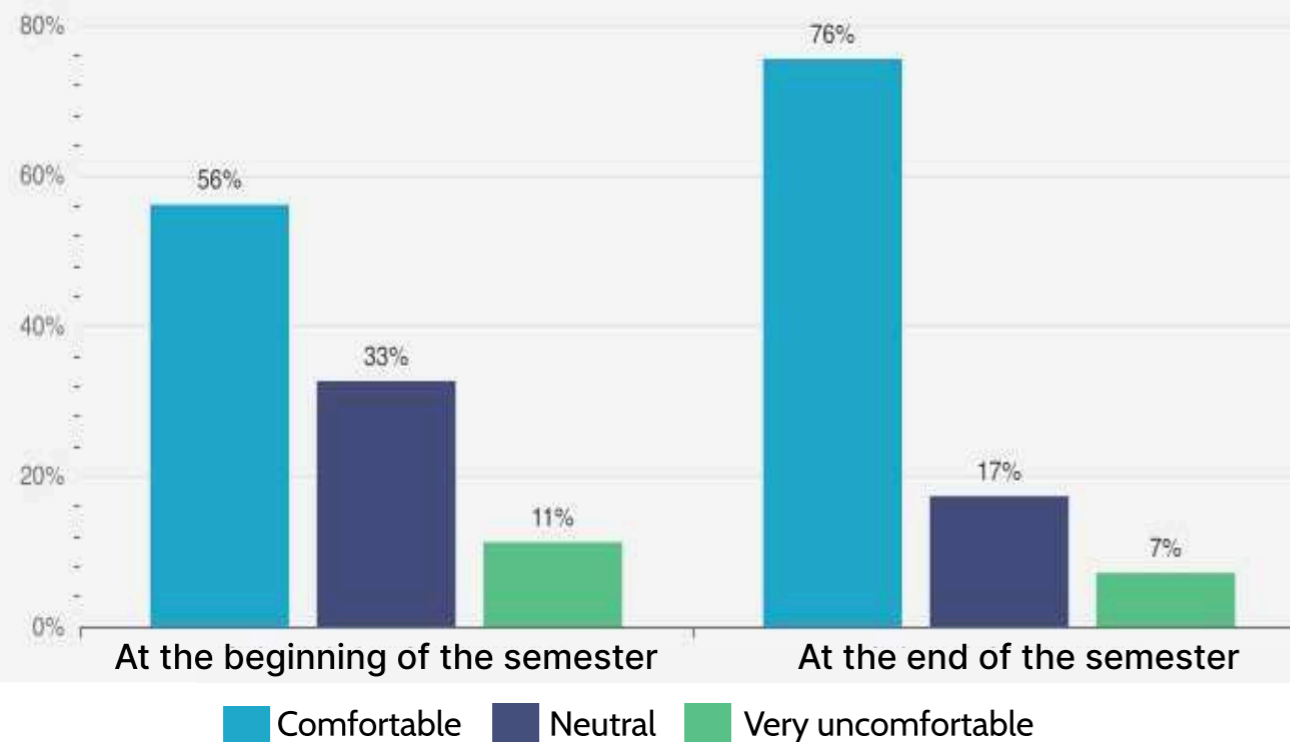
8 out of 10

Youth improved emotional health and comfort sharing their feelings

What change are we looking for?

- Percentage of youth showing fewer incidents of bullying, aggression, and violence.
- Percentage of youth reporting improved emotional health and comfort sharing their feelings.

