Men Can Stop Rape, Inc. (MCSR) is an international organization that gets youth involved in ending men’s violence against women. Instead of blaming men as “the problem,” MCSR does leadership training and public service messages for young men. The people of MCSR are redefining what it is to “be a man” by teaching men to use their strength not to control women, but to help create a world of peace, understanding and equality between the sexes.

Twenty-year-old Anwar Mohammed Nur of Washington, D.C., is a member of MCSR and a student at Temple University majoring in English and African American Studies. He agreed to tell Sex, Etc. about MCSR and the work he’s doing with them.

Sex, Etc.: How did you get involved in MCSR?
Anwar: I first got involved with MCSR during high school. I was participating in the MOST (Men of Strength) Club, a program that teaches young men how to be strong without being violent and helps them to redefine traditional masculinity. Currently, I facilitate a MOST Club chapter at Temple University.

Sex, Etc.: Why is what you do important?
Anwar: Teaching young men how to be strong without being violent is important because it helps to build a better world for men and women. It helps young men be compassionate and empathetic. Can you imagine a future in which men settled their differences with words instead of weapons? The potential effects of violence prevention are limitless.

— Anwar Mohammed Nur

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Sex, Etc.: Are there young women involved in the organization?
Anwar: Our programming is geared towards young men, but we have a pro-feminist approach. We view women as our allies in creating change. During April (Sexual Assault Awareness Month), we have a program called 30 Days of Strength in our MOST Clubs. During 30 Days of Strength, our MOST Club members invite their female peers into the club for forums, discussions and film screenings.

Sex, Etc.: How can other young men get involved?
Anwar: Other young men can get involved by joining the MOST Club at their school or requesting a MOST Club or Campus Strength chapter at their middle school, high school or college.

Sex, Etc.: What can men do in their everyday lives to prevent violence against women?
Anwar: A common saying around Men Can Stop Rape is that we aren’t superheroes. We aren’t patrolling the streets at night looking for sexual assault. It’s just not feasible, and it’s not what we do. We focus on rape prevention by creating cultures free of violence. Men can do their part simply by adjusting their speech and behaviors. Even men who are very respectful of women witness people in their peer group using disrespectful language every day. All you have to do is be willing to engage your peers in a dialogue about why you think their behavior or language is disrespectful. It doesn’t always have to be an intense discussion; it could be as simple as checking your friend for using the B-word.

If men can move from being bystanders to being activists, they can easily play their part in violence prevention.

Sex, Etc.: Is there anything else you would like to tell our readers?
Anwar: I find it astonishing that so many men don’t believe that the issue of sexual assault affects them. Women who deal with sexual assault and sexism could easily be the women that we love. They could be our girlfriends, mothers, wives, daughters, sisters and friends. The sooner men realize this, the sooner we can start making this a better world, not just for the women in our lives, but for ourselves.

MCSR is leading the way in the creation of a world free of violence and oppression and in changing the way we view masculinity. For more information on how to get involved, visit www.mencanstoprape.org.