Youth Guidance’s BAM® (Becoming a Man®) program is a school-based group counseling program that guides young men in 7-12th grades to learn, internalize and practice social cognitive skills, make responsible decisions for their future and become positive members of their school and community. BAM integrates clinical theory and practice, men’s rites of passage work, and a dynamic approach to youth engagement. Each session is built around a lesson plan designed to develop a specific skill through stories, role-playing and group exercises. BAM students learn and practice impulse control, emotional self-regulation, recognition of social cues and interpreting intentions of others, raising aspirations for the future and developing a sense of personal responsibility and integrity. Students who participate in BAM are more likely to stay in school, develop healthy relationships, and stay out of the juvenile justice system.

**BAM in Boston**

After careful mutual selection process with Boston Public Schools and support from Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Strategic Grant Partners, and the GreenLight Fund, BAM Boston launched in Fall 2017. The program has since grown to serve 10 schools and 550 young men across Cambridge and Boston.

**By the Numbers***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Reduction in violent crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Reduction in overall arrests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>Increase in on-time graduations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Up to $30 in societal gains for every $1 invested in BAM

**BAM-Boston Advisory Council**

- Thaddeus Miles, Chair
- Kate Barrett
- Ramon DeJesus
- Turahn Dorsey
- Christyanna Egun
- Emerson Foster
- Latoya Gayle
- Dr. Charles Grandson
- Matt Hamilton
- Conan Harris
- Corey Harris
- Judge Leslie Harris
- Allan Kiser
- Melissa Luna
- Makeeba McCreary
- William Morales
- Ed Powell
- Barbara Sullivan

The BAM Curriculum Emphasizes Six Core Values:

**INTEGRITY**
Students learn that a man is someone who is reliable, honest, either in touch with his virtues or finds his inner virtues, makes amends when he loses his direction and does what he says he is going to do.

**ACCOUNTABILITY**
Students learn that they should be responsible for the choices they make and take ownership for their feelings, thoughts and behaviors. A man can feel anger, sadness or fear, but he must own his reactions to those emotions.

**SELF-DETERMINATION**
Students learn the importance of focus and perseverance in reaching one’s goals. They learn to deal with self-defeating feelings, thought and behaviors that can become obstacles or barriers to achieving their goals.

**RESPECT FOR WOMANHOOD**
Students are challenged to take a critical look at the values and actions that represent positive experiences and appreciation for women. They learn appropriate and positive communication skills to begin using them for their interactions with women, thereby increasing respect for women of all ages.

**VISIONARY GOAL-SETTING**
Students learn to envision their futures and make clear connections between current behaviors, attitudes, values and visions. They seek to identify any traumas or faulty thinking that may cause them to respond in negative and destructive ways. They then learn how to heal themselves and direct energy toward achieving their vision.

**POSITIVE ANGER EXPRESSION**
Students learn anger management, coping skills and effective techniques to express anger. In turn, students may avoid negative consequences such as suspensions, arrests and damaged relationships.

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Student Success Story

Although “Ernest was one of the first students to express interest in BAM, he wasn’t reaching his potential early on. Throughout the first term of his freshman year he was often tardy and had several absences eventually receiving no credit for the first term in school. This fact upset him greatly. Ernest was further devastated when he learned that due to his poor academic standing, he was ineligible to play on the Junior Varsity basketball team. He shared his frustration and life challenges during a BAM session on the core value of self-determination. He asked for help from his peers, that they hold him accountable for his actions, and to help him take responsibility for their effects. With the support of his BAM Counselor and his peers – the safe space that is the circle --Ernest eventually turned his grades around and passed all his classes. And in celebration of his recent academic turnaround, he was invited to attend the BAM Boston college tour to Washington, D.C., something he enjoyed immensely and now looks forward to his sophomore year.

*Name has been changed for confidentiality.
For more program info, email: BostonInfo@youth-guidance.org