Feeling comfortable sharing thoughts with others

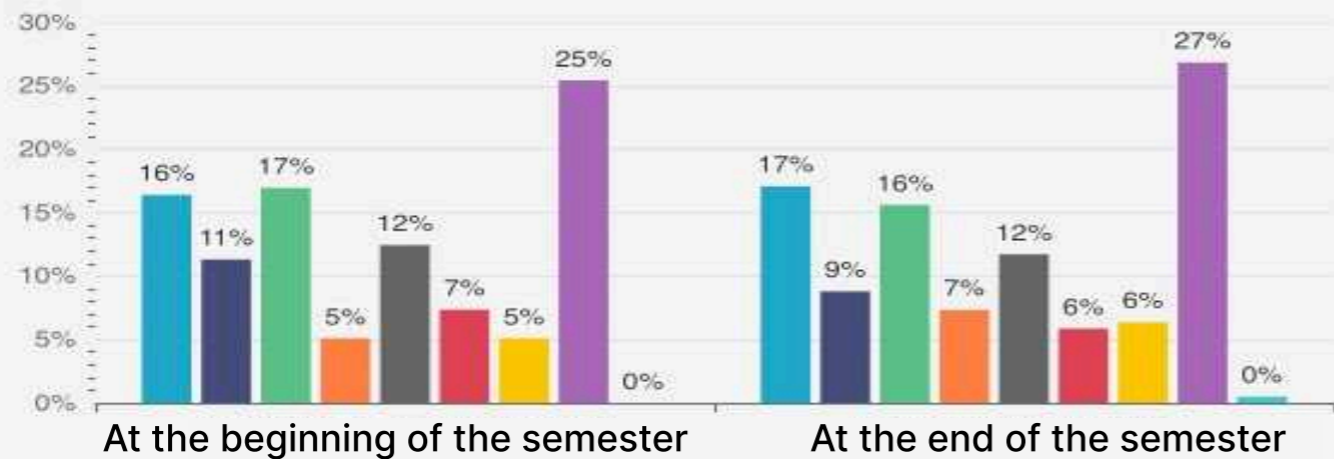


Outcome 2: Youth embrace healthy masculinity and demonstrate reduced participation in violent behaviors.

7% Less

Youth reported exposure to incidents of bullying, aggression, and violence.

What are you likely to do, when faced with a problem?



- Ask for help from friends
- Get angry
- Ignore it
- Other
- Try to resolve it on my own
- Reach out to a family member
- Reach out to my teachers
- Talk to my therapist or counselor

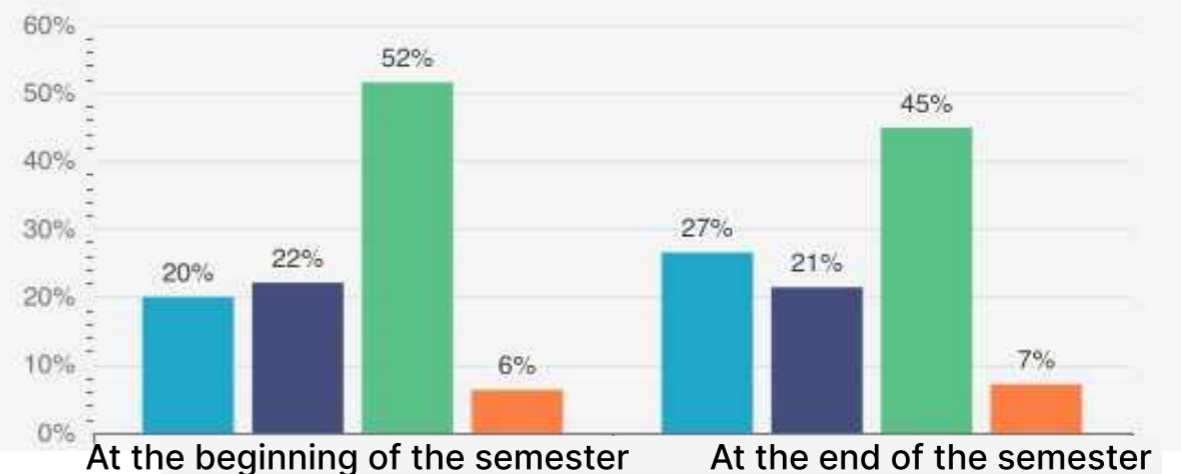
The survey data show the impact of the BTMT programming on fostering healthy masculinity among youth. After participating, **76% of youth reported feeling comfortable sharing their thoughts with others, marking a 20% increase.**

Data also suggests that the youth shows a slight rise in seeking help from friends and therapists. Youth demonstrated a stronger tendency to resolve problems independently, indicating improved problem-solving skills. Furthermore, there was a noticeable decrease in the likelihood of getting angry or ignoring problems, suggesting a shift towards healthier coping mechanisms.

We are changing our questions regarding getting into the conflict at home or school differently in the 2024-2025 school year according to the CDC/YRBS survey to have comparability.



How often do you experience angry outbursts at school or home?



- Never
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very often

Outcome 3 : Youth develop essential skills to cope with life challenges and maintain emotional stability.

