



raison d'être

... a newsletter of boys to MEN Foundation



Leadership and Life Skills programme for Graduates
30 programmes across 4 NYSC LGA in Lagos state

'It's My Time'

Leadership and Life Skills programme for Undergraduates



Leadership and Life Skills programme for Teenagers
(Debiruss College Sangotedo and Grace High School Gbagada)

Conversations

A safe space for men to talk

Thinking Aloud

boys to MEN Foundation podcast

Meals 4 Kids

Feeding over 300 children
each month
(Since March 2019)



A platform for socialising and sharing literacy or
other talents

International Day of the Boy Child

Supreme Education
Foundation School, Magodo

2025 International Men's Day Conference

November 23, 2025

Understanding Gender Differences: *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*

boys to MEN Foundation held its 2025 International Men's Day Conference on Sunday, November 23, 2025. The theme, "Understanding Gender Differences: Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus," fostered cross-gender dialogue and reflection.

The focus was exploring how gender differences, whether real or perceived, shape behavior, relationships, and the pressures males experience.

The Founder and Executive Vice Chairman Mrs Ifeoma Idigbe welcomed attendees and talked about the importance of the boys to MEN Foundation mission.

The Keynote Speaker Mr. Tonye Coles affirmed common humanity while detailing how gender differences affect communication and emotional management in relationships. He addressed the silence and resentment that occur when true sharing is absent, offering ways toward empathetic dialogue. He said 'Nigeria must be intentional about lifting the boy child and referencing the theme, said that Mars has solutions that Venus needs and Venus has insights that Mars does not have. He emphasized the importance of creating a safe space where boys can talk, and that if we fail the boy child today, we will pay tomorrow. He concluded by saying that supporting boys is not a favour. It is necessary for the stability of families and our nation.

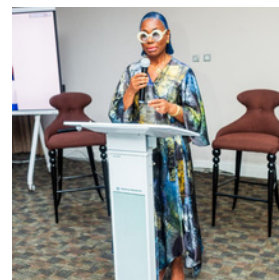
The Women's Panel offered a view of boys and men from women's perspectives. Discussions covered how societal expectations influence the raising of children, the power of mothers in shaping their sons' views, and what women seek in relationships with males for healthier connections. The panel noted that 'Boys face the challenge of Becoming!' This is profound. They must define what they become - the best they can be.

The Men's Panel explored male roles in society. Topics included the pressure placed on males by family and society, often linked to the assumption that "It's a Man's World," how men handle expectations, and the necessity of redefining gender roles due to current social and economic realities. They acknowledged the challenges that can be faced by having strong mothers and insufficient role models willing to engage meaningfully by mentoring the younger generation.

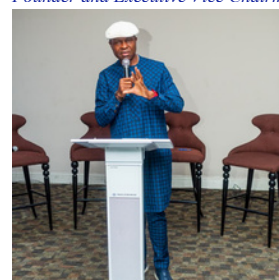
The Gen Z and Millennial Panel discussed how these generations perceive gender, if they hold traditional views, the pressures faced by 21st-century men, and what changes are needed in the gender narrative. They also talked about managing parental relationships and what parents should expect. This panel acknowledged that Gen Z and Millennials are the confused generations because of the shift in the gender narrative - The confusion about what men need to be and what they should be.

Our 2025 conference successfully explored male vulnerability and need by addressing:

Do men need support?, Do they recognize this need?, Do they want or accept support? Single-gender panels allowed the authentic raising of issues, enabling participants of both genders to collectively consider these questions. The conversations supported the Foundation's mission: to support men and boys in becoming their best, positively impacting their communities. #MalesMatterToo



Mrs Ifeoma Idigbe
Founder and Executive Vice Chairman



Mr Tonye Cole, Co-founder Sahara Group
Keynote Speaker



Some members of the Board of Trustees,
boys to MEN Foundation



The Women's Panel



The Men's Panel



GenZ and Millennials Panel

‘Owning My Space’ Leadership and Life Skills programme for graduates

In a world where young men are often pushed to "figure it out" alone, boys to MEN Foundation continues to bridge the gap through its programme "Owning My Space".

Designed for male graduates, Owning My Space. This programme equips participants with the life tools, leadership mindset, and emotional intelligence necessary to thrive in today's complex world while promoting integrity, confidence, and responsibility.

In 2025, boys to MEN Foundation has successfully run 30 programmes across four NYSC Local Government Areas in Lagos State:

- Victoria Island
- Obalende
- Surulere
- Lagos Island

With 1,843 corps members participating, the programme has sparked discussions on the importance of significant mind shift, encouraging participants to break free from societal pressures that stifle vulnerability, emotional growth, and personal vision.

