

Overview

[The Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University](#) (GHELI) supports interdisciplinary education about world health through the production, curation, and dissemination of educational public goods. This exemplar work was a final project for “World Health: Challenges and Opportunities,” a General Education course at Harvard College taught by GHELI Faculty Director Sue J. Goldie. For this creative assessment designed with support from GHELI, students systematically analyze a societal health challenge they care about and create a “real world” product intended to influence policy or motivate change.

Abstract

A video highlighting the experiences of young men who go to therapy.

Artist


Kaitlin Shannon (2022)

Caption

Risk factors and determinants of mental health include, but are not limited to, exposure to violence, societal pressures, adversity, substance abuse, discrimination or exclusion, and an adverse home life. Poor mental health carries consequences of both morbidity and mortality. In fact, depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders are leading causes of illness and disability for adolescents. According to the World Health Organization, one in seven people ages 10-19 experience a mental disorder. A study of 90 countries done by the World Health Organization also found that the mean suicide rate for this age group was 7.4/100,000, but higher in males than females (10.5 compared to 4.1). This study also points to an increasing trend of young, male deaths by suicide. In 2021, the World Health Organization stated suicide to be the fourth leading cause of death amongst the 15-19-year-old age group. Despite this, young men are hesitant to seek help for mental health issues. In a study done in Ireland, many reasons for this were directly related to environmental influences and fear of societal responses. As such, this multimedia campaign focuses on social influence including masculine stereotypes and stigma.

Artist Lens

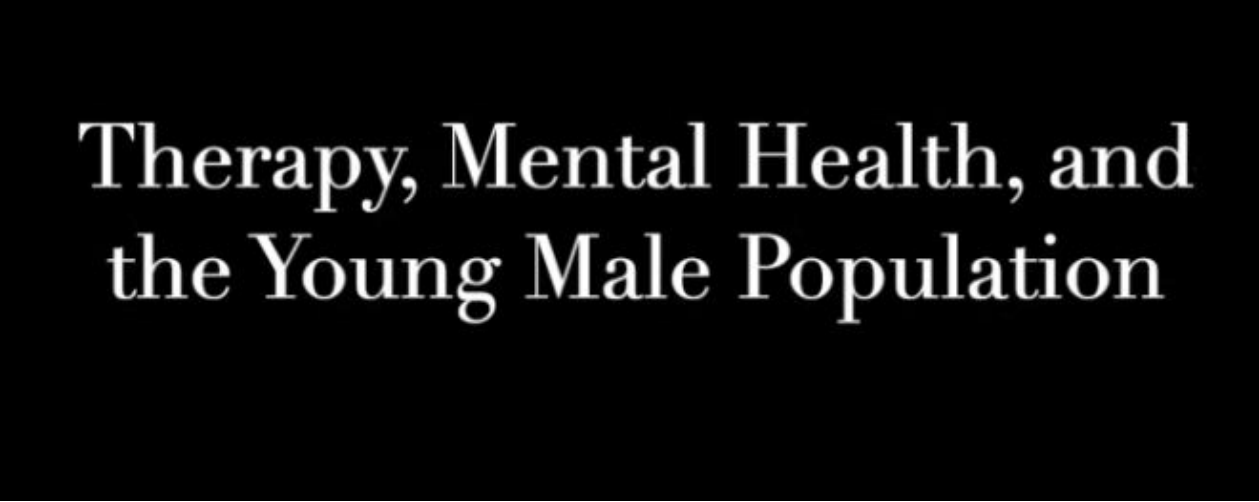
Originally, this video was going to include various gender identities and emphasize the positive impact therapy can have on anyone’s life. While conducting interviews, I was disappointed by the difficulty I had in finding men who had been to therapy, deeply considered it, or were willing to discuss the concept. Additionally, the first two men I interviewed entered therapy out of obligation. Their decisions to continue with therapy demonstrate its positive effects. Still, their stories and the lack of men I found to interview pointed to a more significant issue surrounding the male relationship to therapy. As a result, I focused on the male experience, or lack thereof, with therapy, mental health, and the stigma accompanying these concepts. I chose to use real-life interviews and a video so the audience can feel personally engaged with a real person and real stories. This format also fits with the video's overarching message that we, as a society, need to have more real-life discussions about these topics. The video targets an audience of young men to show that other men experience similar feelings,



thoughts, or struggles and that it is okay to need and talk about mental health help. It is also targeted at the overall population because breaking the stigma requires society to normalize, discuss, and care about young men's mental health.

Media

Video



Therapy, Mental Health, and the Young Male Population

[Watch Therapy, Mental Health, and the Young Male Population](#)