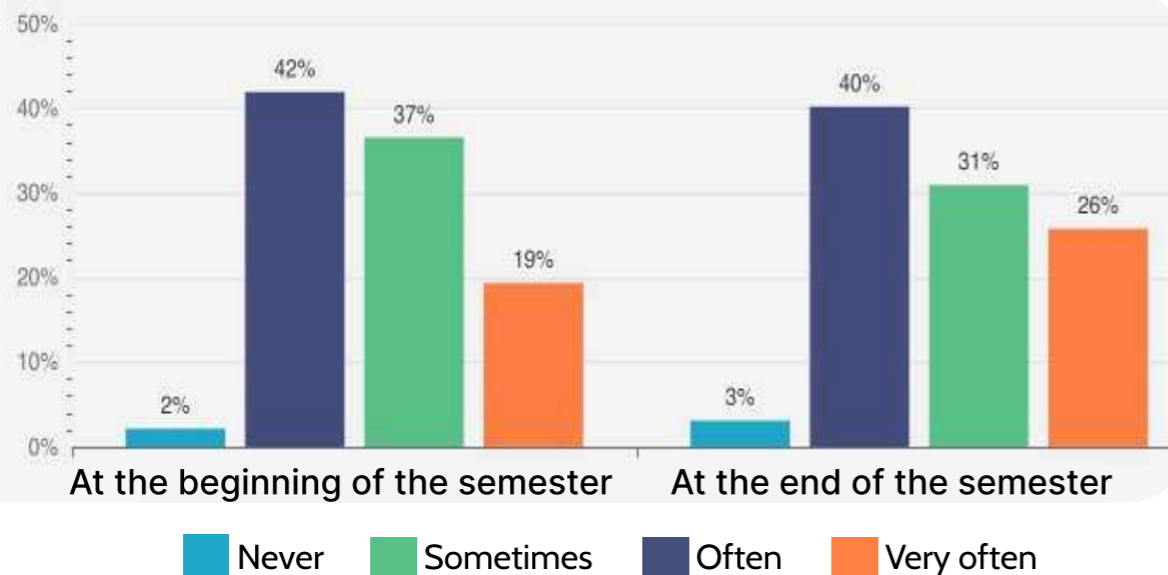
7 out of 10

Youth recognize their strengths and opportunities.
8% increase from before.

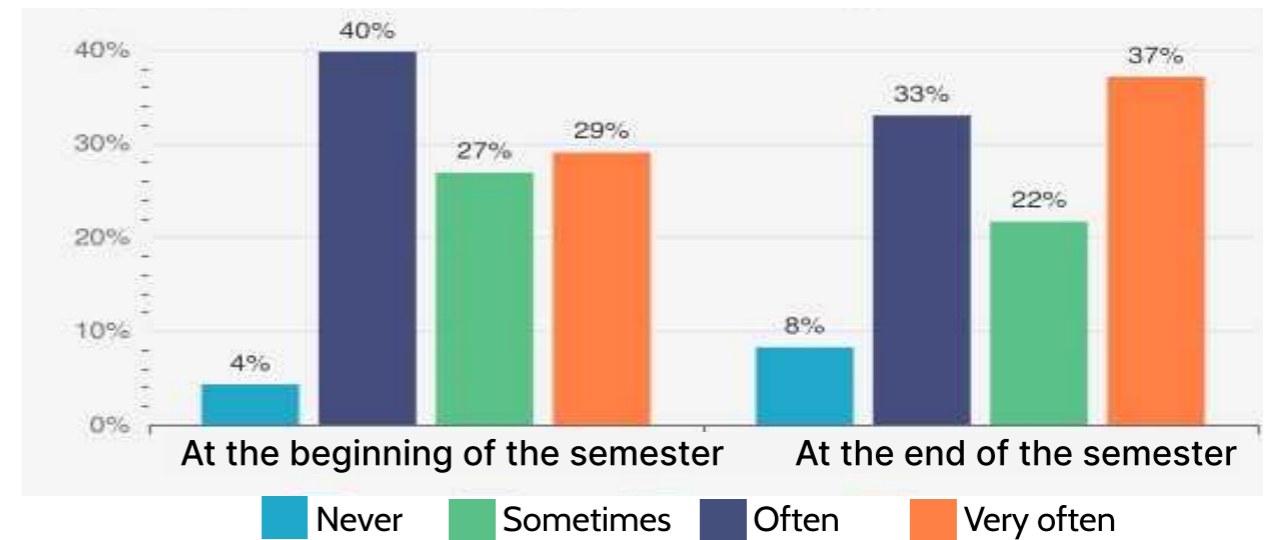
What change are we looking for?

- Percentage of youth recognizing their strengths and opportunities.
- Percentage of youth reporting improved academic performance.

Improvement in academics at school



Recognizing strengths and opportunities



The results indicate a positive impact of mentoring on the youth's emotional stability and coping skills.

There was a notable increase in the '**very often**' category for several key areas:

- 7% more youth '**very often**' felt improvement in academics at school
- 16% more youth '**very often**' felt hopeful and confident about their future
- 8% more youth '**very often**' felt that they can recognize their strengths and opportunities for themselves

Learning: Data shows that the mentoring program has been effective in helping youth develop essential life skills and emotional resilience.

