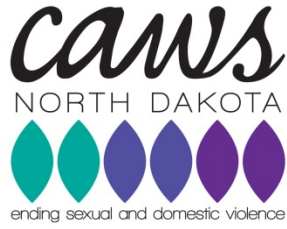


# campaign toolkit



**[Y MOST]**

**[YOUNG] MEN OF STRENGTH**



## **[YMOST]:** Young Men of Strength Campaign

### **TOOLKIT**

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## WHAT IS THE [YMOST] CAMPAIGN?

"The greatest opportunity to fix bullying or harassment would be with the bystanders. There are many more bystanders than there are bullies and victims." - Jerry Misik

The North Dakota [YMOST] Campaign is an opportunity. It's a chance to positively engage young men in the prevention of harassment and bullying. Men Can Stop Rape (MCSR), internationally recognized for its social marketing work positively targeting men and college age men, is now providing a campaign for teen males.

In 2013 MCSR and CAWS North Dakota released the statewide awareness campaign Where do you Stand? This campaign focuses on men's roles as active bystanders to prevent sexual and domestic violence. Scenarios include men's involvement in violence prevention, stalking, sex trafficking and/or prostitution, and drug-facilitated sexual assault, with custom photography from North Dakota.



Now, CAWS North Dakota and MCSR are introducing [YMOST], the **Young Men of Strength Campaign**. Focusing on role modeling bystander intervention, this anti-bullying and harassment public service announcement campaign addresses behaviors common to young men including: gender-based harassment, teasing, bullying and cyber-bullying. Through behavioral modeling situated in different locations around North Dakota, eye

catching and innovative [YMOST] materials empower young men to take action when their peers harass and bully.

[YMOST] was inspired by MCSR's Men of Strength (MOST) Club, a middle and high school youth development program in ten states and the District of Columbia that provides young men with a safe, consistent space to learn how to be strong without being violent. Through curriculum sessions focusing on bullying, sexual harassment and violence, healthy relationships, and masculinity, MOST Club members are transformed from bystanders into agents of change.

[YMOST] achieves its goal of engaging young men in the prevention of harassment and bullying through:

- *Positive Messaging.* We know that fear-arousing messaging doesn't work. The intended audience becomes defensive, angry or dismissive. [YMOST] uses positive identity-based and solution-based messages that invite young men to be part of the answer to ending harassment and bullying.

- *Identity-Building.* In order to achieve behavioral change, it is important to positively cultivate an identity associated with the change. “Men of Strength” provides young men with an identifier that accentuates their best selves.
- *Action Recommendations.* It is imperative for messaging to inform people on what can be done. If action recommendations are absent, behavioral change will not be reinforced. The bubble messages in the [YMOST] posters offer real life examples of positive action.
- *Performable Actions.* The recommended actions must be recognized by young men as performable; if they aren’t, the campaign loses credibility. The [YMOST] bubble describes actions young men could do.
- *Healthy Masculinity.* Messaging should promote healthy masculinity as a means of challenging attitudes and behaviors that are part of gender-based harassment and bullying. Healthy masculinity includes supporting gender equity and other forms of equity, as well as replacing risky and violent masculine behaviors with respecting the self and others.
- *Messaging that Identifies Benefits to the Individual.* Social marketing recognizes that people – and certainly middle schoolers – are generally not altruistic. The campaign communicates the positive results, feelings, attributes, etc., that the young men will obtain from the desired behavior change.

[YMOST] is one tool that can be used to lead more young men to speak out against harassment and bullying. If someone shouted out every time something was said or done that supported acts of abuse, the resulting noise would be thunderous. That is why it is so important for both males and females to join the growing chorus of voices confronting attitudes, behaviors, assumptions, and language that contribute to an unhealthy climate. It is also why it is so important to speak out in favor of ways of treating others that foster mutual respect and promote equity. Using our voices to challenge harassment and bullying is a necessary part of creating a different culture—one where our young people don’t have to worry about being hit, grabbed or called names when they walk the school hallways or community streets.



