



THE FOURTH R

CENTRE FOR ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE FOR PREVENTION SCIENCE
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The Fourth R is a **school-based universal prevention program** that targets **dating violence** and related **risk behaviors**. The Fourth R was rigorously evaluated as part of a 20-school **RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL (RCT)** over 2.5 years and was found to be a **HIGHLY EFFECTIVE** prevention program.

The cornerstone of the *Fourth R* is a **21-LESSON SKILL-BASED CURRICULUM THAT PROMOTES HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND TARGETS VIOLENCE, HIGH-RISK SEXUAL BEHAVIOR, AND SUBSTANCE USE AMONG ADOLESCENTS**. It has been developed to be delivered by classroom teachers who receive one day specialized training. The Fourth R program was **DESIGNED TO COMPLY WITH USA STATE AND CANADIAN PROVINCIAL ACADEMIC STANDARDS**.

FINDINGS:

- Decreased dating violence and increase condom use
- Increased interpersonal skills
- Provided a buffering effect for youth who have experienced multiple forms of child maltreatment

ADVANTAGES OF THE FOURTH R:

- The curriculum is based on the contention that relationship skills can be taught in much the same way as the other “three R’s” (Reading, ‘Riting, and ‘Rithmetic).
- It is comprised of **THREE UNITS** to address **VIOLENCE, SUBSTANCE USE, AND HEALTHY SEXUALITY**.
- The units address the triad of adolescent risk behaviors that are connected to each other in terms of co-occurrence, but are also jointly rooted in peer and dating relationships experienced by youth.
- The units contain similar themes of value clarification, provision of information, decision-making and an extensive skill development component.
- Adolescents receive ample practice role playing exercises to resolve conflict, both as participants and in the role of bystander, and practice skills in the areas of dating and peer conflict, pressure to use drugs or alcohol, and pressure to engage in sexual behaviour.
- There are versions for students in the 7th-12th grades that can be used in Health Education classes, English courses, or cross-curricula, plus adaptations for Native youth, alternative school settings, and After-School programs.

The Fourth R classroom-based curriculum has been implemented in over 1000 schools around Canada and was also chosen in February 2009 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as one of two dating violence prevention programs for their Start Strong initiative in 11 U.S. cities.

RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES:

- Seventh and Eighth Grade Physical & Health Education Curriculum
- Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Grade English Curriculum
- Youth Relationship After-School Program
- Uniting our Nations: Aboriginal Perspectives Curriculum
- Uniting our Nations: Peer Mentoring Manual for Aboriginal Youth
- Uniting our Nations: Peer Mentoring Implementation Manual
- Aboriginal Cultural Leadership Course
- Alternative Education Adapted Curriculum
- Youth Safe Schools Committee Manual
- Parent Newsletters
- Safe Schools Bachelor of Education Course Materials
- Master Trainer Manual

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, visit www.youthrelationships.org, or contact **Ray Hughes**, Fourth R Project at the Center for Addiction and Mental Health (100 Collip Circle, Suite 100, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario N6G 4X8; Phone: 519-858-5144 ex. 25508; Fax: 519-858-5149; Email: rayhughes@rogers.com)

Resources:

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- Chiodo, D. & Killip, S. (2007). Understanding the link between childhood maltreatment and violent delinquency: What do schools have to add? *Child Maltreatment*, 12, 269-280.