



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF MERCED COUNTY**

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PASSPORT TO MANHOOD

In 2009, Davis, Kilburn, and Schultz, published a report evidencing the link between poor outcomes in specific areas and diminished life chances for boys and young men of color. These disparities include, but are not limited to, Socioeconomic Disparities, Health Disparities, Safety Disparities, and ready to learn Disparities are issues if, not addressed, will further cause disadvantage between children of color and their counterparts. The Boys and Girls Club, provides a safe and fun learning environment for all children who face these difficulties and more. We believe that these social indicators cause stresses for families that contribute to these delinquencies and have a negative effect upon the physical, mental and spiritual health of our members and their families. Yet, we are not without hope. We have a proven track record of quality programming which, when implemented, can positively impact our membership in dramatic ways.

Our Passport to Manhood program reaches out to this underserved population and reduces disparities between ethnic groups. Although there are multiple factors, such as social, economic, family and physical activity that contribute to an individual's well-being, the Passport to Manhood captures these elements in 14 interactive topics to prepare young men, and particularly young men of color, to positively navigate that maturation process from adolescence to manhood.

The issue: There are large disparities between boys and men of color which contribute to diminished life chances for this group which must be addressed. For example, being born to a teenage mother, being the victim of homicide, or not completing high school are two times greater than they are for Caucasian counterparts; the consequences for poor outcomes contributes to the overall health of the community at large.

The Need: The passage from boyhood to manhood is challenging, requiring adolescent males to understand and manage many issues and transitions. **Passport to Manhood** addresses critical issues that young men face during this

time, such as ethics, decision making, wellness, fatherhood, employment and careers, cooperation and conflict, diversity, relationships and self-esteem for ages 11-14.

The Proposed Solution: At this critical juncture in our social history, it is more important than ever that boys be given appropriate guidance during this vulnerable time in their lives when society is providing them with many conflicting and confusing messages about what manhood is/should be about. Developing sound character, positive behavior and a sense of moral compass in youth is an achievable goal. Boys ages 11-14 are at a critical stage in their development. The curriculum for adolescent boys addresses several key areas of development while stressing and promoting positive values and behaviors. Our young men are encouraged to adopt the character views that will give them a positive head start in their journey to manhood.

The Proposed Results: Initially, our participants will have successful leadership experiences, they will know how to set personal goals, articulate an education and career goal, believe civic responsibility and leadership are important, and become cognizant of physical development and health. They will complete a group service project and they will have developed and implemented a group "Code of Conduct." Our intermediate goals will result in our young men seeking leadership opportunities in the Club, school and community. They will make decisions in support of education and career; be active in civic events, practice good health habits and physical fitness, understand the group process and tasks, and demonstrate positive behavior. Our Long term goals/results for this program will be the demonstration of strong leadership skills. Development of members who are adept at setting and attaining goals, have a knowledge base with which to pursue education and career goals; are able to continue to be involved in community service projects, have an ongoing health and fitness routine. Our participants will have a positive self-identity derived from group experiences and behavior which reflects a positive personal code of conduct.