

# BE A MAN CLUB

Be a man, change the rules

Future 4YouTH

Join us! It's time for a change!

[www.youngmeninitiative.net](http://www.youngmeninitiative.net)

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**CARE International Balkans** has garnered a reputation for its work on youth development, gender equality, prevention of gender-based violence, women's empowerment and community mobilization within the **Young Men Initiative project (YMI)**. From 2006-2020, it undertook a bold initiative to engage young men (aged 15-19) and from 2013 young women, in addressing violence and the harmful practices of masculinity in close collaboration with local partner organizations.

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YMI's guiding philosophy is that boys should be understood not as obstacles to peace and gender equality, but rather as critical allies in promoting non-violent, healthy relationships and communities. YMI holds that if students learn about violence as well as how to question dominant gender norms and if they have a chance to practice these new ideas and skills in safe spaces, then they will have a greater likelihood of internalizing this information which, over time, will result in living more gender-equitable, healthy, and non-violent lifestyles. Moreover, as group norms begin to change, the program helps foster a more tolerant, accepting environment at the school level. This change trajectory whereby boys and girls practice and internalize new ideas is bolstered by several support structures, but the most important are **BE A MAN Clubs.**

**Be a Man clubs** are established as clubs of high school students who are engaged in a creative way in the design and implementation of the "**Be a Man**" campaign and represent its most significant part. Members of the Club are active participants and promoters of the "Be a Man" campaign in the way that they are those who develop and organize campaign activities in their schools and encourage other young people to get involved in promoting their values. They are allowed to build themselves and encourage others to be better, by providing a safe zone for young people, where there is no judgment, challenged opinion, and where the dialogue and self-critical thinking are encouraged. In addition, they participate in motivational activities such as movie evenings, theater, concerts, sports games, traveling and meeting other young people and sharing experiences with them through various types of youth camps and camps for youth leaders.

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**Be a Man clubs** are not clubs that only include young men these clubs include equally young men and women, with the goal of building healthy lifestyles for all of them.

"It was quite normal to watch arranged fights in the schoolyard, someone else's faces in the mud, covered with bruises. It was also normal not to do anything about it and record everything on the phone... Several years later, after I started to educate others against the bad things I participated in, I realized that there was another life, a better life, in which I was a person helping others and showing them a better way."

**Nikola, Belgrade**



"Before I joined the first thought of the phrase 'Be a Man' was 'do not cry' and 'do not hit a girl', but now I understand that being a man does not mean being the strongest in the world and hiding your emotions, but it means that men should be what they are without shame and fear, and that it is not shameful to show your feelings and be what you are."

**Ružica, Mostar**



Today, there are:

34 Be a Man Clubs

30 cities

2631 young men and women

"When I joined the Be a Man Club in Albania, I couldn't imagine that it would significantly help me in my daily life and routine. I used to react emotionally and impulsively without thinking of the consequences. After joining the Club, my family noticed the change in my behavior and as days were passing, my friends started to positively react and affirm the change as well. That was very encouraging to hear! At the Club, I learnt a great deal on how to express my emotions in a healthy way and how to control my initial thoughts and reactions."

**Krista, Tirana**



## CONTACT US

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