

Promoting
healthy masculinity
and **empowered**
womanhood.

We are **MCSR**



Rooted in **community**. Based in **strength**. Grounded in **respect**.



We are narrative changers and culture creators.

Headlines and statistics, abounding with stories of men's violence and evidence of disadvantaged and disengaged youth, tell only part of the story.

In the fulfillment of our mission, MCSR is creating a new—and truer narrative—about healthy masculinity and the talent and tenacity of young people to play a positive role in creating safe, healthy, productive schools and communities. Our youth development programs build generations of young people who not only defy the odds and society's expectations but, through their example and leadership, create cultures of empathy, respect, and love—free from harm and full of promise. In our hometown of Washington, DC, where more than three-quarters of public school students are youth of color, MCSR recognizes the ways in which our work intersects with racial equity and justice. Further employing a gender lens to examine personal identity, MCSR understands the importance of meeting young people where they are—with mentors of their own communities, reflecting diverse cultures and demographics.

We are pioneers.

When MCSR emerged as an innovator in the field of gender-based violence prevention, the potential of boys and men as catalysts for positive change was wholly unrecognized and untapped—and the intersections of race, gender, socio-economic status, oppression, and violence largely unexamined in the field.

In 1997, the founders of MCSR disrupted the paradigm addressing the epidemic of violence against women. Though the majority of violent acts against women are committed by men, the vast majority of prevention efforts were historically risk-reduction and self-defense tactics directed at women. MCSR's work reimagined prevention, recasting responsibility and engaging men as allies by promoting healthy, nonviolent masculinity. Guided by an upstream approach that considers root causes of gender-based violence and enlists a public health theory of change, MCSR pioneered a comprehensive proactive strategy for prevention that engages boys and men—inspiring them to feel motivated and capable of ending men's violence against women and creating cultures free from harm.





We are difference makers.



85% of MCSR youth development program participants act and are viewed as **leaders** by their peers and other observers



85% of MCSR youth development program participants improve their **academic performance** and reduce their suspensions, expulsions, and critical incidents

“A key impact is providing a community where young people can **work together, share** and **explore ideas for future growth**, and be amongst other strong like-minded individuals aspiring for success.”

Dr. Patrick Christian, Jackson-Reed High School





We build strong children.

In early years of MCSR, as then-Director of Community Education, Neil Irvin began designing the organization’s comprehensive approach and curriculum for working with young people. Framed by the mission to prevent gender-based violence, particularly men’s violence against women, Irvin drew upon his experience and expertise serving at-risk and in-risk youth to create programming to organize and engage school-aged young men and boys as allies and leaders in the work.

Informed by a public health theory of change approach and four-step social ecological model, Irvin developed MCSR’s first signature program, the Men of Strength (MOST) Club, to influence attitudes and behaviors that would prevent violence before its start. Beginning with the first step of individual and working outward along each additional step of the model to relationships, the broader community, and ultimately society at large, MOST Club leverages intergenerational and near-peer mentoring strategies, a 22-week U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-evaluated curriculum, and service learning activities to achieve primary violence prevention and positive youth development goals.

Launching MOST Club in 2000 at Ballou High School, MCSR rooted our organizing work in Washington, DC’s historic Anacostia neighborhood. Centered on the value of inclusivity, MCSR programs have always modeled safe spaces where students of all gender identities could work together as peer leaders and examine how men and women can collaboratively create healthy environments and shape culture. In 2010, MCSR’s youth development work expanded to include a dedicated signature program for girls and young women, the Women Inspiring Strength and Empowerment (WISE) Club.

MOST and WISE Clubs empower young people to define for themselves who they are and reimagine the possibilities for their futures; provide real opportunities to explore career paths in growth industry sectors like S.T.E.A.M.; and honor and engage their voices in community leadership and service, public discourse, issue advocacy, and creative expression.

The positive impact of this approach with young people is demonstrated quantitatively and qualitatively in MCSR’s outcome data and stories, which include the successful lives of veteran Club members and enduring legacy of the Clubs within the families, schools, and neighborhoods of the young people they serve. Furthermore, veteran members serve on MCSR’s Board of Directors, as MCSR staff, and as mentors in the same schools where they once were students themselves.

We achieve measurable outcomes.

MCSR employs rigorous evaluation tools and protocols developed in collaboration with the Research Triangle Institute and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Based on a comparison of pre- and post-test evaluation results after a single program year, MOST and WISE Club programming resulted in a significant number of double-digit percentage gains in Club members’ knowledge, attitude, and behavioral intentions.



Violence Prevention

43% of high school MOST Club members responded that they completely agree with the statement, “If I see someone hurting someone else, I feel like I know how I can stop it” **compared to 21% at the start of the year.**

66% of middle school MOST Club members completely agreed that “Rape and sexual violence hurt men and boys as well as women and girls” **up from 33%.**

85% of Club members view themselves as critical agents of change in ending men’s violence against women.



Character Development

48% of middle school MOST Club members completely agreed with the statement “If I get angry, I feel like I know how to make myself calm without hurting myself or anyone else” **compared to 16% at the start of the program year.**

84% of high school WISE Club members completely agreed that “I feel like men and women are equal in a family”, **up from 22% at the start of the year.**

64% of middle school MOST Club members completely agreed with the statement, “Listening to what others say or need is important to me” **up from 15%.**



Truancy

As part of *Show Up, Stand Out*, DC’s Truancy Reduction Initiative, **71% of middle school students participating in MCSR youth programs** increased their school attendance before the end of the 2014-2015 school year.

