

The Youth Violence Prevention Project in Thunder Bay and District

YOUTH

Violence Prevention Project
in Thunder Bay and District

Evaluation Report

October 30, 2024

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Key Takeaways

The Youth Violence Prevention Project (YVPP) was a 6-year (2018-24) intervention research project funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) in partnership with local and District School Boards and Education Authorities. The goals were to deliver the Fourth R (adapted to local context as required), then develop and deliver a Booster intervention (a brief intervention that would reinforce Fourth R learnings). This report presents an evaluation of the YVPP, the focus was on the implementation and outcomes of the YVPP overall, the delivery of the Fourth R, and the development and implementation of the Booster intervention.

Highlights of This Report:

Overall, the YVPP was a success. The YVPP had positive impacts on Thunder Bay and District Students, Educators, Service Providers, and Members of the Advisory Committee.

The Fourth R was being delivered and was seen as valuable:



Teachers and other service professionals welcomed the opportunity to get trained in the Fourth R and they also used the resources that were provided

While there was variability in implementation of the Fourth R, the consensus was that the curriculum was a valuable resource for promoting healthy relationships

The YVPP Healthy Relationships Booster can be considered a success:



A Grade 10 Healthy Relationships Booster, designed to reinforce the Grade 9 Health curriculum, was successfully developed, piloted, and evaluated through the YVPP



The Booster has been enthusiastically welcomed by Boards, teachers, and students. It also had a broad reach:

- It was delivered to more than 1,453 students in Thunder Bay and District
- It was delivered in a variety of classroom settings in Public, Catholic, Francophone and Indigenous Schools
- Though originally designed to be delivered in Grade 10 Careers class, it was successfully delivered in Grade 10 Civics, Religion, and Healthy Living classes and three community settings; it was also offered in Grades 9, 11, and 12

