

# WHAT'S IT LIKE BEING A GUY TODAY IN AOTEAROA?

We asked over 50 young men living in Auckland what gender expectations they came up against in their everyday lives. Lots of those we talked to said that everyday expectations of them limited what they could do and how they could act.

## BEING 'THE MAN'

Guys talked about the importance of being seen to be "the man": this referred to a dominant stereotype of masculinity, meaning physical power and emotional control. Guys also talked about losing respect if they got involved with activities and interests that others thought of as "feminine" - including being "whipped" by girls and "hanging around with girls too much".



Many guys also talked about homophobic environments where being seen as gay would 'taint your image'. Being 'the man' in Aotearoa today often means dominating women and competing with other guys for status. This story about masculinity isn't new - but it does harm. These behaviours are linked to violence against women, sexism, and homophobia.

"Gardening or knitting... guys feel that, if they're seen doing that other guys will think they're feminine and then their social standing will go down."

"You're expected to like girls but then you're expected to not be hanging around with them."

"The male has to be the one providing for the family, the one in charge."