End of the Year Highlights



22+

Schools participated



250+

Students participated



78%

Youth feel hopeful and confident



76%

Youth feel comfortable sharing their feelings. +20%



Participation in the BTMT circles with programming has significantly impacted the youth, fostering a sense of support and increasing their awareness of available external assistance. Post-participation, confidence levels have risen by 2%, while the feeling of being part of a supportive group has doubled, showing a 12% increase.

Notably, relationships have improved, with an 8% increase. This positive change underscores the effectiveness of the BTMT circles with programming in fostering a supportive environment. Additionally, there has been a 4% rise in mental health awareness and a 2% increase in awareness of County's Health and Human services.

Overall, the youth now feel 4% more in control of their situations, highlighting the effectiveness of the BTMT circles with programming in empowering them.

Healthy Intergenerational Masculinity Initiative



Healthy Intergenerational Masculinity Initiative Overview

The Healthy Intergenerational Masculinity (HIM) Initiative is a multi-year collaborative project that aims to transform systems that harm Black and Brown boys in Pima County while providing them with intensive support.





The initiative promotes healthy masculinity and gender equality by transforming the support available to masculine-identified youth in Pima County through cross-sector collaboration.

During this reporting period, the initiative began piloting new programming, continued group-based mentoring in schools, and worked on HIMI goals and objectives.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development outlined 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide an impact framework to assess an entity's contribution towards health, education, equality, and many other well defined issues.



Alignment to Impact Standards + Frameworks

SDG Alignment	Target Description
<p>SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 3.4: By promoting mental health and well-being through positive relationships, awareness of resources, and coping skills, the program contributes to reducing mortality from non-communicable diseases and promoting mental health and well-being. • Target 3.5: The initiative fosters emotional stability and resilience in youth, contributing to the prevention and treatment of substance abuse.
<p>SDG 4: Quality Education</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 4.7: Through education on healthy masculinity and life skills, the program promotes the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including sustainable lifestyles, human rights, and gender equality.
<p>SDG 5: Gender Equality</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 5.1: The initiative addresses the harmful effects of toxic masculinity, promoting gender equality by fostering a healthier understanding and practice of masculinity. • Target 5.2: By creating a safe space and promoting healthy relationships, the program indirectly contributes to ending all forms of violence against women and girls.
<p>SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 16.1: By fostering emotional stability and resilience, the program contributes to reducing violence and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. • Target 16.2: The program helps protect children from abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence by providing a safe and supportive environment.

Healthy Intergenerational Masculinity Initiative

The HIM Initiative has made significant strides in fostering systems change and promoting health equity through innovative approaches and collaborative efforts.

Community-based programming is essential for ensuring accessibility and effectively serving the most vulnerable populations. With three Goodwill Youth Engagement Centers now offering the Healthy Masculinity group mentoring program, including the newest center in Tucson's East Side, an area with high youth violence rates, these programs align with the lived experiences and familiar resources of high-risk opportunity youth. During this reporting period, over 150 youth participated across these centers, demonstrating the importance of localized efforts in providing safe spaces, building trust, and addressing systemic challenges to create pathways for sustainable change.

Collaborative Strengths:

Partnerships with school districts and community organizations have been instrumental in implementing holistic solutions that address the academic, social, emotional, and physical well-being of youth. Collaborations with Goodwill of Southern Arizona, the Pima County Health Department, and others have provided wrap-around services, such as job skills training, mental health workshops, and violence prevention programs. These efforts have enhanced youth engagement and fostered practical, real-world learning opportunities, including internships for BIPOC youth as Healthy Masculinity Core Mentors.

Equity in Action:

The initiative maintains a health equity lens by focusing on the needs of BIPOC communities and creating culturally relevant, accessible programs. Key efforts include a youth-led media campaign addressing drug overdose prevention and mentorship programs designed for masculine-identified youth of all genders. By acknowledging the intersectionality of gender identity and health, the initiative dismantles stereotypes, reduces stigma, and provides equitable access to support and resources, empowering youth to thrive.

These efforts collectively reflect a commitment to systemic change, community-driven solutions, and equity-focused programming, creating a lasting impact on the lives of the youth and communities served.

150

Youth participated across different centers

“In patriarchal culture men are not allowed to simply be who they are and glory in their unique identity. Their value is always determined by what they do.”

—bell hooks
Author, feminist,
and social
activist.

Healing Justice Pilot Initiative

The Healing Justice pilot program, a collaborative effort between Goodwill of Southern Arizona and Emerge Center Against Domestic Abuse, was successfully launched to engage men and masculine-identified individuals impacted by the criminal justice system.