Through interactive sessions, storytelling, mentorship, and practical exercises, participants are not only taught to take ownership of their lives but to also become change-makers in their communities.

In a culture that tells men to "man up" and remain silent, Owning My Space challenges that narrative by teaching young men that vulnerability is strength, leadership begins with character, and every man has the power to define his own story responsibly and intentionally.



Participants Feedback

- The programme is enlightening, I love how relatable it was not just with the facilitators but within ourselves, we get to share ideas about improving mens mental health, learn how to manage our finances and qualities of a leader.
- boys to MEN Foundation has just answered some of the questions bugging my mind as pertaining to what it is to be a man, a leader, a good friend , a good brother, and so on. This programme should be encouraged and spread across other states, because like me there are others who seek answers.
- boys to MEN Foundation initiative is necessary in today's world where mental health of the boy child is slowly getting neglected and they are forced to conform to societal narratives. The lecture on mindset change was very crucial and also very insightful. Thank you to the organizers for this initiative.
- Today's programme was inspirational, knowledgeable and informative. I loved the interactive class and how each speaker related to real life scenarios.
- Men experience stress, anxiety, depression and trauma just like anyone else. Programmes like this are an emotional support for men to break free from trauma of sexual abuse or even suicide as it encourage men to break away from social isolation, combat toxic masculinity and promote healthy relationship
- This was a very enlightening programme that put a spotlight on men's mental health as it is a topic that had majorly been ignored
- .These sessions really impacted me in some way. The monologues were an eye opener for me to see more and understand what men go through in the society



International Day of the Boy Child

On May 16th, 2025 we engaged with the students of Supreme Education Foundation School, Magodo, in a special session to commemorate the International Day of the Boy Child.

The Founder and Executive Vice Chairman of boys to MEN Foundation, Mrs. Ifeoma Idigbe made a presentation, sharing selected poems from her book that reimagines what it means to become a good man, not just by society's traditional standards, but through empathy, self-awareness, and respect. She talked about vulnerability as a human trait necessary for mental health.

It was an inspiring and enlightening conversation that left a lasting impact on everyone present. The discussion afterwards showed that the boys understood clearly the message of the presentation through the medium of poems.

Here's to raising a generation of men who lead with compassion, courage, and consciousness!



‘Becoming My Best Self’ Leadership and Life skills programme for teenagers

‘Becoming My Best Self’ programme focuses on youths in schools, churches, and other community groups, addressing vital aspects of their growth: mindset, attitude, behaviour, and social issues.

We target this age group because the lessons learned now will influence how they live the rest of their lives and the positive impact they will have on others. Our goal is to equip them with the essential skills they need to navigate the complexities of adolescence and emerge as thoughtful, confident, and responsible young men.

In 2025, the Foundation successfully hosted the ‘Becoming My Best Self’ programme at two secondary schools in Lagos:

- Debiruss College, Sangotedo, and
- Grace High School, Gbagada.

The session provided a platform for male students aged 13–17 to develop essential life skills and leadership qualities that shape their character and sense of identity.

The participants demonstrated an impressive level of openness and willingness to engage in meaningful dialogue. The session allowed the teenagers to identify and discuss real-life challenges they currently face. These issues included stress, anxiety, peer pressure, challenges with parents, masturbation, distraction, grief, and self-worth. The boys' honest engagement proved their strong desire for growth and guidance in these crucial areas.

A feature of the programme was a group activity on leadership. This exercise provided a practical lesson in:

- How leaders naturally emerge
- The importance of taking the initiative
- The value of clear direction and bringing order

The activity offered hands-on experience in teamwork and responsibility, showcasing leadership not just as a title, but as a practical, shared function.

The students' readiness to embrace ongoing support was evident when they suggested additional topics for future sessions, including personal well-being, the challenges of puberty, and developing self-value.

boys to MEN Foundation reaffirms its core message #MalesMatterToo. ‘Becoming My Best Self’ programme is a foundational step in our commitment to raising a generation of young men prepared for success.

‘It’s My Time’ Leadership and Life Skills programme for undergraduates

On Tuesday, May 6th, 2025, boys to MEN Foundation was at the Nigerian University of Technology and Management (NUTM) as part of its "It's My Time" Leadership and Life Skills Programme for undergraduates.

Facilitated by Mrs. Ifeoma I. Idigbe, the session was a blend of honest dialogue, critical self-reflection, and practical learning designed to prepare young adults for personal and professional growth and leadership.

A breakout session allowed participants to address some real issues facing today's youth, including social media addiction, peer pressure, identity crisis, misplaced priorities, time management, navigating relationships and procrastination. Each group developed and presented practical solutions, sparking thoughtful discussions and peer learning.