## IMPLEMENTING [YMOST]

You've got some [YMOST] campaign materials. What do you do with them? You don't want to slap up some posters on a wall and forget about them. This section and the next will help you think about effective ways to implement the campaign. You can start by thinking about where to place the materials. Here are some ideas:

- *Look for public areas with the most traffic.* Ask yourself, what areas do young men regularly pass through or hang out in your schools and communities? Gather a group of young men from the schools or communities and ask them where they think the campaign materials should be placed.
- *Use event and presentation spaces.* Make your campaign materials mobile. For instance, laminate the posters and take them with you wherever you go to use as opportunities for discussion.
- *Consider the floor.* We're used to seeing things on walls – especially in schools – so the competition for attention there is more intense. Look for spots that receive a lot of traffic but where the competition is lower – like the floor.
- *Don't overlook private work space.* Use work spaces to express visible support of the campaign by teachers and administrators. It is especially powerful when those who aren't overtly associated with the campaign put the materials up in their offices.
- *Cover private school space.* Give students ownership of the campaign by providing them with materials they can put up in their locker or display in various other ways.



## USING [YMOST] MATERIALS FOR DISCUSSION



If a young man sees a [YMOST] poster or palm card, he might have all sorts of responses running through his head but nowhere to discuss them. If you are conducting workshops or teaching a class, you can provide that space for dialogue. Take posters to the lesson and let them be the centerpiece. Start out by asking if they've noticed [YMOST] materials and then use these prompts for discussion.

### Guidelines:

1. We recommend that you start your discussion with elements at the top of a poster, and move downward, ending at the bottom of the page.
2. Use the poster as a training aid to help reinforce what young men may have only briefly seen and read. People need to see a message as many as seven times before they fully capture the information.
3. Ask the following questions to get the young men started talking. The bullets following the questions can be used to prompt them or validate their responses.

### A. Theme: "As Young Men of Strength"

*Goal: To reinforce the idea of strength as standing up for what is right and caring about others.*

- Main question: What do you think "strength" means here?

Possible discussion prompts:

- What have you been taught as a young man that strength means? (You can provide them with magazines to pick out pictures that represent strength.)
- What do you believe it means to be strong?
- What are the differences between physical strength and mental strength?
- What does it mean to have strength of character?
- Is it hard or easy to be strong in a situation like this?

## **B. Intervention bubbles:**

**“We told Andy it’s wrong to call Sam gay and make fun of him. “**

**“We asked Kevin to stop texting Jen when his texts made her uncomfortable.”**

**“We talked with coach about Steve posting harassing messages on Sarah’s page.”**

**“We asked: How do you know? When Ben said Liz wanted it.”**

*Goal: To reinforce the idea that there are ways young men can positively intervene when bullying or harassment is going on.*

- Main question: Are these actions something you would do?

Possible discussion prompts:

- When is it hard or easy to take some kind of action when bullying or harassment is going on? When do you feel unsafe?
- Does this kind of bullying or harassment happen here? What other kinds happen here? (You can have young men act them out.)
- Are there actions you could take that would make the situation worse?
- What other kinds of actions could you take in these situations?
- How would taking some kind of action make you feel about yourself?
- What is the cost of not taking some action? How does that affect someone’s life? How does it affect you?

## **C. Young men and settings: Two young men in school (lockers, library, basketball court, etc.)**

*Goal: To reinforce the idea that young men are stronger together.*

- Main question: Is it easier to take some kind of action if a friend does it with you?

Possible discussion prompts:

- Who is your best friend?
- How does your friend make you feel good about yourself?
- Do the two of you see bullying and harassment? Do you talk about it?
- Where in your school does bullying and harassment take place?
- How can you support each other to take some kind of action when you see bullying and harassment?

#### **D. Invitation: “Show Your Strength”**

*Goal: To strengthen the invitation to take action when people are bullying and harassing.*

- Main question: Do you feel like you can take action to stop bullying and harassment?  
Possible discussion prompts:
  - How are you strong? (You can have young men write this down.)
  - Who is proud of you when you show your strength?
  - Who benefits when you show your strength?

#### **E. Wrap up**

- Give the students [**YMOST**] poster/ palm cards.

# WHAT [YOUNG MEN OF STRENGTH] CAN DO TO PREVENT HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

You might think anything you do won't help to prevent bullying and harassment. Not true. If more and more young men like you take a stand, everyone will notice the difference.

## 1. UNDERSTAND YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Helping to prevent bullying and harassment is about small steps. You don't have to move a mountain. Decide what kinds of actions feel safe and that you can manage. Everyone taking small steps adds up to big steps.