- **Program Focus:** Facilitates healing work by helping participants understand their past experiences and the impact on gender interactions.
- **Participation:** The program began with 8 participants and concluded with 4, emphasizing deep, individualized engagement.
- **Goal:** Disrupt the cycle of intergenerational violence and foster healthier, more equitable futures.

This initiative marks an important step toward addressing systemic issues and promoting healing and transformation.

Advancing BIPOC Representation in Mentorship

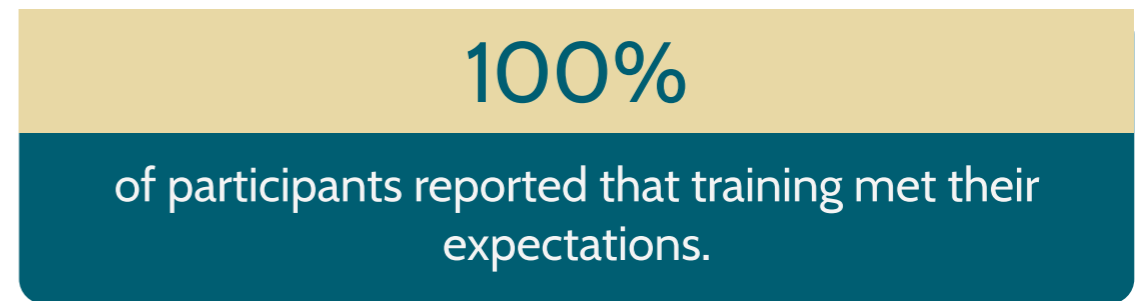
Boys to Men Tucson (BTMT), in partnership with **Goodwill and Arizona Serve**, successfully recruited and trained four BIPOC Core mentors, who collectively provided **over 120 hours** of service during this reporting period. This effort underscores the commitment to increasing representation and leveraging community resources to create sustainable mentorship systems.

To further expand BIPOC mentorship, BTMT, Emerge, and Goodwill hosted two **"A Call to Action: Men's Leadership and Community Change"** events, engaging **more than 60 men** in meaningful discussions about leadership and community impact.

These initiatives reflect a collaborative approach to fostering diversity, strengthening community ties, and building a foundation for long-term, inclusive change.

Program Experience

Supportive | Empowering | Transformative



Racial Identity

Race	Ethnicity	%COUNT(Race)
Black/African American/African	Non Hispanic	75.0%
American Indian/Alaska Native	Hispanic	25.0%



Transforming Discipline: Restorative Practices in TUSD

In partnership with Goodwill of Southern Arizona, Boys to Men Tucson (BTMT) implements the Healthy Masculinity Group Mentorship program at four District Alternative Education Program (DAEP) sites within Tucson Unified School District (TUSD), engaging an average of **78 youth** weekly.

This initiative shifts from punitive disciplinary measures to restorative frameworks, fostering emotional intelligence, conflict resolution skills, and positive relationships. By embedding mentorship into alternative education, BTMT and Goodwill are championing systemic change to create nurturing, equitable environments for Tucson's youth.

Empowering Youth Voices: Highlights from the Youth Leadership Council (YLC)

The Youth Leadership Council (YLC) has strengthened its impact through a dynamic new structure and expanded community engagement:

- **Enhanced Leadership:** Appointment of a Youth Council Lead has improved communication, participation, and the effectiveness of council initiatives.
- **Community Engagement:** YLC members participated in weekly Goodwill-hosted talking circles, fostering personal growth, trust, and camaraderie.

Key Events:

- At the **"Unity in the Community"** event, YLC members hosted an informational table, promoting the HIM initiative and demonstrating their commitment to community outreach.
- During the **Goodwill Gun Violence Community Conversation**, members engaged in discussions and shared insights, actively contributing to critical conversations on community safety.

Collaborative Initiatives: In partnership with the **Pima County Health Department's** Substance Youth Team, the YLC launched a youth-focused media campaign to raise awareness, improve resource access, and prevent drug overdoses.

These activities highlight the YLC's growing role as a voice for youth-driven leadership, community empowerment, and meaningful systemic change.

78

Youth Engaged Weekly



Pathways to Engagement and Empowerment



Pathways to Engagement and Empowerment: Building Futures Beyond the Classroom

Program Overview

Pathways to Engagement and Empowerment is a transformative initiative, created in partnership with Arizona Serve and other community-based organizations, to provide young individuals with enriching out-of-school experiences. Designed to alleviate poverty and strengthen community capacity, this program equips youth with the tools to thrive in life, fostering resilience, personal growth, and career readiness.

