



THE ALASKA FOURTH R PROGRAM

Lesson plans focused on healthy relationships.

WHAT IS THE FOURTH R PROGRAM?

The Fourth R Program (R = Relationships) is a comprehensive school-based program designed to reduce violence, substance use, and other risk behaviors.¹ The program is based on the premise that relationship skills are as important to learn in school as the other three R's (**R**eading, **wR**iting, and **aR**ithmetic). The program focuses on building healthy relationships and decision-making skills through interactive teaching methods such as role play. The Fourth R lessons provide a variety of discussion opportunities to process issues with peers and the teacher, as well as opportunities to examine individual beliefs and boundaries.



The Fourth R curriculum was developed in Canada and has been adapted for use in Alaska.¹ The core program contains 21-lessons in three units designed to be implemented by trained school teachers in 7-9th grade health and physical education classes. Age-appropriate lessons focus on important subjects such as: the impact of bullying and harassment, developing skills for healthy relationships, building skills to avoid pressure to use substances, and positive coping strategies.

THE FOURTH R PROGRAM IS EFFECTIVE

The Fourth R is an evidence-based program and is listed on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices among others.²

International evaluation has found the Fourth R program effective in reducing physical dating violence among boys; reducing acts of violence towards peers; increasing knowledge and awareness of dating violence, substance use and other risky behaviors; and increasing students' use of communication skills.³

"The Fourth R

has completely changed the way I've taught. I really enjoy it. It's reinvigorated me. To me, this is so much more important than anything else going on in this school.... If they don't have the relationship [skills], it just really doesn't matter."

— Fourth R Teacher



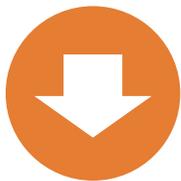
THE FOURTH R SUPPORTS LEARNING

The Fourth R emphasizes the five basic competencies of social and emotional learning: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.⁴

There is growing evidence that social and emotional learning programs—such as the Fourth R—are associated with improved academic outcomes including: decreased absenteeism, suspensions and behavioral problems; and increases in grade point averages, standardized test scores and commitment to school.

"I learned to notice if somebody is in a bad situation or if you need help. Realizing more about other people and what you can do to help them instead of just pushing it off to the side for a moment and becoming a passive bystander."

— Alaska Student



REDUCE

- Absenteeism
- Suspensions
- Discipline referrals
- Bullying
- Violence
- Problem behaviors



IMPROVE

- Standardized test scores
- Goal-setting
- Commitment to school
- Problem-solving
- Teacher-related academic performance
- Time-management
- Grades
- On-task learning behavior
- Grade point averages

THE FOURTH R MEETS STATE AND NATIONAL STANDARDS

"I love [the Fourth R], especially for a first-year teacher. It's super user friendly."

The Fourth R provides lessons that meet the Skills for a Healthy Life content standards developed by the State of Alaska, Department of Education & Early Development.⁵ The Fourth R program also aligns with the performance indicators of all eight of the U.S. National Health Education Standards for grades 9-12.⁶

FOURTH R TEACHERS ARE PROVIDED (AT NO COST):

- ✓ Complete curriculum kits: teacher-friendly lessons, learning objectives and expectations, and teaching/learning activities.
- ✓ A variety of teaching materials (binder, DVDs, CDs and laminates).
- ✓ Curriculum training and booster sessions.
- ✓ Ongoing program support and technical assistance to help teachers and students succeed.
- ✓ Support and assistance from community partners.
- ✓ Opportunities to become a master trainer.

THE FOURTH R PROGRAM IN ALASKA

To date, 60 schools in 21 districts have received Fourth R curricula materials, and over 300 school staff and community partners throughout Alaska have been trained to teach the Alaska Fourth R program in their schools.

ALASKA SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN FOURTH R



"[The Fourth R] has taught me to know what I deserve in a relationship and about my rights to feel safe and secure. This knowledge has helped me make changes in my personal life for the better. I was able to apply what I learned, and I am happier and safer now that I have done so." — Alaska Student

The Fourth R was evaluated in Alaska in 9th grade health class from 2011-2013. Findings of youth who participated in the Fourth R Alaskan evaluation show ...



IMPROVED
awareness of abusive behavior



INCREASED
positive social support among youth with high adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) scores



REDUCED
acceptance of physical aggression



REDUCED
adherence to rape myths



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE FOURTH R IN ALASKA
OR TO SCHEDULE A TRAINING:**

Contact: Patricia.Owen@alaska.gov — 907-465-2939
For more information, please visit www.youthrelationships.org.

The Department of Education & Early Development coordinates with the Department of Health and Social Services to provide curriculum training for teachers interested in teaching the Fourth R.



“This class has changed the way I think a lot. I now understand that there are people that go through hard times, and it is important to be understanding and to treat everyone respectfully.”

— Alaska Student

“I like the role-playing. [It] really helps you understand how to do things in real life.”

— Alaska Student

ENDNOTES

1. The Fourth R was developed in Canada by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Centre for Prevention Science.
For more information, go to: www.youthrelationships.org
2. <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/>
3. <https://youthrelationships.org/fourth-r-findings>
4. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning:
<http://www.casel.org/>
5. <https://education.alaska.gov/standards/pdf/standards.pdf>
6. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/SHER/standards/index.htm>
7. The Impact of School-Connected Behavioral and Emotional Health Interventions on Student Academic Performance: An Annotated Bibliography of Research Literature (May 2014):
www.healthinschools.org/en/School-Based-Mental-Health/Revised-Annotated-Bibliography.aspx.
8. The Impact of School-Connected Behavioral and Emotional Health Interventions on Student Academic Performance: An Annotated Bibliography of Research Literature (May 2014): www.healthinschools.org/en/School-Based-Mental-Health/Revised-Annotated-Bibliography.aspx

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