



# Healthy Relationships Plus Program - Enhanced

*for vulnerable youth and youth in the justice system*

## About The Fourth R - HRPP

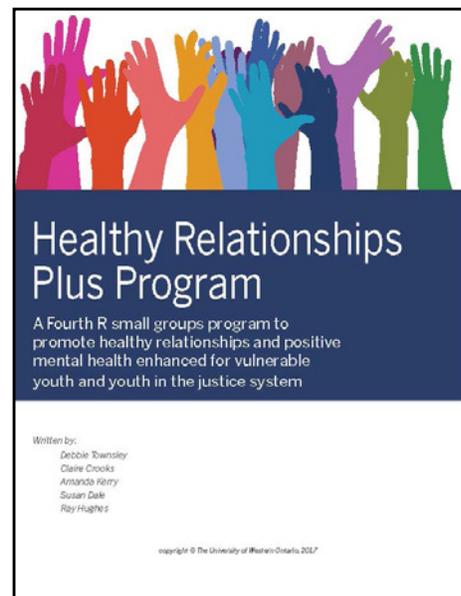
The Fourth R Healthy Relationships Plus Program is an evidence-informed small groups program based on the same core principles of skill-building and awareness as The Fourth R classroom-based programs. The Fourth R is currently taught in more than 4,500 schools across North America, and equips students with the skills they need to build healthy relationships and to help themselves and their peers reduce risky behaviours.

The HRPP Enhanced version uses open dialogue and role playing to engage youth in enthusiastic discussions about peer pressure, help-seeking, media literacy, healthy and unhealthy peer and dating relationships, and healthy communication. The HRPP Enhanced version is a competency enhancement program rather than a treatment. The program is appropriate for vulnerable youth and youth in the justice system, aged 12-18 years. The HRPP Enhanced version includes trauma informed adaptations, additional high risk scenarios and a harm reduction approach, enhanced information about dating violence and safety planning, as well as teaching about consent and addressing sexual exploitation.

The HRPP Enhanced version consists of 16 one-hour sessions, and all youth will receive a certificate upon completion of the program. We expect that the HRPP Enhanced version will improve students' communication and problem solving skills, better enabling them to reduce peer and societal pressures.

## Session Topics Include:

- Session #1 - Getting to Know You
- Session #2 - It's Your Choice: Friendships/Relationships
- Session #3 - Shaping Our Views
- Session #4 - Influences on Relationships
- Session #5 - Impact of Substance Use and Abuse
- Session #6 - Healthy Relationships
- Session #7 - Early Warning Signs of Dating Violence
- Session #8 - Safety and Unhealthy Relationships
- Session #9 - Rights and Responsibilities in Relationships
- Session #10 - Boundaries and Assertive Communication
- Session #11 - Taking Responsibility for Emotions
- Session #12 - Standing Up for What is Right
- Session #13 - When Friendships and Relationships End
- Session #14 - Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Session #15 - Helping Our Friends
- Session #16 - Sharing and Celebrating



## What Youth are Saying about the Healthy Relationships Plus Program

The Fourth R's ongoing evaluation of the Healthy Relationships Plus Program has shown that youth enjoy the program, consider their time in the program to be a valuable experience, and learn important material.

Youth particularly enjoy the **interactive components** that are built into every session of the Healthy Relationships Plus Program. For example, each session begins with an energizer or ice-breaker activity, and youth reported that these activities made them more comfortable and increased their willingness to "open up" during later discussions and activities. Youth also described enjoying many of the topics covered in the program, such as messages in advertisements, healthy and unhealthy relationships, rights and responsibilities in friendships and relationships, and how to get out of situations in which they feel pressured to do something.

The interactive, **small group** format of the Healthy Relationships Plus Program is one of the program's strengths, and seems to have contributed to what youth take away from the program. For **example**, youth reported that listening to other people tell their experiences was particularly valuable. As one youth explained, listening to a story that someone else told helped her to understand her own relationships. Likewise, youth appreciated the opportunity to share their own **experiences and stories**.

In addition to enjoying the program and finding it valuable, youth also seem to learn important material from the Healthy Relationships Plus Program. For **example**, when asked to describe something they learned in the program, youth variously described learning communication skills; how to identify and manage stress; how youth are influenced by their family, culture, friends, and media; how to understand and identify differences between positive and negative encouragement; the role of power in relationships; conflict resolution skills; and communication skills. Importantly, one youth reported learning that "I'm not the only one dealing with these problems."



## What Facilitators are Saying about the Healthy Relationships Plus Program

Preliminary data collected from program facilitators suggest that the Healthy Relationships Plus Program is enjoyable to implement and valuable for youth. For example, facilitators have overwhelmingly stated that implementing the Healthy Relationships Plus Program was a positive experience and that they would recommend the program to a colleague.

Facilitators have also reported observing positive changes in youth. For example, one facilitator said, "The participants appeared to be more aware and realized how unhealthy some of their relationships have been." Another facilitator noted, "A lot of our clients know somebody who's died by suicide and there's a very high risk of attempting suicide themselves. They (the youth) don't know the warning signs. So, it is a really important subject to talk about, especially with this clientele. The program provides a safe place for them to talk about it and become more aware of the warning signs," and still another suggested that "Excellent program! Youth have been very responsive to the interactivity of it and have stated that it is their favourite program that we offer. It has brought to light topics that are not talked about often but are much needed in the correctional environment."

## What Youth are Sharing that they Learned in the Healthy Relationships Plus Program

*I like how it taught many ways to deal with people in many different situations. It has changed the ways I interact with people. - Male, 18 years*

*I learned that throughout group sharing others have the same stress as me. - Male, 14 years*

*It teaches what a healthy relationship is, which is what most young people need. - Male, 18 years*

*I learned how it is abusive to try and control someone. - Female, 16 years*

*I liked the activities that we did and how we worked together in groups and socialized. - Male, 18 years*

*I have used this program to help prioritize my friends and put effort into the positive friends and not the negative ones. The program has also helped me become more open with my family and build a stronger bond with them. - Male, 18 years*

*How to recognize an abusive relationship and how to get out of it. - Female, 17 years*

*I will use this program for the rest of my life. - Male, 18 years*

*Everyone should learn these skills and get a better understanding of a healthy relationship from a negative relationship. I would recommend it to people in the community as well as jail, and not just youth, adults too. - Male, 18 years*

*The Fourth R has really made me think about how I treat others. I realize now that I don't treat people very well, and I am going to make changes. - Female, 15 years*