

# For Staff: Group Activities for Youth

## Safety in Sharing

### Freewrite and Discussion: 15 minutes

Write the following prompt on the board or chart paper:

“Write about someone in your life that you confide in. What makes them a good person to share things with?”

Remind teens that they don’t need to worry about spelling or grammar. If a teen can’t think of someone that they would confide in, encourage them to write about the attributes that make someone a worthy confidante. After people finish writing, invite them to share if they’d like. Summarize the main points from the teens’ responses (e.g., “She listened and offered advice,” or “He helped me find a solution,”) and write those points on the board or chart paper.

### Read the Story: 15 minutes

As a group, read aloud “Who to Tell,” by Anonymous (p. 20), taking turns. Let teens pass if they don’t want to read.

### Dear Teen Writer: 15 minutes

Tell the group, “Now that we’ve read the story, we’re going to write a letter to Anonymous to show them some support.” Again, remind teens that the goal is to communicate ideas and responses to the story, so they don’t need to worry about spelling and grammar. Write down the following guidelines on flip chart paper and read them aloud to the group:

- Greeting: Dear Anonymous, I just read your story, “Who to Tell.”
- What were some details of Anonymous’s experiences that resonated or stood out to you?
- What were some connections you made with Anonymous’s experiences?
- As one of the people Anonymous has confided in, how can you as a reader show your support for Anonymous in persisting through abuse?

Give group members about eight minutes to write their

letters. Explain to the group that they are now going to do a Pair Share. Tell them to turn to the person next to them and take turns sharing the parts of their letters that they feel comfortable sharing. Each member of the pair should take about a minute to share. Cue partners to switch roles after the first minute. Time permitting, lead a discussion by asking group members to comment on what they heard, such as similarities, differences, or personal connections to their peers’ responses. They can also discuss points they agree or disagree with, new ideas they’ve been given, and questions they still have. Should a teen want to send their letter to the author, they can mail it to *Represent* at the address on p. 2. ■

## Breaking Out of the Gender Box

### Read the Story: 10 minutes

As a group, read aloud “Misogyny Is Everywhere, Even in Me,” by Ria Parker (p. 30), taking turns. Let teens pass if they don’t want to read.

### The Gender Box: 15 minutes

Place teens into groups of three to four and give each group a piece of paper. Groups should designate one member as the “recorder.” Have the recorders draw two large boxes, one on each side of the paper. Above one box, they should write, “Act Like a Lady” and above the other box, “Be a Man.” Within the boxes, teens write the stereotypes and expectations for how women and men are supposed to act according to society and the patriarchy [for example, boys shouldn’t cry, women should not be outspoken or too confident, men should be physically strong, women should be soft and wear make-up].

Tell groups to take five minutes to fill in the “Act Like a Lady” box and five minutes to write in the “Be a Man” box. Encourage teens to find examples in the story they just read.

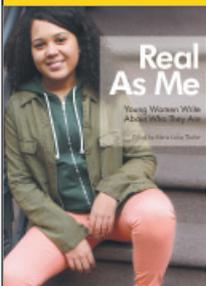
### Discussion: 20 minutes

Ask groups to share what they wrote in each of the boxes and prompt them with the following questions:

- What are the sources of these stereotypes and expectations?
- What keeps people in the box?
- What can be hard about being inside the box?
- What happens to people who step outside of their gender box?
- In your own life, how do you fight back against these stereotypes? What does it take to challenge them?

Finish the discussion by discussing ways teens can support each other in breaking free of these stereotypes. Thank group members for sharing. ■

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