

The Fourth R

Teaching healthy relationship skills to reduce youth risk behaviors

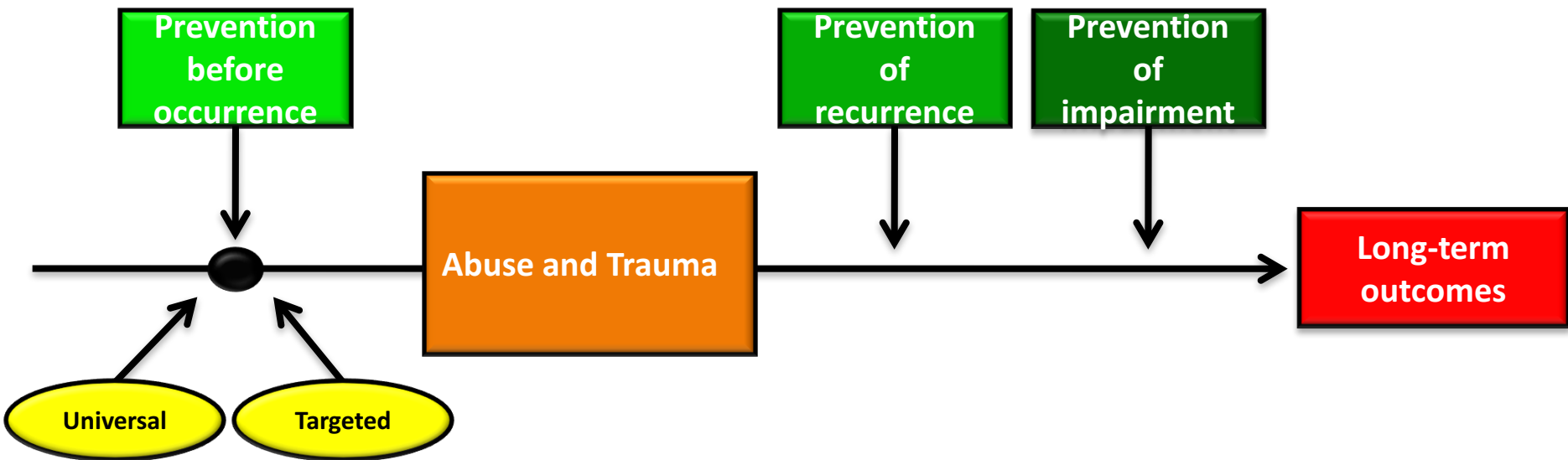
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Prevention opportunities



MacMillan HL, Wathen CN, Barlow J, Fergusson DM, Leventhal JM, Taussig HN. (2009). Interventions to prevent child maltreatment and associated impairment. *The Lancet*. 2009;373:(9659):250-266.



Theoretical overview



Early- to mid-adolescence: A key window of opportunity

- Autonomy / transition / experimentation
- Pressure to conform
- Gender-role rigidity returns (with a vengeance)
- Patrolling the borders: Gay-baiting, homophobia, and peer violence
- Signaling intimacy: Confusing abuse as signs of love and caring