Program Goals

- Empower Youth: Equip participants with the skills and confidence to navigate life's challenges.
- Foster Resilience: Build resilience through structured, supportive activities that prepare youth for real-world situations.
- Enhance Education: Complement academic learning with practical, hands-on experiences that broaden perspectives and problem-solving abilities.
- Develop Job Skills: Provide training in soft skills like communication and teamwork, as well as industry-relevant technical skills.
- Build Community Capacity: Strengthen community ties through active participation in educational and social initiatives.

Highlights from the Program

- Two participants from the program's first year have achieved significant milestones: both are now successfully employed, showcasing the program's long-term impact on youth development and career readiness.
- Hands-on activities, including job skills training and community service, provided participants with practical experiences that enhanced their personal growth and professional prospects.

Collaborative Success

Through partnerships with youth-serving organizations, Pathways to Engagement and Empowerment has expanded access to resources, networks, and opportunities, creating a robust foundation for participants to achieve lasting success.

This initiative exemplifies the power of collaboration in fostering resilience, empowering youth, and building stronger communities.



Adventure Outings: Building Connections and Skills



Adventure Outings

Adventure Outings are dynamic and educational events designed to engage masculine-identified youth (ages 13-24) in the Tucson community and surrounding wilderness areas. These outings provide marginalized youth with rare opportunities to explore the outdoors while learning collaboration, risk-taking, decision-making, and other essential aspects of healthy relationships. By building social-emotional skills in a supportive environment, these experiences contribute to mental health improvement and violence reduction.

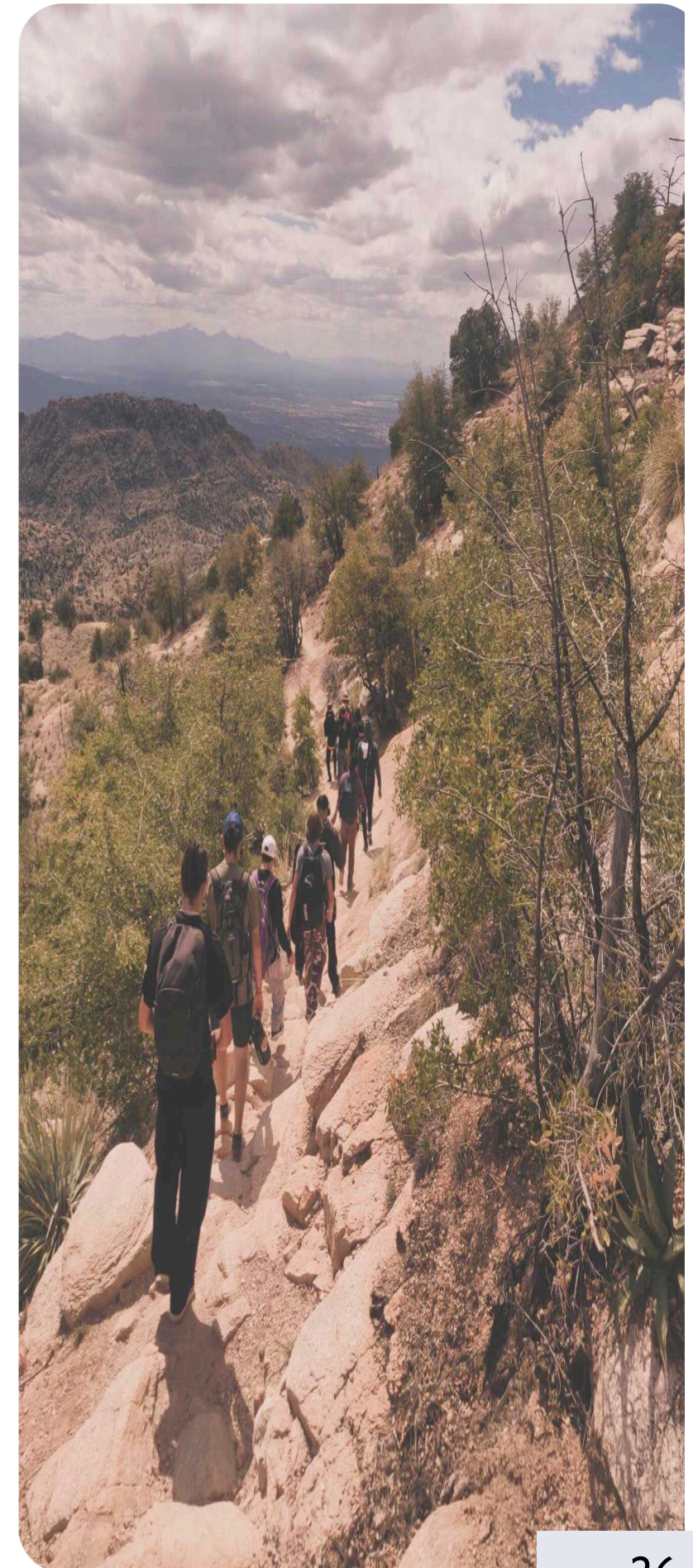
During this reporting period, the program held a single outing—an inspiring hike on Mt. Lemmon—with 10 participants and 5 mentors. This limited activity was due to necessary restructuring to prioritize participant safety and program sustainability. Despite this, the event successfully fostered connection, personal growth, and a sense of adventure for everyone involved.