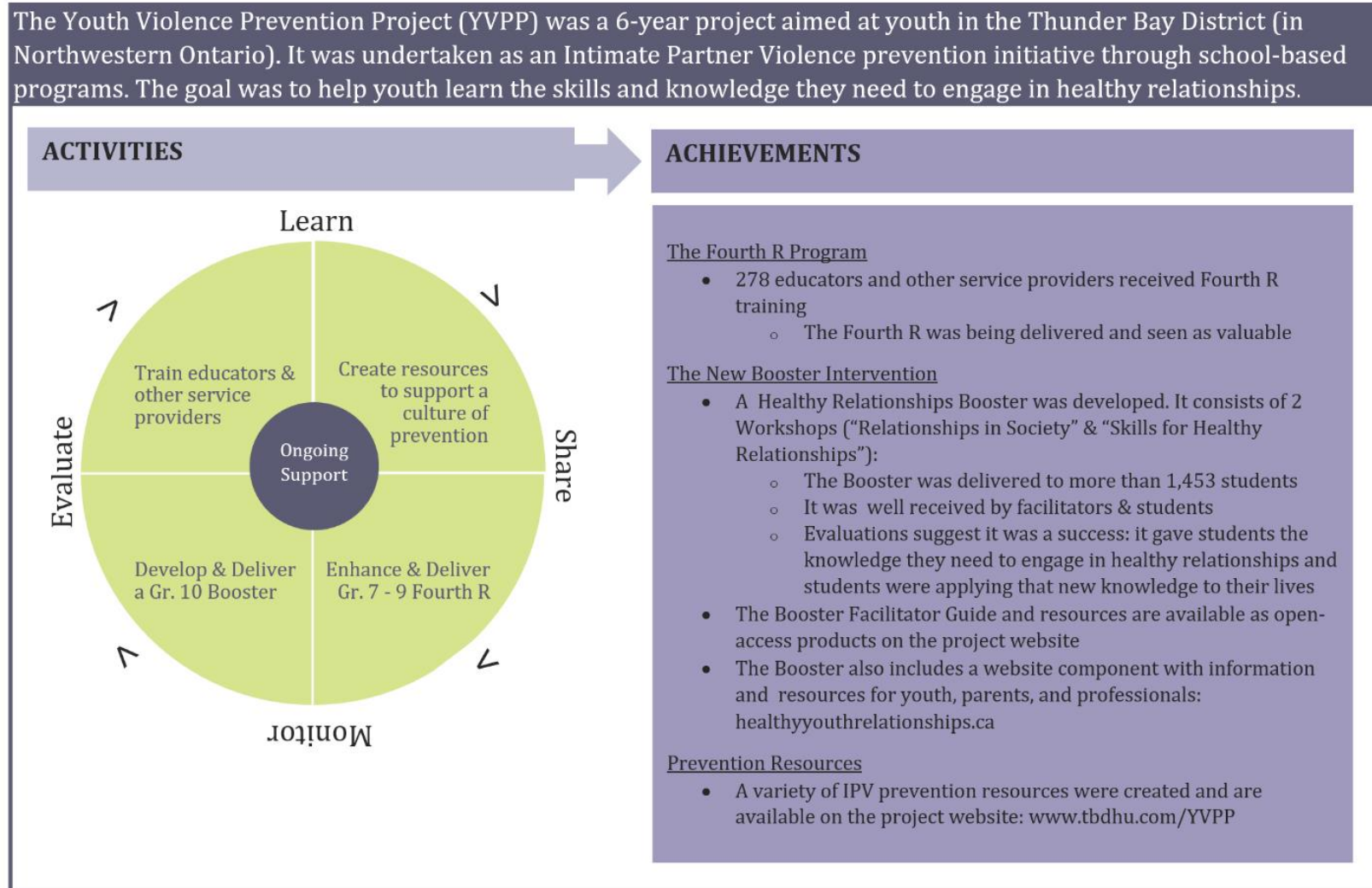


Evaluations were consistently positive, suggesting the YVPP Booster is a promising teen dating violence prevention intervention:

- The Booster Workshops were well received by facilitators and students:
 - The facilitators found the Workshops easy to deliver and the students liked the Workshops and found the content to be practically useful for people their age and could be useful in promoting healthy relationships
- The data suggest the Booster is achieving its intended outcomes of giving students the knowledge they need to engage in healthy relationships and that students are applying their new knowledge to their lives

The YVPP's Key Activities and Achievements are Highlighted in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1. Key Activities & Achievements



This model was inspired by the Knowledge Management for Global Health Logic Model: Sullivan et al. (2015). *Leveraging the Power of Knowledge Management to Transform Global Health and Development*. Glob Health Sci Pract;3(2):150-62.

Forward

The urgency to prevent teen dating violence (TDV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) has never been greater. Declared an epidemic by the Ontario government and over 90 municipalities, including Thunder Bay, IPV is a serious public health issue.

Youth are particularly vulnerable to dating violence, with long-lasting effects such as poorer academic outcomes, mental health challenges, substance use, risky sexual behaviours, and a higher risk of both perpetrating and experiencing IPV in adulthood. The Youth Violence Prevention Project (YVPP) recognized that adolescence is a critical period for preventing violence and was a timely upstream prevention initiative emphasizing a "culture of prevention" approach. Through educator training in the Fourth R, a universal school-based healthy relationships program for grades 7-9, and the development of the grade 10 Healthy Relationships Booster, the YVPP aimed to provide youth with the knowledge and skills to engage in healthy relationships and prevent future IPV.

The YVPP went beyond traditional intervention efforts, which have historically focused on victims, instead emphasizing the importance of increased awareness of the root causes of GBV. This approach aimed to equip peers, families, schools, and communities to promote healthy relationship behaviours and intervene early, as well as engage boys and men to challenge harmful societal beliefs about gender norms that contribute to the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV).

By teaching these skills early, the YVPP aspired to create conditions that make violence less likely to occur, investing in a safer and healthier future for all.

- YVPP Core Team



Introduction

Background

The Youth Violence Prevention Project in Thunder Bay and District (YVPP) was a 6-year intimate-partner violence prevention initiative (2018-24) for youth in the Thunder Bay District Health Unit Catchment area (in Northwestern Ontario).

Intimate-Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence (IPV, sometimes called domestic violence) is a form of gender-based violence (GBV). IPV is a serious public health issue that can have lifelong physical, psychological, and social impacts.

Teen dating violence (TDV) is a subset of IPV and affects youth from all backgrounds, regardless of ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, or gender-identity.