Mrs. Idigbe also spoke about multipotentiality, helping students understand how to thrive with multiple passions and talents. She emphasized the power of self-discovery, shared a simple approach to financial discipline, and walked participants through an easy-to-use budgeting method.

It was a session that not only informed but inspired a room full of future leaders.



22 May, 2025 @ Café One, Victoria Island, Lagos

boys to MEN Foundation hosted its “Pass the Mic” programme designed to bring people together in a relaxed, creative, and entertaining atmosphere.

The event served as a social hub where participants could unwind, connect, and share their talents. From spoken word and poetry to music and open conversation, the stage was alive with energy, creativity, and authentic expression.

Young men from diverse walks of life came together, boldly taking the mic to showcase their unique gifts, while cheered on with contagious enthusiasm. More than just a talent night, Pass the Mic was a reminder that “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy” and that spaces for expression, laughter, and support are vital for personal and collective well-being.

The evening left a lasting impression, reinforcing the power of community, creativity, and positive engagement.



Conversations

At boys to MEN Foundation, we believe that men deserve safe spaces to unburden, to express, to reflect, and to grow. We have transited from our physical monthly ‘Conversations’ to quarterly virtual ‘Conversations’. Our virtual ‘Conversations’ series continues to provide that space where real issues affecting men are explored with honesty, empathy, and clarity.

The April edition discussed the evolving complexities of relationships in today’s society. With over 100 participants, two focal themes led the conversation:

- The Japa Syndrome – how mass emigration is reshaping long-distance relationships.
- The debate around Arranged Marriages in a time where individuality and love marriages dominate.

Key Reflections:

- Can a trusted third party help you find a better partner than you can?
- Is emotional maturity outpaced by career pressure, leaving people unready for real partnership?
- Why are so many “good people” still single?
- How do economic pressures push men into fear and emotional distance?

This session emphasized how shifting gender roles, financial demands, and societal expectations continue to complicate the journey toward healthy relationships for men.

Our June edition addressed a long-suppressed reality: Men are emotionally stifled, and it's hurting them.

Most men don’t just struggle with expressing how they feel they’re unsure how to express it, who to express it to, and where it’s safe to do so.

This dialogue exposed how societal conditioning has denied men a vital part of their humanity: the right to feel and be seen without judgment. Men fear being misunderstood, labeled weak, or dismissed when they open up. But we affirmed that vulnerability is not weakness it is courage. The conversation identified men’s reluctance to talk even when given the opportunity and suggested that they must learn to choose their mental health by accepting their human vulnerabilities and be less concerned about what people will say.

The December ‘Conversations’ focused on the emerging trend of ‘Masculinism’ and what it means for the gender narrative and relationships.

Thinking Aloud

Our podcast ‘Thinking Aloud’ provides an opportunity to discuss topical issues concerning boys and men. Started in 2022.

We recorded several podcasts this year in our podcast studio but were not able to professionally edit the videos. We plan to engage a professional editor next year. This is an important learning for us this year.



Meals 4 Kids

‘If you can’t feed a hundred people, then feed just one.’

— Mother Teresa of Calcutta

In a world where millions of children go to bed hungry, boys to MEN Foundation believes in starting with one meal, one child, one community at a time.

In many vulnerable communities, children face daily food insecurity. Hunger affects their ability to concentrate in school, weakens their immune systems, and limits their growth both physically and mentally.

Through our Meals 4 Kids programme, we provide free, nutritious meals to 300 children every month in vulnerable communities in Lagos. The programme is funded through donations received from individuals and a partial sponsorship from Bukka Hut.

If you find yourself able to support our love initiative with a contribution, we would greatly appreciate your contribution. Our account details are as follows:

boys to MEN Foundation
Sterling Bank plc
0082581050



Looking Back and Looking Forward ...

2025 has ended and we successfully ran our programmes. As we approach 2026, we have an even more urgent need to expand our programmes and reach more boys and young men.

The feedback we receive speaks to the increasing impact of our programmes. This is the time to expand.

Our plans for 2026 include running

- 'Owning My Space' Leadership and Life Skills programme
- 'Becoming My Best Self' programmes
- Virtual 'Conversations'
- 'Pass the Mic'(social and talent engagement programme)
- 'Business Clinics' (for budding entrepreneurs)
- Annual International Men's Day Conference
- Annual Research and Report
- Quarterly magazine 'Unfiltered'
- Annual newsletter (That presents all our programmes and sponsors for the year)
- Podcasts- Continue our podcasts with professional editors
- We plan to finally introduce our Trustees Dinner next year to celebrate our Trustees and their support

We couldn't have done it without your generous support.



... and the many individuals who support our Meals 4 Kids programme - Thank you all



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