Expanding Access and Opportunities

Recognizing the critical importance of providing additional services to youth who traditionally lack access, the next phase of Adventure Outings will include:

- **Community-Based Sporting Events:** Activities that promote teamwork and physical health.
- **Partnerships with Local and National Parks:** Opportunities to engage with nature, expand horizons, and build environmental stewardship.

These initiatives aim to bridge gaps for underserved youth, ensuring they have access to transformative outdoor experiences that foster resilience, mental well-being, and social connectedness. By prioritizing access for marginalized communities, the program aligns with efforts to reduce violence and improve mental health outcomes, creating pathways to healthier, more equitable futures.



Mentor's Observations Post Adventure Weekends

The mentors gave open feedback after observing the youth during the adventure weekend. We categorized the experiences and changes the youth made into five themes. These categories reflect significant positive developments in interpersonal relationships, personal growth, communication skills, emotional intelligence, and respect for others.

- **Building Trust and Relationships:**

- *The youth built solid and vulnerable relationships with each other and the mentors.*
- *They gained trust in others, even those they had just met.*
- *There was an overall increase in sharing and openness, especially who were initially quiet.*
- *Observations of increased trust and openness as the weekend progressed.*

- **Overcoming Fears and Challenges:**

- *Youth challenged themselves by engaging in activities they found scary.*
- *They learned to overcome personal challenges and open up to others.*
- *Some boys who were initially reluctant opened up more by the end of the event.*
- *The "golden chair" session, where boys received compliments, helped them overcome insecurities.*

- **Expression and Communication:**

- *Youth expressed essential thoughts and feelings, indicating they felt safe and in a trustworthy community.*
- *They had opportunities to express themselves through conversation*
- *Noted increased communication, engagement, and vulnerability.*
- *Some boys learned the significance of using proper pronouns and understanding and respecting identity.*

- **Emotional Growth and Self-Discovery:**

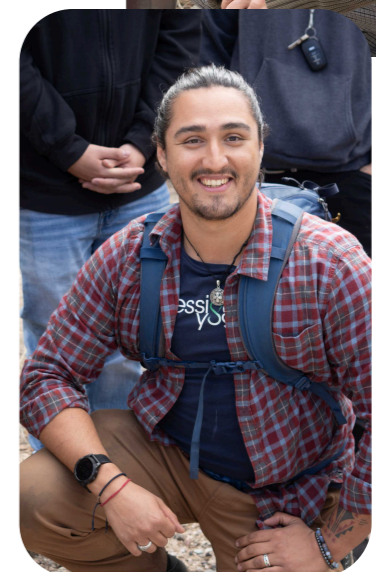
- *Participants showed openness to new perspectives and greater attention to listening.*
- *There was a noticeable leaning into vulnerability and honesty.*
- *Observations of empowerment, confidence boosting, and self-trust.*
- *Boys showed emotional presence, with one notably asking many questions*

- **Respect and Empathy:**

- *Learning the power and value of asking for help.*
- *Developing respect for the outdoors and their peers.*
- *Treating each other with increased respect.*
- *A general trend of more respectful interactions and empathy towards each other's experiences.*

75%

of mentors feel responsible to help the next generation.



Youth Testimonials

84%

Positive Sentiment

“I find time with Boys to Men mentors helpful because it helps me express myself and feel better about myself. It helps me be able get out my cell more :)”

“I find time with Boys to Men mentors helpful because it helps me and other kids express how we feel or if we wanna talk to someone. And Boys to Men mentors seem to care about what the kids say and are feeling or at least not ignore how the kids are feeling and give us time to talk.”



Outreach, Engagement, and Training



Outreach, Engagement, and Trainings

Boys to Men Tucson (BTMT) and its partners have made significant progress in diversifying mentorship and strengthening community engagement. The program team collaborated with school counselors at multiple sites, ensuring that at least one counselor at each location is now trained as both a mentor and a community liaison. This strategic partnership supports the integration of BTMT's Healthy Masculinity Group Mentoring Program into school communities, creating a foundation for sustained impact.

