

## Reducing Sexism and Violence Program (RSVP) *for* HIGH SCHOOLS

**Audience:** High school students of all genders (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Initial Training:** Two six-hour workshops for groups of 30-40 students

**Outcome:** Formation of ongoing student-led community-supported **RSVP Action Groups**

*“This is an opportunity to talk about very important topics that don’t get talked about or addressed anywhere else”*

*“Now, I’ll question another guy’s motives for making sexist comments and challenge him on it.”*

**RSVP High School Program (RSVP-HS) empowers students to play a central role in confronting sexist attitudes and behaviors that are limiting and harmful to boys, girls, men and women.**

Participants learn how cultural definitions of masculinity can limit boys and devalue girls, by normalizing sexist attitudes and harmful behaviors. Students examine important connections between the emotional well-being of boys, the benefits of gender equality, and ending gender based violence. RSVP-HS is a program of awareness, critical thinking, self-reflection, and action.

Grounded in numerous sociological theories of change, workshops use clips from the documentary *The Mask You Live In*, group discussions, inspiring activities, and sharing of experiences around realistic scenarios. Participants discuss topics which include:

- Gender as a social construct
- Self acceptance through the development of our whole selves
- Strengthening emotional capacity, dealing with pressure to conform to stereotypes
- Thinking critically about media
- Healthy communication, sexuality, boundaries, and consent
- Sexual harassment and assault
- Bystander intervention
- Leadership and action

Multiple 3<sup>rd</sup> party evaluations, including a two-year study by the Maine Center for Public Health, show that RSVP changes attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs about sexism, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence. Additionally, participants show a greater willingness to play an active role in defusing or reporting situations that can lead to violence.

Please visit [www.maineboystomen.org](http://www.maineboystomen.org) or contact us at 207-774-9994 for more information or to schedule programming.

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