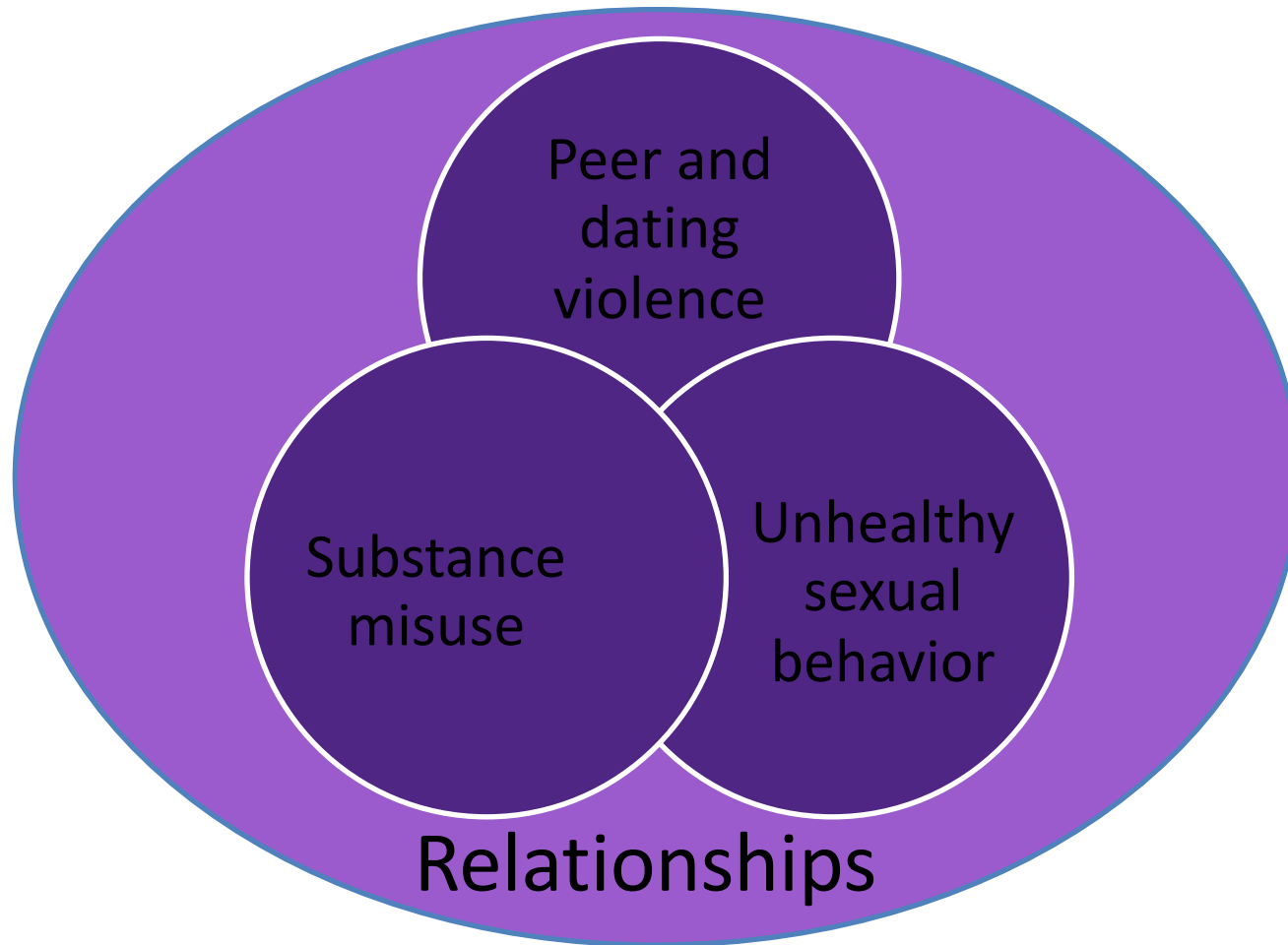


Principles of universal prevention

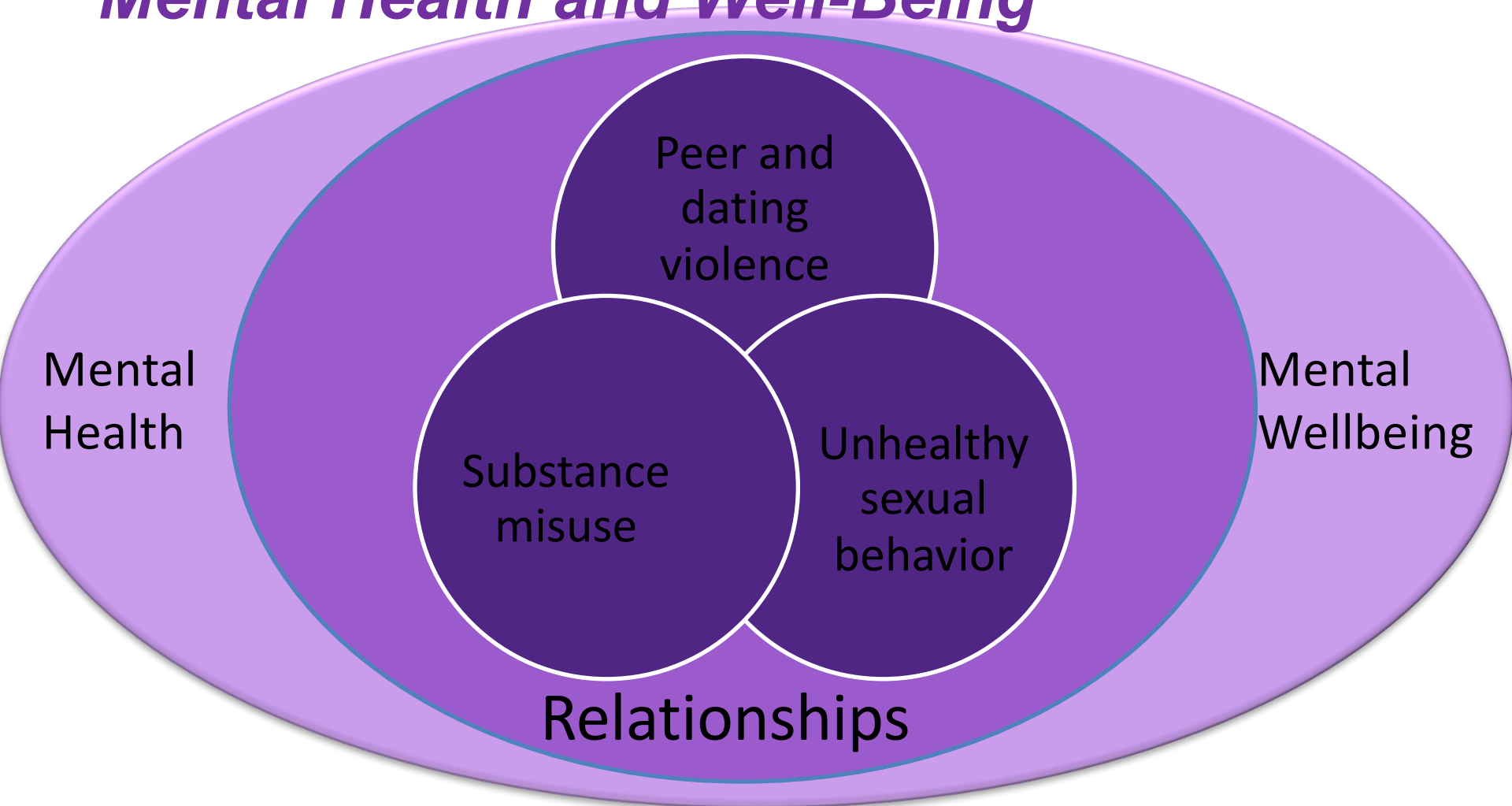
- Proper dosage, timing, delivery, content, and setting
- All youths need:
 - education about *healthy, non-violent* relationships
 - Accurate information without a scare message
 - Personal values clarification, and limit/boundary setting



The Adolescent Risk Triad: *The Relationship Connection*



The Adolescent Risk Triad: *Connection to Mental Health and Well-Being*



Approach

- ▶ 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*)



Approach

- Match content and skills with curriculum requirements (usually health and phys ed):
 - Peer and dating violence
 - Substance use & abuse
 - Healthy growth and sexuality
- Involve not only youth but teachers, parents and community
- Integrate skill development and role play
- Process issues with peers and the teacher through partner, small group and whole class discussions



Current Resources

School-based

- Grade 7, 8 and 9 Health
- Catholic and French
- Grade 9, 10, 11, 12 English
- Healthy Relationships Plus Program

