

**[WOMEN INSPIRING  
STRENGTH AND  
EMPOWERMENT]**

**WISE CLUB**



# Women Inspiring Strength and Empowerment Club



In fall of 2010, Men of Strength (MOST) Club members at Banneker High School responded to their female peers' requests for a similar space by launching the most important Community Strength Project to-date: MOST Club members supported the women at their school in creating: **Women Inspiring Strength and Empowerment (WISE Club)**, the female companion program to the MOST Club.

## WISE Club seeks to:

**EMPOWER** girls to overcome gender based barriers by first recognizing those barriers exist and how they are affected by them.

Provide a safe environment for girls to recognize their endless potential and **STRENGTH**.

**INSPIRE** them to define their roles in society for themselves and to create a narrative that supports gender equity.

**WISE Club** offers a separate space for middle and high school young women to meet to explore key learning areas of development. WISE Club has set out to motivate young women to live their best life and be able to do so without feeling the need to conform to societal standards of womanhood. We provide young women the time and space to connect with themselves and their peers. WISE members learn from positive female role models, engage in constructive self-expression, develop healthy peer relationships, and become powerful young women. WISE members are confident leaders in the movement to create cultures free from violence.

**"I'm happy to have a place where my voice is heard."**

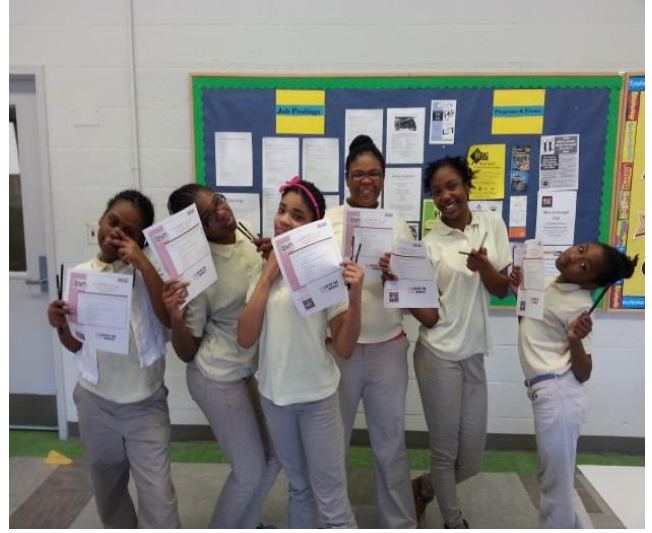
– Tania, WISE Club member

## Middle School & High School

High school groups focus on empowering young women to become leaders while becoming powerful voices in preventing gender-based violence in their schools and communities. Middle school groups, however, require a different structure and developmentally-appropriate content. Discussions focus on attitudes and awareness about bullying and sexual harassment, healthy relationships, and self-esteem. It is our unique approach that enables us to reach such a wide range of peer groups. Regardless of age, background, or interest, WISE Club empowers members to gain life skills, awareness, confidence, and self-esteem. Our participants take these lessons back to their communities and serve as role models and leaders.

**MEN CAN**  
CREATING CULTURES FREE FROM VIOLENCE  
**STOP RAPE**

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## DCPS Truancy

Men Can Stop Rape collaborated with the Justice Grants Administration on the “**Show Up Stand Out**” truancy reduction initiative. WISE Clubs served as the community based organization within Washington, D.C. Public Schools (DCPS), working with chronically truant students (5-9) absences and family support collaborative from all quadrants of the city. During its two-year partnership with “Show Up Stand Out, DCPS has reported a significant decrease in truancy and an increased interest in programming.

## Community Strength Projects

**Community Strength Projects** translate curriculum lessons into public action and peer education. Under the guidance of adult facilitators, Club members develop, execute, and evaluate their own projects. Washington, D.C. high school Club members earn service learning credits to fulfill graduation requirements. Club members also enjoy tangible benefits of active participation as well as the intrinsic rewards that accompany service to others.

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## **“Be WISE be Ready”**

WISE Club created a school-wide campaign, **“Be WISE Be Ready”**, which encouraged students to stay focused, do their best, and get adequate rest to be prepared for testing. “WISE Club” pencils were given to the young women and distributed to their peers during lunch and quoted the slogan “Be WISE Be Ready.”

## **30 Days of Strength**

Throughout Sexual Assault Awareness Month, WISE Club members devote the entire month of April to “showing their strength” to classmates in ways that create environments of learning, activism, and positive change to stop violence against young women. During this campaign, the MOST and WISE Clubs integrate for a series of activities geared towards mobilizing male and female peers on the topic of relationship violence.

Men Can Stop Rape launched the 30 Days of Strength social media campaign to encourage students to highlight themselves or their communities demonstrating strength. During one activity, WISE Club members shared statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding rape and sexual assault with their schoolmates during morning announcements. Also, WISE Club members passed out literature regarding sexual violence throughout the school before the day began. They shared their initiatives across various social media via their “#30daysofstrength” hashtag.