Key outreach efforts included engaging with **over 300 community members** through tabling at events and outreach at multiple schools. These interactions increased awareness of the program and its mission to foster healthy masculinity and reduce violence.

Mentor Trainings

Six mentor training sessions were conducted, with **over 70 individuals** participating. These sessions focused on BTMT's masculinity model, which emphasizes healthy masculinity as a framework for violence prevention and mental health improvement. While not all trainees will be placed in schools, the training serves to scale BTMT's mentoring model and expand its reach into the community.

300
Community Members Engaged

95
Recommendation Score

70
Mentors Trained

6
Mentor Trainings

2
Special Trainings



Why are you interested in becoming a mentor?

"I am Interested in providing trauma informed and community based support to people in their youth. I find programs such as BTM to be incredibly important and helpful for those presenting their masculinity, so that people can heal or better understand their trauma and existence. I am interested in learning more ways to provide support through respecting everyone's personal identities and whatnot." –Training Participant

Outreach, Engagement, and Trainings

Specialized Trainings

- Two **Healthy Masculinity Training** sessions were conducted for school staff and counselors, focusing on the masculinity model central to BTMT's initiative. These sessions equipped participants with the knowledge and tools to better understand and address issues of gender equity and violence prevention.
- BTMT staff participated in **Youth Mental Health First Aid training**, enhancing their ability to support the mental health needs of youth. This training is critical to the program's mission of providing informed and effective assistance to young individuals.
- The program team worked closely with CAPE, a juvenile detention school, to introduce the masculinity model and plan for weekly restorative talking circles.

Mentors Training Satisfaction:
 100% of participants reported that training met their expectations. (75% response rate)



Feedback On Positive Aspects Of Training

Training Feedback	%Mentors
Facilitation and Interaction	18.4%
Training Content	16.5%
Creating Safe Spaces	16.5%
Interactions and Network	14.6%
Self-reflection	11.7%
Training Delivery	11.7%
Presentation Skills	7.8%
Time Management	2.9%

Scaling the Model for Impact
 These trainings and outreach efforts are pivotal in scaling BTMT's mentoring model, ensuring that mentors and community partners are equipped to address the unique challenges faced by masculine-identified youth. By promoting healthy masculinity, the program aligns with broader goals of violence prevention and mental health improvement, creating a safer and more supportive community for all youth.

Team and Key Partners

Team:

- Erica Smith, CEO
- Mark McKenna JR, Fund Development
- Paul Braden, Operations
- Tayamni Goodshield, Programs
- Precious Craig, HIM Initiative
- Sean Battle, Core Mentor
- Marcos Danner, Core Mentor
- Kasey Ackerly, Core Mentor
- Vida Rodriguez, Core Mentor

Key Partners and Supporters

- Emerge Center Against Domestic Violence
- Goodwill Industries of Southern Arizona
- Social Venture Partners
- Marshall Foundation
- Vitalyst Foundation
- David and Lura Lovell Foundation

Board of Directors

Brian Eller | Lance Meeks | Terri-Tellez Baker
Catherine Tornbom | Korey Schultz
Larry Starks

Our Stakeholders:

- Nonprofit Youth Serving Orgs:
 - Administrators •Staff •Mentors
- School Systems •Educators •Administrators
 - Staff •Students, with particular focus on BIPOC •Guardians & parents
- Community Orgs: •Administrators •Staff
 - Volunteers, with particular focus on BIPOC
- Juvenile Justice •Administrators •Staff •Youth



Next Steps

Improve Data Collection Process

- We plan to conduct three consistent data collection cycles: one at the intake, one at the baseline, and one at the end of each semester.
- We will implement unique identifiers from the start to accurately understand individual youth progress over time. UIDs will be consistent across all data collection points.
- The data system will integrate insight from all five cycles to understand youth perception change and progress.
- We will explore using digital tools and platforms for data collection to enhance data accuracy and efficiency.

Include More Open-Ended Questions:

- To gain deeper insights into the experiences and challenges faced by youth, we will add open-ended questions to surveys to capture detailed information about youth behavior and conflicts in school or at home.

Standards Alignment

- To enable comparability with national standards and benchmarks, we will incorporate questions and metrics aligned with the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS). The YRBSS determines how often unhealthy behaviors occur across age, grade, race, ethnicity, state, etc.

Resources

- The Healthy People 2030
- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- ODPHP : Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion



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