Community-based Healthy Relationships Plus Program

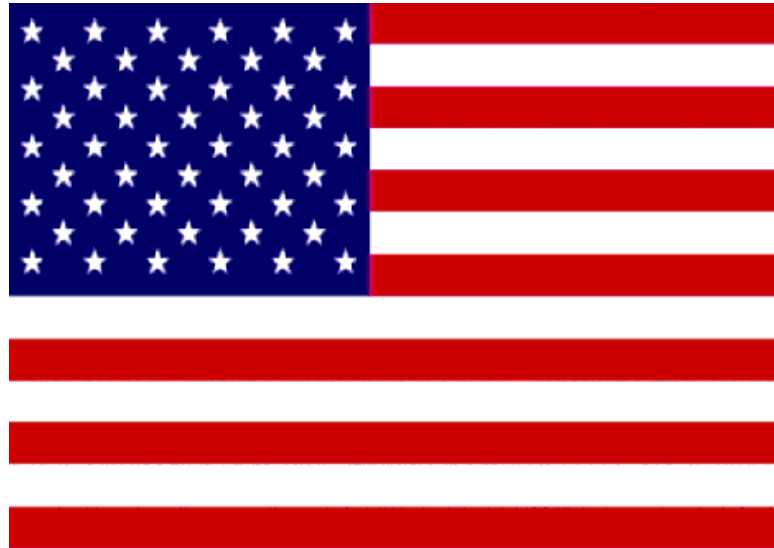
Parents

- Media violence / literacy workshops
- Fourth R workshops
- Parent webinars
- Parent / child homework assignments



Plus...

- We have American versions (where we take out the 'U' out of behaviour... neighbour...colour...)



- We recognize the importance of all youth seeing themselves reflected in the curriculum and include same sex relationship myths and facts and examples



