



AW facilitator resource kit.

GENDER RECONNECTION

purpose.

In 2018, in response to client feedback, AW started to build opportunities for gender reconnection into Adulthood programs. Historically the programs had always been written as gender separate – however, after insight from the schools, it was clear that the separation was creating more disconnection than connection amongst cohorts. The purpose of the gender reconnection process is to open a space for young men and women to come together and talk openly about how they can support each other on the transition into adulthood. The sessions allow space for participants to identify and articulate the qualities and behaviours of the opposite gender that promote growth and those that block progress. They can be very powerful sessions when run well.

delivery.

Effective delivery of this process requires facilitators to work together to come up with a format that best suits the two groups and where they are at. Sometimes groups will need plenty of fun and priming up front to grow the safety of the space, other times, the groups will be ready to drop straight into a meaningful discussion.

The important things to remember are:

- Students don't get this opportunity very often, therefore it might be an uncomfortable experience for them initially. Work hard to build comfort and safety.
- You set the tone – model the level of maturity that will be required by participants to take part in the session. Treat your partner facilitator with the kindness and openness you are seeking from participants.
- Put plenty of thought into the environment:
 - Are we on neutral territory?
 - Would it suit the groups better if one were to host the other in their space?
 - Are participants comfortable? i.e. are we in direct sunlight on a 35deg day?
 - How have we prepared the space to welcome the other group if we have arrived first?
 - How are we entering a space if it has already been prepared for us?
- Give participants ownership over the process – talk through the above factors with them and let them decide what would work best. They know each other much better than we do. Trust their judgement.

example session.

NOTE: Frontloading and pre-work for this session must be done prior to reconnecting with the other group.

Prime - Frontloading: Share a personal story about what your friendships and relationships with the other gender were like when you were a teen. What was working for you? What wasn't working so well? What do you wish you'd known? What was 'courtship' like?

Ask the group:

- How is it different without the boys/girls?
- How do we show up differently when they are not around?
- What are the benefits of not having them here?
- What do we miss?
- If we were to see them right now what stories from our camp journey would we want to share with them?



This might happen in a sharing circle, or if your group has energy to burn, you might challenge participants in smaller groups to come up with a 30sec skit about each of the above topics.

Pump: Prepare for the joint session, which will take the format of a STOP, START, KEEP

1. What could they (the other gender group) **START** doing that would benefit our relationships and community? What could they **STOP** doing? **KEEP** doing?
2. What could we **START** doing that would benefit our relationships and community? What could they **STOP** doing? **KEEP** doing?
3. How can we deliver this to them in a way the speaks to our truth, lands respectfully, and results in meaningful change? How will we present our ideas? Who will represent the group?

Peak - Reconnection:

Step one - Connection: bring the two groups together with a fun game or energiser.

Split the group into mixed smaller groups of about 4 people in each. Invite the small groups to share their highlights of camp and let casual conversation flow. They can share how the group's journey has been up to now, highlights, challenges, funniest moments etc.

Step two – bring everyone into one large, seated circle

Frame the conversation:

So here we are together for the first time in a few days. Maybe we've got to see some things about ourselves and each other since we last saw each other. Well this moment is kind of monumental, because we get to come together and, as a healthy community, SHARE OPENLY about what we need from each other so we can be united, supported and well. Most communities really struggle to do this well.

So, let's begin. Which group would like to commence? We will alternate between groups.

Step three - Conversation:

The groups alternate sharing, with each other, their STOP, START, KEEP and work together.

Step four - Talking stick popcorn style: Now that we have heard each other, let's have some discussion about what this is going to look like from now on.

Step five – Debrief (this may happen as a large group, or back in the smaller groups or both) What was most lovely or amazing about that? What was most challenging?

success looks like.

- ✓ Both groups get to feel seen and heard
- ✓ Both groups can deliver the key pieces of their stop, start, keeps
- ✓ The two groups form connections and bonds
- ✓ The mood of both groups is positive