

# Case Study: Inner-City Boys in the United States

## Media Campaign and Workshops for Inner-City Boys in the United States

In the United States, an organization working with inner city youth has established a program with the following components: mobilize male youth to end violence against women; challenge traditional masculinity and celebrate alternative models of strength; and empower young men as allies with women and girls to foster equitable and safe relationships and communities. One programmatic tool the organization used was a media campaign called a Strength Campaign to target 13,000 male youth (ages 13–18) in high schools.

The goal of the campaign was to educate male youth about their role in preventing dating violence, highlight nonviolent models of male strength, and mobilize young men as allies with women in fostering relationships based on respect, equity, and compassion. The Strength Campaign put posters on bus stands and other public spaces, highlighting non-violent messages of masculinity, and trained teachers and faculty on how to provide these messages to their students. In addition, the program also held Strong and Safe Workshops for young boys. These workshops focused on exploring masculinity in popular culture, building empathy with gender-based violence survivors, and teaching non-violent strategies for challenging attitudes and behaviors that support rape.

One young man who participated in the workshop said, "To think after all these years, we thought we were in the real world, but we were in our own little dream world. I knew what a real man was. I was wrong, my father was wrong, my uncle was wrong, and the world is wrong. I am starting to understand what it means to be a real man. What I knew all my life was a lie." (Men as Agents of Change)

### Reference

*Men Can Stop Rape*. n.d. "Strength Campaign." Retrieved December 16, 2009 from <http://www.mencanstoprape.org/info-url2696/info-url.htm>.

