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Award-winning anti-violence film makes the rounds

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NCR Today

The Interrupters, an award-winning documentary by director Steve James and author Alex Kotlowitz, is generating quite a buzz this month.

The movie tells the story of three violence interrupters who try to protect their Chicago communities from the violence they once employed. All three work for Ceasefire, an innovative organization founded by Gary Slutkin, an epidemiologist who believes violence mimics the spread of infectious disease and requires similar treatment: attend to the most infected and stop the infection.

The documentary, which received Official Selection at Sundance 2011, is scheduled to be aired at 9 p.m. Eastern time Feb. 14 on PBS's "Frontline," followed by a special panel discussion on WTTW's *Chicago Tonight*.

Hoping to amplify the film's potential to inspire anti-violence activism, distributor Kartemquin Films is organizing house screenings across the country throughout this month and next. Viewers are encouraged to support the American Youth Act, a House bill that provides funding for youth and gang violence prevention.

And Thursday, Stephen Colbert, God bless him, interviewed Ameena Matthews, one of the film's protagonists. The daughter of a notorious Chicago gang leader and once a drug ring enforcer herself, Matthews is now a remarkably courageous advocate for peace in her community.

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