In 2022, MCSR directly served more than 900 students in DC Public Schools and completed our third round of CDC-funded evaluation with Research Triangle Institute. As demand for MOST and WISE Clubs continues to grow across the country, we remain committed to assessing the impact of our work and maintaining program fidelity in our hometown and beyond. For a closer look at some of our evaluation outcomes, please visit mcsr.org/mostwise-gains.

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We empower youth organization and advocacy.

The healthy behaviors developed in our MOST and WISE Club group mentoring sessions ripple out to help transform the entire school community. One important element of that ripple effect is what we call Community Strength Projects.

With Community Strength Projects, Club members translate lessons from our curricula into inspired public action and peer education. Through intergenerational and near-peer mentoring, Club members develop, execute, and evaluate their own initiatives across four key areas:

ARTS AND MEDIA

Solutions Through Film, is our annual Black History Month Film Festival, founded in 2002 with the American Film Institute (AFI).

Counter Stories is our award-winning digital content series, produced by MOST and WISE Clubs presenting positive, authentic counter messages that resist negative, limiting dominant values and expectations.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

30 Days of Strength is our annual initiative for Sexual Assault Awareness Month, when Club members devote the entire month to showing their strength in ways that create and cultivate environments of learning, activism, and positive change.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

MCSR Young Professionals Spotlights introduce Club members and their peers to young entrepreneurs, potential mentors, and new career opportunities.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ARTS + MATH

MCSR Gaming is our first-of-its-kind esports league that encourages members to bring the healthier, nonviolent norms established in their Clubs into competitive gameplay.



We institutionalize healthy masculinity at work.

MCSR's trainings for professionals and customizable workplace initiatives employ the best practices in primary and secondary prevention, public health, mental health, and social sciences, including the CDC's social ecological environmental change model, to address challenges and knowledge, skill, and ability gaps for youth-serving and other professionals and across a broad swath of public and private sectors.

Entities seeking MCSR's training and technical expertise have included the United Nations; the World Bank; the White House; U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Justice, and State; the Congressional Black Caucus; National Council of Negro Women; Research Triangle Institute; the Biden and Ford Foundations; NFL, NBA, MLB, MLS, NCAA, and their player associations; entertainment industry agencies; Fortune 500 companies; and community organizations like Campaign for Black Male Achievement, Boys and Girls Club of America, Big Brothers Big Sisters, 4-H, and It's On Us.

Our trademark Healthy Masculinity Training Institute offerings enhance organizational priorities, like Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work, increasing knowledge and building measurable skills including:

Knowledge about:

- How healthy masculinity enhances communication and productivity
- The benefits of building leaders who model healthy masculinity
- What cultures of healthy masculinity look like for your industry and organization

Skills that:

- Create cultures of transparency, equity, and trust
- Develop leaders who model core values
- Align employee attitudes and behaviors with reputational goals





We raise the collective consciousness.

In 2012, when MCSR first conceived of the Healthy Masculinity Action Project (HMAP), we envisioned a future where cultures of equity and respect flourish and healthy, safe relationships and communities thrive. With the launch of HMAP that same year, MCSR mobilized more than 40 national organizations, government agencies, and corporate partners to ignite the healthy masculinity movement. As the national catalyst for establishing the value and practice of healthy masculinity in multiple sectors, HMAP inspired boys and men to build the knowledge, skills, and abilities to develop more fully authentic selves that continually learn and grow.

Before HMAP, healthy masculinity existed only as a blip on the Internet—a search led to fewer than 20 results. Then, this unprecedented collaboration drove HMAP's massive reach to more than 60 million people. Today, that same search returns more than 90,000 results. HMAP not only changed the conversation about men's violence against women, but together we raised the collective consciousness about the vital role healthy masculinity has in creating a better world for everyone.

We have seen this paradigm shift across every area of human activity, from gender-based violence prevention to suicide prevention, corporate branding to institutional research, sports and entertainment to psychology and faith.

*Our work is not done,
and we know that together,
we can accomplish even more.*

Healthy masculinity motivates boys and men to build the knowledge, skills, and abilities to develop more fully authentic, healthier, nonviolent selves that continually learn and grow. MCSR programs build the skillsets that balance the head and the heart, leadership and learning, and competition and compassion—inspiring boys and men to consistently model the attitudes and behaviors that create healthier, safer relationships, communities, and societies.

*We invite you to partner with us
and invest in a healthier, safer world.*

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SUPPORT MCSR'S YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORK

Unrestricted grants allow MCSR to establish programs in communities where they are needed most.

ENGAGE MCSR'S TRAINING TEAM

Customized workshops and trainings can meet your workplace goals and create tangible outcomes.

SPONSOR HEALTHY MASCULINITY ACTION PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Taking public leadership on issues of importance to employees and customers showcases organizational values, elevates reputation, and demonstrates your commitment to equity and a healthy workplace culture.

EXPLORE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Community engagement inspires enterprise-wide pride, enhances morale, and fosters environments of integrity and trust. Corporate partners are welcome to participate in MCSR's Healthy Masculinity Action Project activities or young professionals spotlights with our youth development programs.

*Envision a future where cultures of equity and respect flourish,
and families and individuals thrive.*

It is a bold, hopeful vision—one that you can help to achieve.

Contact Neil Irvin at nirvin@mcsr.org to discuss these opportunities and other ways you can engage with our work and help to create a better world for us all.