As dating relationships emerge in adolescence, this is a critical time for prevention efforts. During this formative period, there is an opportunity to help youth gain the knowledge and skills they need to engage in healthy relationships:

- Universal, school-based prevention programs (for all students, not just those at risk) are evidence-based strategies to foster healthy relationships and protect against IPV. Research also suggests that longer exposure to school-based prevention programs produces more positive effects.¹
- “Booster” interventions (educational modules, delivered as brief interventions) are recommended in the literature to reinforce learnings, prolong, and sustain program outcomes.²

¹ Crooks, C. V., Exner-Cortens, D., Siebold, W., Moore, K., Grassgreen, L., Owen, P., Rausch, A., & Rosier, M. (2018). The role of relationships in collaborative partnership success: Lessons from the Alaska Fourth R project. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 67, 97-104. DOI: 10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2017.12.007

² Tolan PH, Gorman-Smith D, Henry D, Schoeny M. The benefits of booster interventions: evidence from a family-focused prevention program. *Prev Sci*. 2009 Dec;10(4):287-97. doi: 10.1007/s11121-009-0139-8. PMID: 19513845.

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit

A Large Geographic Area and Dispersed Population

- Located in Northwestern Ontario, the TBDHU covers a large geographic area (249,900 km²) and dispersed population (approximately 146,000 people)
- The region is home to a **large and growing Indigenous population** (almost 20% of the TBDHU residents identify as Indigenous)³
- South to North, the District extends almost 900 km; East to West, the District covers 300 km
- The region includes the City of Thunder Bay (an urban community with a population of 120,000, 1400 km by air from Toronto), many small rural towns and settlements, and 25 First Nations (in Robinson-Superior, Treaty 3, and Treaty 9 territories), including 8 remote communities that are only accessible year-round by air



An Urgent Need for IPV Prevention Efforts

IPV is a particular concern in Thunder Bay where rates of violence have consistently been among the three highest among all census metropolitan areas in Canada.⁴ Prevention efforts are required. To address these needs, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, school boards and educational authorities, along with community partners, worked collaboratively to develop a proposal for submission to the Public Health Agency of Canada, with the overall goal of:

- Establishing a universal, school-based educational program that promotes the development of the knowledge and skills required for healthy relationships as a promising violence prevention strategy for the Thunder Bay District.

³ Statistics Canada. (2021). Census Profile: 2021 Census of Canada. Profile Table: Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Available at: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&SearchText=Thunder%20Bay%20District%20Health%20Unit&DGUIDist=2022A00073562&GENDERlist=1,2,3&STATISTIClist=1,4&HEADERlist=0> Accessed: August 25, 2024.

⁴ Conroy, S. (2021). Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2019. *Juristat: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics*, 1-55. Available at: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.pdf?st=dQq6xkjp> Accessed: August 25, 2023.

The Youth Violence Prevention Project

In the Summer of 2018, funding was sought ...	The Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU), with the assistance of the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research (CRaNHR) at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay Crime Prevention Council, Thunder Bay Drug Strategy, and with support of Thunder Bay and District school boards, submitted a funding proposal to support the implementation of the YVPP
In the Fall of 2018, initial funding was awarded; in Fall 2023, funding for a one-year extension was received	<p><i>Preventing Gender Based Violence: the Health Perspective Investment</i></p> <p>\$1,198,701</p> <p>October 22nd, 2018 – September 30th, 2024</p>

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Goals & Objectives

The overall goal of the YVPP was to work toward IPV prevention by delivering school-based programming to help youth build the social and emotional competencies they need to engage in healthy relationships and make safe(er) choices regarding sexual behaviour and substance use.

In collaboration with school boards, education authorities, and community partners, the YVPP sought to:

- **Deliver an evidence-based TDV prevention program (the Fourth R)** by training educators and service providers to deliver lessons to grade 7-9 students in Thunder Bay and District
- **Develop and deliver a Booster Intervention** (brief educational modules) to grade 10 students to reinforce knowledge about healthy relationships gained in grades 7-9 health lessons
- **Evaluate the YVPP, Fourth R and the Booster** to learn more about whether TDV prevention works, what works and why such programs work, with emphasis on meeting the needs of students in Northern schools

Rationale

Rationale for the YVPP, its proposed activities, and intended goals are summarized in **Figure 1** (Project Logic Model), **Figure 2** (Project Overview,) **Figure 3** (Theory of Change) and **Figure 4** (YVPP & Booster Logic Model).

