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Title: Men of Strength Clubs: Implementing and Evaluating a Primary Prevention Program for Sexual Violence

Text: Men Can Stop Rape (MCSR) was established in 1997 as an organization of men dedicated to the primary prevention of sexual violence through the redefinition of masculinity and male strength. A key component of MCSR's prevention efforts is the Men of Strength (MOST) Club, in which young men (ages 13 to 22) complete a core 16-week curriculum addressing masculinity and violence against women and engage in community strength projects throughout the school year. Currently, there are more than 50 MOST Clubs active in high schools nationwide. The aim of MOST Clubs is to provide young men with a safe space to examine gender scripts of masculinity, exposure to nonviolent models of male strength, and an opportunity to become engaged and mobilized as allies of women in the prevention of violence. In 2003, MCSR was selected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to receive technical assistance on an evaluation of the implementation and potential effects of MOST Clubs. The proposed presentation will describe MCSR's unique and innovative approach to sexual violence prevention, including a broad overview of the MOST Club curriculum for high-school aged men. In addition, findings from a preliminary evaluation of MOST Clubs will be reviewed. This initial evaluation utilized self-report data from MOST Club members (N = 77) collected before and after participation. Clubs were held in eight Washington, D.C. schools and about 90% of members were African-American or Latino. Survey results pointed to significant positive changes in participants' attitudes towards women (M = 3.1 at pre-test vs. 0.6 at post-test; $p < .001$) and feelings of self-efficacy to intervene when they witnessed sexist or sexually violent behavior (M = 3.0 at pre-test vs. 3.2 at post-test; $p < .05$). However, given the preliminary nature of these data, this presentation will conclude by outlining lessons learned during this initial implementation and evaluation of MOST Clubs, as well as current efforts by MCSR and CDC to expand and improve future evaluations, providing a more rigorous examination of the ability of this promising primary prevention program to impact sexual violence against women.

Theme Groups: 2 Relationships relevant to...