

“What these boys learn has an impact on the whole school. They become role models.”

-Principal

“You never really think, like before WiseGuyz, about the stereotypes of being a guy and like what they’re supposed to do. You just kind of follow that. After WiseGuyz... you’re more open to breaking free from the stereotype.”

-Participant

“Boys that wouldn’t necessarily have had a strong social footing, had a better one by the end of the year and had more confidence.”

-School Administrator

“It has been amazing watching the boys as they experience the program – they love to go, and they feel empowered by the conversations that they have with the facilitators.”

-Vice Principal



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SACE provides an extensive range of support services for people who experience sexual violence, including crisis support, counselling, police and court support, and advocacy, and fosters prevention of sexual violence through direct public education and advisory consultation with groups and agencies undertaking their own prevention efforts.

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**WISEGUYZ**  
Centre for Sexuality

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## What is WiseGuyz?

WiseGuyz is a healthy relationships and life skills program for grade 9 boys and masculine youth. The program's goal is to provide a safer space for participants to build relationship skills and challenge harmful gender stereotypes. The WiseGuyz program promotes healthy relationships and prevents youth dating violence using innovative and evidence-informed practices. By developing healthy sexuality and relationships, participants can challenge attitudes related to homophobia and gender-based violence. The program strategically works with grade 9 boys who are about to transition to high school and are going through a time of change.

## What does a WiseGuyz group look like?

- A WiseGuyz group runs weekly within a school or community-based organization
- The group is facilitated by a WiseGuyz facilitator who has received extensive training through the Centre for Sexuality in Calgary
- Each group is typically made up of 12-15 male or masculine youth in grade 9
- The group meets in the same learning space every week
- The program focuses on four sequential modules that the group works through together over the school year
- The program fosters and sustains a culture of respect and inclusive participation for all
- Boys and masculine youth are encouraged to express themselves authentically and practice empathetic communication

## Why was WiseGuyz developed?

WiseGuyz was initially developed at the Centre for Sexuality. After doing extensive research on the subject, they identified a need in the community for a program designed specifically for young men to challenge the alarming trends presented in mainstream culture and media around what it means to be a man. Additionally, they saw a need for a program that would:

- Foster positive masculinity
- Encourage future healthy relationships
- Provide comprehensive sexual health education
- Reduce bullying
- Challenge homophobia and transphobia in schools
- Reduce STI rates
- Allow young men and masculine youth to explore topics in a safe space

With these goals in mind, the WiseGuyz program was created. In conjunction with University of Calgary researchers, the program is constantly being evaluated and using evidence-informed practices.



## How can WiseGuyz benefit your school?

Research on the award-winning WiseGuyz program has found that youth who complete the program have increased knowledge and skills in the areas of:

- Healthy relationships - Participants learn about boundaries, consent, coping skills, and effective ways to express emotion and resolve conflict
- Sexual health - Participants learn about healthy sexuality, how bodies change during puberty and tools to make informed decisions about their sexual health
- Gender and the media - Participants learn the difference between sex and gender and are encouraged to examine and deconstruct harmful gender norms and stereotypes that are portrayed in the media
- Human rights, advocacy and allyship - Participants discuss concepts of equity and justice and explore how stereotypes and prejudices can have an impact on people's opportunities

## How can you get WiseGuyz in your school?

Contact us at [education@sace.ca](mailto:education@sace.ca) to get more information on the program. In addition, our WiseGuyz facilitators can set up a time to talk with you over the phone or provide an information session on how WiseGuyz can best fit in your school.