Youth Guidance’s Becoming A Man (BAM) and Working On Womanhood (WOW) programs are school-based group counseling and mentoring programs that improve the social-emotional and behavioral competencies of students in grades 6-12.

BAM and WOW Counselors work full-time in schools, delivering a dynamic blend of clinically based group and individual services that target students who’ve been exposed to traumatic stressors or who face social, behavioral, cognitive or emotional challenges. Weekly group counseling sessions, called BAM and WOW Circles, guide students through a curriculum-based process of self-exploration and skill building that serve as the foundation for personal and academic success.

Students who participate in BAM and WOW experience greater social-emotional and psychological well-being, improved school engaged and academic attainment, and increased utilization of safe and healthy behaviors.

**BAM and WOW Partners**

BAM and WOW launched in Hickman Mills C-1 Schools during the Spring 2021 semester with generous support from GreenLight Fund Kansas City, Mayor Quinton Lucas, and the Charles & Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation.

BAM and WOW operate at Smith-Hale Middle School and Ruskin High School, providing students with increased access to critical mental and behavioral health supports that will help them realize their full potential in school and in life. Youth Guidance plans to expand BAM and WOW to additional schools across the Kansas City metropolitan region.

“BAM and WOW are proven, evidence-based models that provide youth safe spaces to share their challenges, find mentorship and access support, and I am glad to help launch these programs in our Hickman Mills School District.”

-Mayor Quinton Lucas
BAM Emphasizes Six Core Values:

INTEGRITY
Students learn that a man is someone who is reliable, honest, either in touch with his virtues or finds his inner virtues, makes amends when he loses his direction and does what he says he is going to do.

ACCOUNTABILITY
Students learn that they should be responsible for the choices they make and take ownership for their feelings, thoughts and behaviors. A man can feel anger, sadness or fear, but he must own his reactions to those emotions.

SELF-DETERMINATION
Students learn the importance of focus and perseverance in reaching one’s goals. They learn to deal with self-defeating feelings, thought and behaviors that can become obstacles or barriers to achieving their goals.

RESPECT FOR WOMANHOOD
Students are challenged to take a critical look at the values an actions that represent positive experiences and appreciation for women. They learn appropriate and positive communication skills to begin using them for their interactions with women, thereby increasing respect for women of all ages.

VISIONARY GOAL-SETTING
Students learn to envision their futures and make clear connections between current behaviors, attitudes, values and visions. They seek to identify any traumas or faulty thinking that may cause them to respond in negative and destructive ways. They then learn how to heal themselves and direct energy toward achieving their vision.

POSITIVE ANGER EXPRESSION
Students learn anger management, coping skills and effective techniques to express anger. In turn, students may avoid negative consequences such as suspensions, arrests and damaged relationships.

WOW Emphasizes Five Core Values:

SELF-AWARENESS
Students develop a strong sense of who they are. They do this by exploring different aspects of their identity through activities and questioning each other.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
Students learn to identify and manage emotions. They learn how their perceptions often drive emotions and how this impacts behavior. Through group activities, they strengthen empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills. They will develop conflict resolution and emotion regulation skills.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS
Students develop the ability to differentiate healthy and unhealthy relationships. They deepen their understanding of the importance of maintaining boundaries in their relationships. Through engaging role plays and share pairs, students strengthen communication skills. They are empowered to change negative relationship cycles.

VISIONARY GOAL-SETTING
Students learn the process of developing and accomplishing goals that add quality to one’s own life, as well as the world around them. They explore what motivates them, what their aspirations are and how to harness these in line with their personal vision for success within their community.

LEADERSHIP
Students develop important leadership skills such as problem-solving, assertiveness and the importance of seeking leadership mentors. They also explore ethics, social responsibility, critical thinking, and accountability and the roles these have in their leadership journey. Through community service projects, students demonstrate leadership in their schools and communities. Through guest speakers and volunteerism, students develop career awareness and broaden their exposure to powerful female leaders.

BAM Impact

- 50% reduction in violent crime
- 35% reduction in overall arrests
- 19% increase in on-time graduations
- Up to $30 in societal gains for every $1 invested in BAM

WOW Impact

- 48% decrease in social anxiety symptoms
- 24% decrease in PTSD symptoms
- 57% decrease in depression symptoms