Video Example

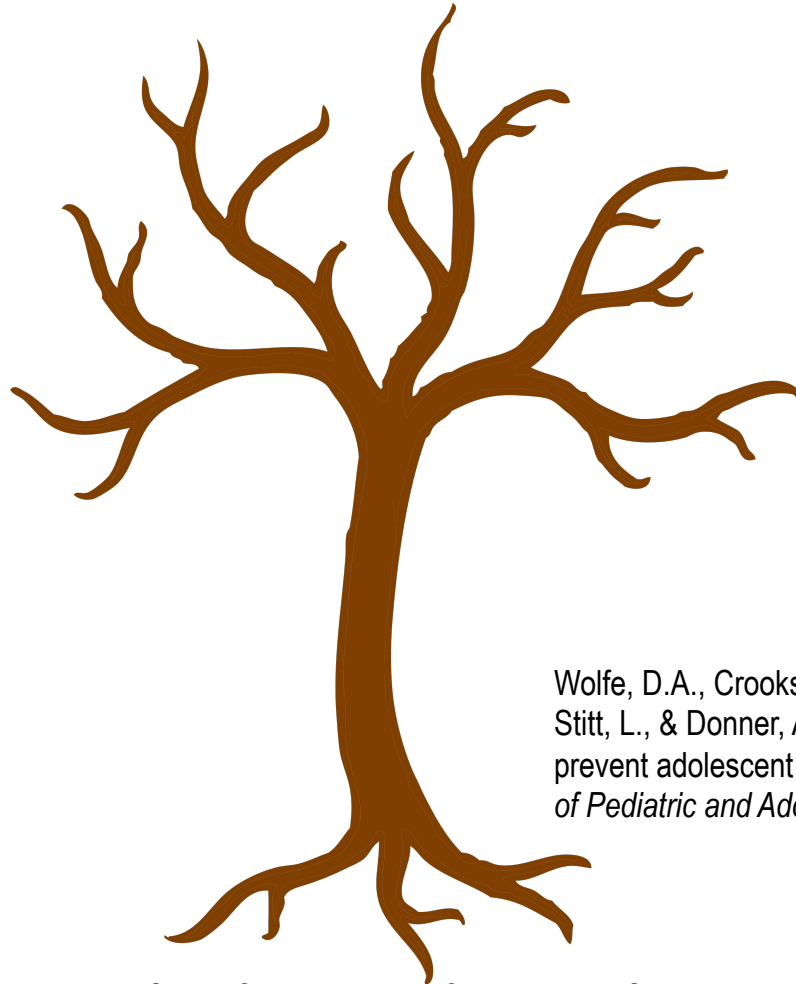


Evidence to date

- Committed to importance of establishing evidence base – published RCT with 1700 youth in 20 schools to look at longitudinal impacts of programming (2009)



Evidence



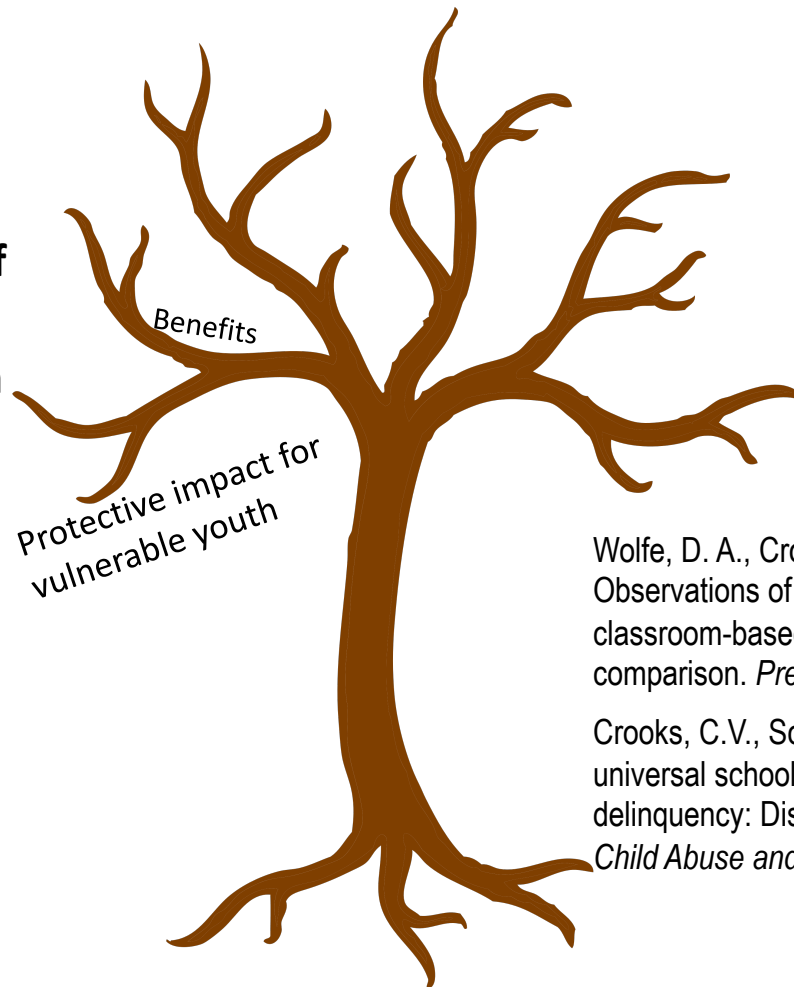
Wolfe, D.A., Crooks, C.V., Jaffe, P.G., Chiodo, D., Hughes, R., Ellis, W., Stitt, L., & Donner, A. (2009). A universal school-based program to prevent adolescent dating violence: A cluster randomized trial. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 163, 693-699.

The Grade 9 Fourth R decreases dating violence and increases condom use



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Deeper understanding of the benefits of Grade 9 Program



Protective impact for vulnerable youth

Benefits

Wolfe, D. A., Crooks, C. V., Chiodo, D., Hughes, R., & Ellis, W. (2012). Observations of adolescent peer resistance skills following a classroom-based health relationship program: A Post-intervention comparison. *Prevention Science*, 13, 196-205.

