STRATEGIES FOR HEALTHY YOUTH RELATIONSHIPS
FEATURING THE FOURTH R
COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED APPROACHES FOR HELPING SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES REDUCE VIOLENCE AND RISK-TAKING AMONG YOUTH

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The Rationale: Why Violence Prevention Should Be Universally Available for Youth

1. Learning to relate starts early, is gender-based, and requires positive influences
2. Rapid increase in related risk behaviors
3. Patrolling the gender borders: Gay-baiting, homophobia, harassment, and peer violence
4. Child maltreatment, bullying, gender-based harassment, and adolescent dating violence are inter-connected
Circularity of Risk Behaviours

- Violence
- Sexual Behaviour
- Alcohol & Drug Use

RELATIONSHIPS
What is the *Fourth R*?

- A relationship-based approach to prevent adolescent violence and related risk behaviours
  - Peer and dating violence
  - Substance use & abuse
  - Healthy growth and sexuality
- School-based comprehensive prevention approach
The Fourth R:

- Help youth strengthen relationship skills to assist in making safe, responsible choices
- Address the common elements of multiple risk behaviors (re: *goals of adolescence*)
- Counteract pro-abuse messages from peer culture (*gender, race, sexual orientation*)
- Emphasize positive message of safety and harm reduction (*prepare, not scare*)
- Provide opportunities to develop assets and strengths (*build youth connections*)
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
Resources for schools and communities

- Grade 7/8 Healthy Relationships
- Grade 9 /10 Core Phys Ed & Health
- Grade 9 - 12 English Curriculum
- Fourth R Aboriginal Perspective
- Alternative Education / Strict Discipline Program
- Youth Relationships After-School Program
- Youth Safe Schools Committee / Manual
- Fourth R Site Trainer Manual

The Fourth R
Unit 1: Personal Safety and Injury Prevention (7 lessons)

1. Focus on Healthy Relationships
   - myths/facts about teen relationships, relationship rights & responsibilities

2. Barriers to Healthy Relationships
   - active listening skills and ‘types of violence/abuse’

3. Contributors to Violence
   - group effects on violence, individual differences

4. Conflict & Conflict Resolution
   - communication styles: passive, assertive, aggressive; conflict scenarios

5. Media Violence
   - student presentations of examples of violence in the media

6. Conflict Resolution Skills
   - rights and responsibilities when ending a relationship

7. Action in the School and Community
Cluster randomized trial: Design and Participants

- **Design and Setting**
  - Ten schools randomly assigned to the control group to continue their usual methods of teaching adolescents about health and risk behaviors
  - 10 schools assigned to the intervention.

- **Participants**
  - 1722 Grade 9 students aged 14-15 (53% girls) in 20 public secondary schools taking the required Health and Physical Education class.
Primary Outcomes

- Reduced dating violence, especially for boys in intervention schools (OR = 2.77, CI = 1.39-5.29, p < .01)<sup>1</sup>
- condom use among sexually active boys was greater in intervention schools than in control schools (OR, 1.70; CI, 1.10-2.66; p < .05)<sup>1</sup>
- the risk of violent delinquency associated with several types of child maltreatment was lower in intervention schools than in control schools at follow-up (OR = .66, CI = .46-.97; p<.05)<sup>2</sup>

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Adolescent Risk Behaviors
Why Teens Experiment and Strategies to Keep Them Safe
David A. Wolfe, Peter G. Jaffe, Claire V. Crooks

The Fourth R
Naming the Violence Activity

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