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# BOYS' LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

## 2014-2015 REPORT



GET ACTIVE!

CHANGE THE GAME!

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Scope of Stakeholders 3

The Research 4

Scope of Engagement 5

Sample Curriculum 6

Program Testimonials 7

Looking Ahead 8

*Get Active!  
Change the Game!*

## Program Overview

The Boys' Leadership Program engaged young men in grades 6-8 at John C. Clark Elementary School in Sport-Based Youth Development (SBYD) practices that enabled the development of life skills and leadership traits. The SBYD framework, integrated with positive coaching and intentional lessons provided the young men with structured opportunities to learn, practice and apply transferable life skills and leadership traits within the program, inside the classroom and in their everyday lives.

## Scope of Stakeholders

In the process of developing the Boys' Intervention Program, Husky Sport's & Neag School of Education's PhD Graduate Assistants researched, gathered information and brought forth best practices and personal knowledge to engage youth in the development of leadership roles through sport. Working with key teachers and administrators at John C. Clark Elementary School in partnership with administrators and behavioral staff at Capital Region Education Council (CREC), 12 young men were strategically identified to participate in the program. With the support of the Journalism and Media Academy (JMA) principal and physical education teacher, a schedule was developed to share indoor and outdoor space that would maximize the program's potential.



Where the future is present.



HUSKY SPORT



## The Research

The implementation of the Boys' Leadership Program was based on a semester long observation of elementary and middle school classes, hallway transitions, and participation in special classes (i.e. music, physical education and art) during the fall of 2014; for six weeks, there were 12 or more hours a week dedicated solely to observing students in these settings. Observations were made in multiple school settings in order to gain a stronger understanding of the challenges students and teachers regularly face and to identify areas of opportunity.

The observations allowed the program leaders to understand their student population, school and classroom dynamics, the needs of the teachers and the daily challenges of the administration. The most important aspect that the program leaders focused on was evaluating the various levels of interactions amongst all stakeholders, including student-to-student to teacher-to-parent. This allowed the program leaders to accurately identify opportunities to improve the educational experiences for all stakeholders within Clark School. These findings from our observations on the climate/culture of the school provided a foundation for the development of the Boy's Leadership Program.

### Key Observations

- Consistent use of positive behavioral strategies by teachers resulted in increased positive behavior within the classroom.
- Inconsistent or lack of positive behavioral strategies by teachers resulted in an increase of negative behavior within the classroom.
- The consistency of implementing positive behavioral strategies among teachers had an impact on increasing or decreasing positive classroom and school climate.
- There needed to be buy-in from all of the teachers and leadership that included a high and efficient level of communication.
- The ability to collaborate with the various community partners and supports within the school was required.
- All programs need to be aligned with the school's behavior management framework - PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) in order to ensure a consistent message and level of accountability.
- A system would be necessary to monitor and track outcomes of the participants to make sure that the program evolves and adapts to the students' and other stakeholders' needs.

## Scope of Engagement

The Boys' Intervention Program engaged 12 boys from March – June 2015. Working with Husky Sport coaches, students saw many gains in leadership skills and behavior throughout the length of the program. The boys were able to make strives toward positively leading others and making positive choice for themselves.

### Who?

Four 6<sup>th</sup> grade boys

Two 7<sup>th</sup> grade boys

Six 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys

were identified to participate by recommendation of teachers and faculty of Clark School and CREC based on their leadership potential in the classroom.

### What?

All boys participated in:

- Team sports
- Strength and conditioning training exercises

interwoven with

- Leadership lessons
- Life Skills lessons

### Where?

JMA gym

JMA weight room

JMA field

### When?

12 weeks

2 days a week

90-minute sessions

### Reflection as a Key Component

In a strategic approach, students used journals to record reflections of the day's activities at the end of each session. Students wrote responses to verbal prompts that required identification of the skills learned throughout the day, how the skills were learned through the activities, where they have seen these skills exhibited in their everyday lives, then how and when they can apply those skills.

## Sample Curriculum

Life Skill: Self-control

Do Now: Play a short game of basketball without talking. Consequence of talking will be 2 sprints.

Physical Activity:

**Station 1** - Strength training circuit: *1 minute each exercise, 3 total sets*

Exercises: back rows, bench press, sit-ups, shoulder presses, cable pushdowns

**Station 2** - Plyometric workouts: *1 minute each station, 3 total sets*

Exercises: ladder work, cone jumps, wall jumps, one-legged hops, hurdle jumps

Discussion: Provide examples from life experiences of having and not having self-control.

Journal activity: What is self-control? How did you practice self-control today in the activities? Give an example of how self-control can be helpful in the classroom and in your interactions with your schoolmates?

Life Skill: Recognizing strengths and weaknesses

Do Now: Free throws, medicine ball wall throw, hurdle crawls, math problem with squats

1. Students will divide themselves into pairs, ensuring that pairs are evenly matched.
2. Once introduced to the stations, pairs will have 2 minutes to decide which station to start at based on each student's strengths and weaknesses.
  - a. Pairs will go to starting station. The first pair to complete all the tasks wins the activity.  
*Activities can be adjusted to make it easier or harder for the students depending on their strengths and weaknesses.*

Discussion: Why is it important to know your own strengths and weaknesses? Provide examples from life experience.

Physical Activity: One-minute medicine ball wall tosses. *Partner counts number of reps in 1 minute*

- Once both partners have gone, discuss the importance of strengths and weaknesses, as well as goal setting skills - short-term v. long-term goal setting.
- Use this activity as a baseline for goal setting journal activity.

Journal activity:

- Students will develop goal setting with medicine ball wall tosses to increase their score.
  - How many tosses today? Goal for 1 week? Goal for 1 month?
- What are some strategies to achieve your short-term goal and long-term goal?
- How can you apply these strategies to academic goals? Life goals?

# Program Testimonials

"..the importance and value of providing consistency and keeping the boys accountable to maintain a high standard." - Program Coach

"...things like **self-control, grit** and to **keep going** even if your body doesn't want to" - 6th grader

## What did you learn from the Boys' Intervention Program?

"I learned about **discipline** and how to **respect** your elders" - 8th grader

"...push hard here and **push hard** in the classroom too" - 6th grader



**Give an example of a time when you applied what you learned in the program.**



"I showed **grit**, like trying to push myself. I show **trust** when I have a partner, I have to trust him and he has to do the same thing; trusting in your partner." -7<sup>th</sup> grader

"Yea, I was doing this long test and I really thought I was done and was ready to guess on all the answers and I had remembered that word **grit**. Then my friend said '**Grit, man, grit.**' Then I **started showing grit** and ended up finishing out the test. And I ended up getting the highest grade in the school." -8<sup>th</sup> grader

## Looking Ahead

### Going into the 2015-2016 school year, we are looking to:

- Revise the selection process for joining the program, as to continue working with teacher and administrators to identify qualified students AND add the opportunity for interested students to earn admittance into the program
- Streamline and solidify program routines and schedules
- Maintain consistent contact with classroom teachers and administrators to check-in on academic and behavioral progress
- Spend more time in the classroom, building relationships with students and reinforcing the transfer of leadership skills into the classroom setting



*As the Boys' Intervention Program continues to gain traction, we are hoping to engage with students, teachers and administrators regularly in order to create successful classroom cultures, set high behavioral and academic expectations and support and environment of continued achievement.*

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