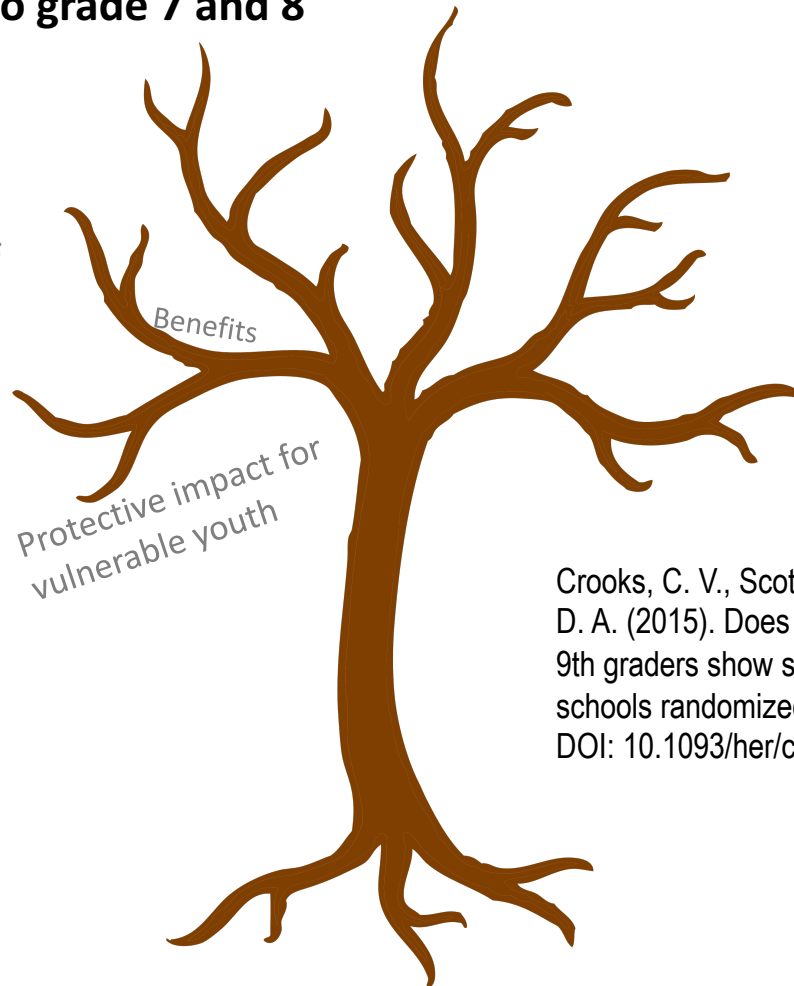
Crooks, C.V., Scott, K., Ellis, W., & Wolfe, D. (2011). Impact of a universal school-based violence prevention program on violent delinquency: Distinctive benefits for youth with maltreatment histories. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 35, 393-400.

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Downward extension of evidence to grade 7 and 8