## **No Name Calling Week**

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Throughout the school year, WISE club has participated in several social justice campaigns including **GLSEN'S (Gay Lesbian & Straight Education Network)** "No Name Calling Week," an anti-bullying campaign. Participants were responsible for getting their schoolmates to sign "no name calling" pledges and creating posters about bullying. The campaign was very successful and the Jefferson Middle School WISE club was recognized in GLSEN'S **2015 Creative Expressions Online Exhibit**.

## **Project Me**

Project Me, is an empowerment conference created for young women. Hosted every spring, over 30 young women gather to learn from positive female role models, engage in self-expression, develop positive relationships with their peers, and go out into the world feeling empowered, inspired and confident. Participants are encouraged to reflect on how they see themselves in their families, communities, and society. Because this project is student led, WISE members were deeply involved in the planning and successful execution of the **Project Me** conference—manning the registration table, ensuring everyone had what they needed, promoting the event and arriving on time to planning meetings.

## **Young Professionals Week**

Young Professionals Week (YPW) serves as a platform to introduce students to young entrepreneurs. Each day, entrepreneurs visited different WISE Club locations throughout the city. Young Professionals Week exposes students to diverse routes of success and empowers them to think more about their futures. Specifically, YPW encourages WISE ladies to think of themselves as entrepreneurs. Through YPW, WISE Club members have various opportunities to connect and build networks with a diverse group of forward thinking businesswomen as well as their own peers. Ideally, the young women will sustain the relationships they create and the skills they develop during Young Professionals Week throughout young adulthood and into their careers.

## **WISE Club Committee**

Part of Men Can Stop Rape's mission is to mobilize youth to be active in their schools and communities. The WISE Club committee was formed in the 2014-2015 school year. Committee members are responsible for showing up to planning meetings, participating in all **Community Strength Projects**, representing the organization in various settings, engaging peers outside of WISE club and encouraging them to participate in WISE club activities. WISE Club committee members have demonstrated the leadership qualities necessary for developing WISE into an even stronger and valuable community resource for young women.

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## OUTCOMES FOR CLUB MEMBERS

- 100% of WISE Club members will participate in at least one aspect of Community Strength Project planning, facilitation, attendee recruitment, or promotion.
- 85% will view themselves as a critical agent of change in ending men's violence against women.
- 85% will act as peer leaders and be viewed as leaders by their peers and other observers.
- 85% will improve their attendance and academic performance.
- 85% will reduce their suspensions, expulsions, and critical incidents.
- 20% of project-attending members will bring a parent, guardian, or other adult.

## WHAT OUR DATA SHOWS:

**61.99%** more high school WISE Club members responded that they completely agree with the statement, "I feel like men and women are equal in a family."

**50.15%** more high school WISE 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."

**38.89%** more high school WISE Club members responded that they completely agree with the statement, "If I don't feel comfortable with something, I know how to tell my friends or adults close to me."

**33.91%** more high school WISE Club members responded that they completely agree with the statement, "If I get angry, I feel like I know how to make myself calm without hurting myself or anyone else."

**26.19%** more high school WISE Club members responded that they completely agree with the statement, "Listening to what others say or need is important to me."

# Women Inspiring Strength and Empowerment Club



**“WISE Club has helped me figure out who I am.”**

–Erica Jones, 11th Grade

**“Thanks to WISE Club, I’ve learned how to inspire my colleagues.”**

–Kaitlyn Marsh, 11th Grade

**“I do not judge others anymore by their appearance and I realized that I am not alone in how I think.”**

–Janine, 8th Grade

## Next Steps

This year, MCSR is adapting our evaluation to capture additional outcomes related to improved academic performance. We have seen the potential of the WISE Club to improve attendance and academic performance while reducing suspensions, expulsions, and critical incidents. Our new evaluation measures will collect data to record these quantitative changes. Additionally, WISE Club will have clubs that specifically deal with issues around truancy to encourage improved attendance.

## Criteria Questionnaire for WISE Club

Thank you for your interest in **Women Inspiring Strength and Empowerment (WISE) Club**, Men Can Stop Rape’s youth development program.

To determine whether a WISE Club would be a good fit at your site and benefit the youth we serve, we ask that you complete a questionnaire. The information you provide will help us in understanding your site’s specific environment and plan how we can best work together.

# Women Inspiring Strength and Empowerment Club

## Application Checklist:

\_\_\_ Completed WISE club Criteria Questionnaire

\_\_\_ Notarized background check(s) for the intended club facilitator(s)

## For questions and to request the questionnaire form, contact:

### To Request the Questionnaire, Contact:

Josh Bailey

Program Manager, Youth Development

Men Can Stop Rape

[jbailey@mencanstoprape.org](mailto:jbailey@mencanstoprape.org)

### Mail: Men Can Stop Rape

1130 6 Street NW, Suite 100

Washington DC 20001

### More Questions?

Contact Jason Page, Senior Director of National Programs

(202) 534-1838 [jpage@mencanstoprape.org](mailto:jpage@mencanstoprape.org)

Check out info about WISE Club at [www.mcsr.org](http://www.mcsr.org)