## 2. DECIDE WHO YOU WANT TO BE AS A YOUNG MAN

Consider whether messages like "stop acting like a little girl" lead young men to prove they *aren't* acting like a girl by bullying and harassing. Choose what kind of young man you want to be. We need positive role models like you.

## 3. TALK IT OVER

Don't wait to deal with the problem after it's occurred. If you're troubled by bullying and harassment and want to do something about it, talk to a friend or a trusted adult. Two heads are better than one. Together you can come up with some positive steps toward solutions.

## 4. GET A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Ask young women how bullying and harassment affects their daily lives. Listen and learn from them about their experiences. Not only will they help you make better choices about your own behavior, they'll help you be more convincing when you're persuading your friends not to bully and harass.

## 5. ASK GUYS

Ask other young men if they're bothered by bullying and harassment. You might think you're the only one, but it's more likely that plenty of other young men feel the same way you do. They just haven't said anything about it. Give them the chance.

## 6. BE AWARE OF POP CULTURE'S MESSAGES

We are surrounded daily by TV shows, music, magazines, video games, and movies that communicate messages about masculinity, bullying, and harassment. Don't let images in popular culture decide your behavior.

## **7. CHOOSE WORDS CAREFULLY**

When you use words to bully or harass someone, you support the belief that they are less than fully human. It is easier to ignore someone's well-being when they are seen as inferior. Choose language that respects people.

## **8. SPEAK OUT**

Start with friends. Maybe you say you don't find it funny when a friend is making fun of someone. Maybe you say you don't like some disrespectful language a friend used. Speaking out to people you know will be good practice for speaking out to others you don't know as well. Use your voice.

## **9. GET INVOLVED**

Get involved in student government and become a spokesperson for anti-bullying and harassment at your school. Maybe there are already student groups that would care about preventing these behaviors. If not, start one.

## **10. SHOW YOUR STRENGTH**

Don't bully or harass anyone. Make a pledge to be a young man whose strength is used for respect.



# MEN CAN CREATING CULTURES FREE FROM VIOLENCE STOP RAPE

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MEN CAN STOP RAPE, VISIT  
[WWW.MENCANSTOPRAPE.ORG](http://WWW.MENCANSTOPRAPE.ORG)**

STRENGTH – MASCULINTY – VIOLENCE. Consciously and unconsciously, young men absorb a multitude of messages about the embodiment of these concepts. The mass media and popular culture saturate the market with their versions of masculinity that are deceiving and dangerous, leading too many young men to form unhealthy expectations and commit acts of harm to themselves and others.

Since 1997 Men Can Stop Rape (MCSR) has challenged these unhealthy expectations by leading the call to positively redefine masculinity and male strength as part of preventing men’s violence against women. Identified by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as one of the “world’s most innovative domestic violence prevention programs,” MCSR’s innovative youth development programs, public awareness campaigns, and leadership training have reached over two million youth and professionals throughout the country and world.

## **Mission & Vision**

MCSR’s mission is to mobilize men to use their strength for creating cultures free from violence, especially men's violence against women.

MCSR’s vision is to institutionalize the primary prevention of men’s violence against women through sustained initiatives that generate positive, measurable outcomes in populations throughout the world.

## **The Strength Campaign**

Because the normalizing messages of masculinity referred to in the earlier paragraph are so pervasive, any primary prevention initiative challenging such messages will be most effective if it is as comprehensive as possible in its approach. MCSR’s youth development programs, public education campaigns, and leadership training together constitute the Strength Campaign – a unified and comprehensive primary violence prevention campaign that has launched in states and cities around the country. The Strength Campaign consists of the following components:

**The Men of Strength (MOST) Club.** Since 2000, the MOST Club—the premier, award-winning primary prevention program for male youth in the country—has provided middle, high school, and

college age young men and boys with a structured and supportive space to learn about healthy masculinity and redefine male strength. Each year-long, multi-session Club builds members' ability to translate their learning into community leadership.

**Strength Media.** From U.S. military installations across the world to billboards and movie theaters across California to public health clinics in South Africa, Strength Visuals' public service announcements have reached hundreds of thousands of men with their compelling visuals and positive messages, inspiring them to be strong without being violent.

**Strength Trainings.** MCSR has trained more than 10,000 youth-serving professionals and provided technical assistance to more than 500 agencies and organizations. Strength Trainings are based on sound theories and effective exercises that professionals can use to increase young men's awareness of the harms associated with unhealthy masculinity and to offer them positive, healthy alternatives.