Deeper understanding of the benefits of Grade 9 Program



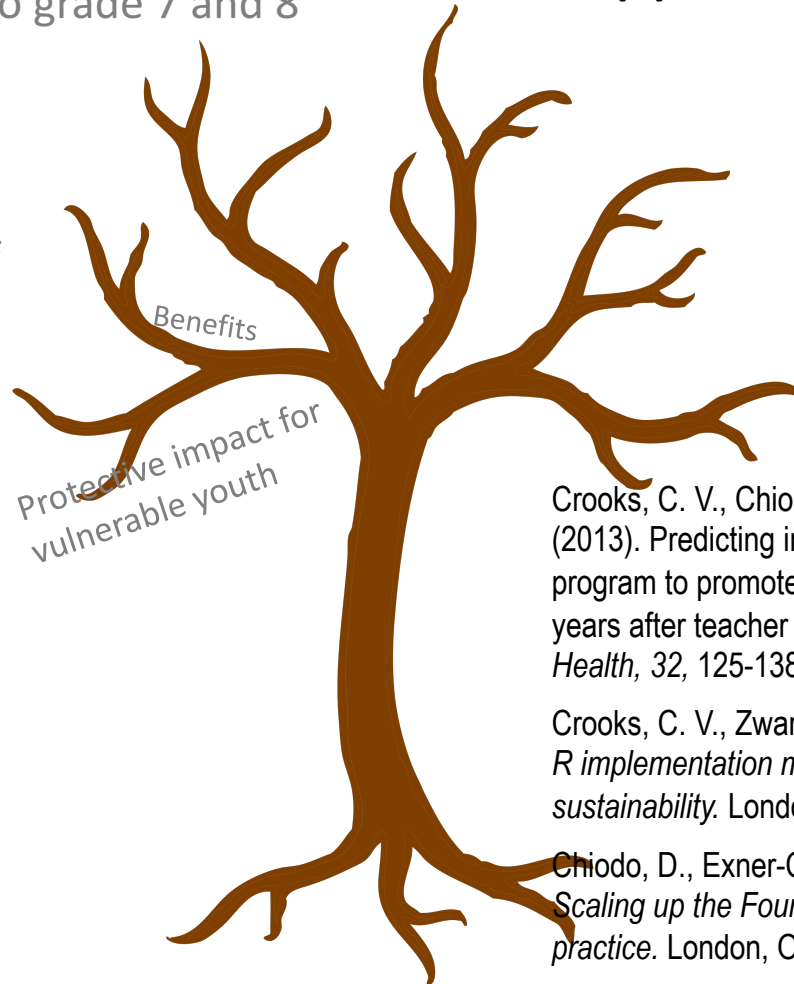
Crooks, C. V., Scott, K. L., Broll, R., Zwarych, S., Hughes, R., & Wolfe, D. A. (2015). Does an evidence-based healthy relationships program for 9th graders show similar effects for 7th and 8th graders? Results from 57 schools randomized to intervention. *Health Education Research*. DOI: 10.1093/her/cyv014

The Grade 9 Fourth R decreases dating violence and increases condom use

Downward extension of
evidence to grade 7 and 8

Identification of implementation and scale up processes and challenges

Deeper
understanding of
the benefits of
Grade 9 Program



Crooks, C. V., Chiodo, D., Zwarych, S., Hughes, R., & Wolfe, D. A. (2013). Predicting implementation success of an evidence-based program to promote healthy relationships among students two to eight years after teacher training. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health*, 32, 125-138.

Crooks, C. V., Zwarych, S., Burns, S., & Hughes, R. (2015). *The Fourth R implementation manual: Building for success from adoption to sustainability*. London, ON: Western University.

Chiodo, D., Exner-Cortens, D., Crooks, C.V., & Hughes, R. (2014). *Scaling up the Fourth R program: Facilitators, barriers, and problems of practice*. London, ON: CAMH Centre for Prevention Science.

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Downward extension of
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Identification of implementation and
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**Assessing the costs and
benefits of the Fourth R**

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Findings of Cost/Benefit Analysis

- Based on reductions in dating violence and violent delinquency – cost savings of \$1778.73 per student
- Program cost differed based on geography and phase
 - NT adaptation and capacity building - \$126
 - NT implementation - \$38
 - AB implementation - \$18
 - TVDSB sustainability - \$5
- Tremendous return on investment – even most expensive case was 14:1 and 0.5% of annual education budget per student



Summary

- Fourth R has grown from a single grade 9 program to menu of options for different stakeholders
- Principles remain same, but increased attention to mental health/well-being and new opportunities for LGBTQ+ considerations
- Continue to grow the evidence-base (NIH RCT in Houston now underway)
- Shift from focusing on effectiveness to implementation and sustainability



Contact Information

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