



The *Fourth R*

World Conference on the
Prevention of Family Violence 2005
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Fourth R National Team

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Teachers and
administrators from 24
TVDSB high schools

What is the *Fourth R*?

- A relationship-based approach to prevent adolescent violence and related risk behaviours
 - Peer and dating violence
 - Substance use
 - High risk sexual behaviour
- School-based comprehensive prevention approach

History of the *Fourth R*

- Youth Relationships Project
- Writing Curriculum
- Pilot Schools
- Thames Valley Implementation
- National Implementation

Meaningful Collaboration

- Partnership with school board at every step
- Program meets Ministry guidelines
- Teachers co-wrote lessons
- Youth as participants, not targets
- Training *for* teachers developed and conducted *by* teachers

Comprehensive Approach

- Multi-focused targeting a triad of risk behaviours:
 - Personal Safety and Injury Prevention (Peer and Dating Violence Prevention)
 - Healthy Growth and Sexuality
 - Substance Use and Abuse
- Multi-level:
 - Curriculum
 - Peers
 - Teachers, Principals and School
 - Parents
 - Community

The *Fourth R* Lessons

- All three units include:
 - Focus on healthy relationships
 - Accurate information without a scare message
 - Integrated skill development and role play
 - Opportunity to process issues with peers and the teacher through partner, small group and whole class discussions
 - Personal values clarification, and limit/boundary setting
 - Video

Other Students in the School

- Youth Action Committees:
 - Teacher facilitated group of 6-10 students per school
 - Focus on healthy relationships and the prevention of risk behaviours
 - Coordinate media campaigns, leadership events, and speakers, drama presentations within the school and community
 - Older students may assist with role play demonstrations
 - Annual conference to motivate students and provide leadership training

Fourth R Teachers

- *Fourth R* teacher training includes:
 - Background and philosophy
 - Overview of the curriculum and materials
 - Specific training in using role play
 - Training specific to debriefing role plays
 - Skills practice using role play
- Additional professional development opportunities during the year
- Video

Other Teachers and School Personnel

- Information for all school personnel on the fundamentals of the program
- Tips for violence prevention – consistent with school board policies
- Supplementary activities such as theatre presentations and guest panels for all grades

Principals

- Administrators support is crucial to the success of a whole-school approach
- Provided with information about program aspects
- Look for champions
- Informal opportunities for updates
- Awareness of demands on their time

Parents

- Provided with general program information at Grade 9 orientation night
- Four newsletters during semester with:
 - Information about the program
 - Information about developmental changes during adolescence
 - Suggested parenting strategies
 - Community resources for parents with teens
- Student-generated newsletters

Sample Parent Newsletter



:: the Fourth R :: Relationship Based Violence Prevention

A Practical Guide for Parents of Adolescents

Personal Safety and Injury Prevention

Romantic Relationships

As a parent, you have probably noticed that your teen spends most of their social time with friends of both sexes. On average, by age 14 or 15, about half of all adolescents report some single- or group-dating experience. Dating at this stage is often short-term, as adolescents learn how to relate to their peers. For example, the average length of romantic relationships among 15-year-olds is approximately four months.

Data from Canadian high school students shows that peer to peer harassment is prevalent. Violent behaviour, such as physical aggression, intimidation, or coercion, is associated with mental and emotional problems for both victims and perpetrators. As youth begin the transition to dating relationships, some of these potentially harmful acts occur with romantic partners. Recognizing that girls as well as boys engage in abusive behaviour in adolescence, guidance and support during this period of development is crucial.

What Is Your Adolescent Learning in School About Personal Safety and Injury Prevention?

In Grade 9, your child is taught the following important lessons in their Physical and Health Education class:

- Effective personal strategies to reduce injuries and self-compromising behaviours
- Active listening skills when managing conflict
- To identify types of physical and non-physical abuse and the causes of abuse and violence
- Solutions and strategies to address violence in the lives of young people

- To understand personal values that can lead to conflict
- To understand the impact of the media on values and goals related to healthy living
- Assertive communication techniques to avoid escalating conflict
- The school's involvement in developing strategies to end violence in the lives of young people

What is Dating Violence or Relationship Abuse?

Dating violence and relationship abuse are a pattern of power and control that one person uses against another (i.e., boyfriend, girlfriend, or partner). Violence can happen to anyone at any age, no matter what ethnicity, religion, level of education, or economic background. Relationship abuse can include many different forms of violence, including:

- **Emotional or verbal abuse:** name calling, criticizing, put downs, threats, isolation from friends and family, controlling what someone wears or with whom they socialize.
- **Physical abuse:** hitting, slapping, pushing, and punching.
- **Sexual abuse:** being forced to engage in a sexual activity without consent (i.e., kissing, touching, intercourse, etc.).
- **Financial Abuse:** denying access to money; extortion; one partner makes all financial decisions.

Community Partners

- Increased links between community agencies and students
- Activities are organized by Youth Action Committees, and may include:
 - guest speakers
 - field trips
 - an agency “open house” at the school to learn about community resources
- Encourage volunteerism at related agencies
- Community agency sponsored awards night

Data Collection

- Grade 9 students
- Teachers and School Administrators
- Parents
- Role Plays
- Grade 11 students

National Implementation

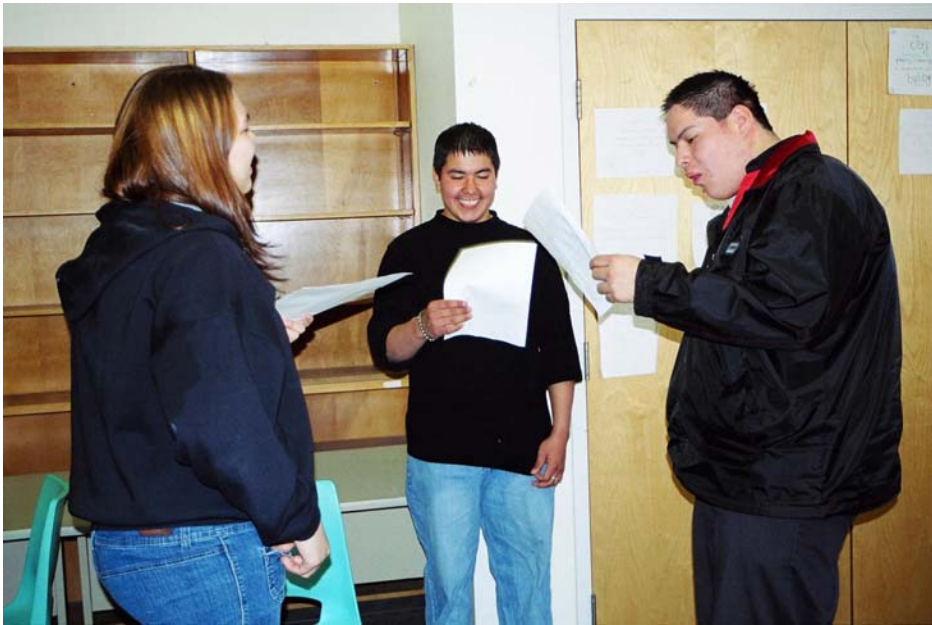
- Opportunities for Partnerships
- Saskatchewan
- British Columbia
- Strict Discipline Schools
- Uniting Our Nations

Uniting Our Nations Project



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