Figure 2. Youth Violence Prevention Project in Thunder Bay & District: Logic Model

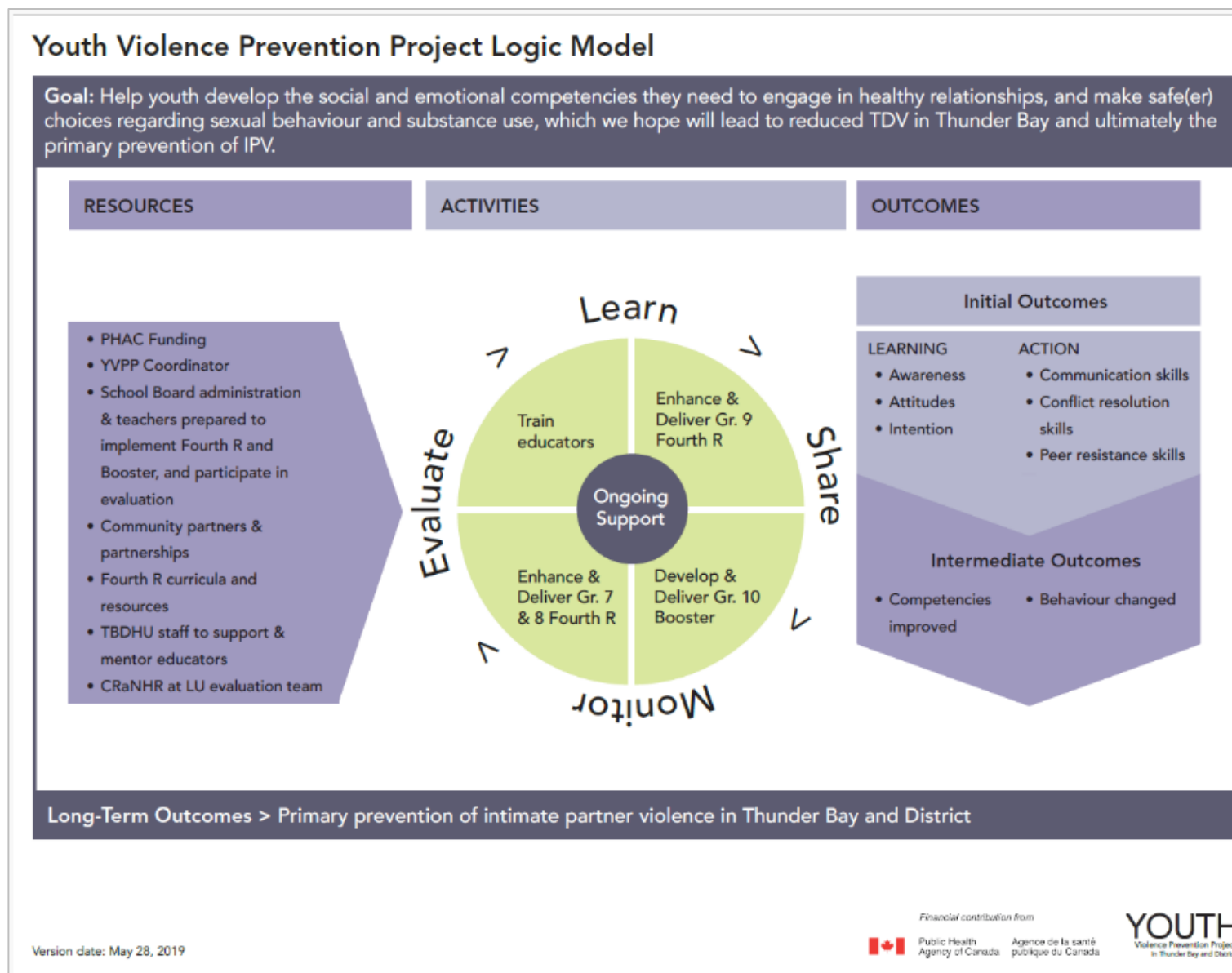
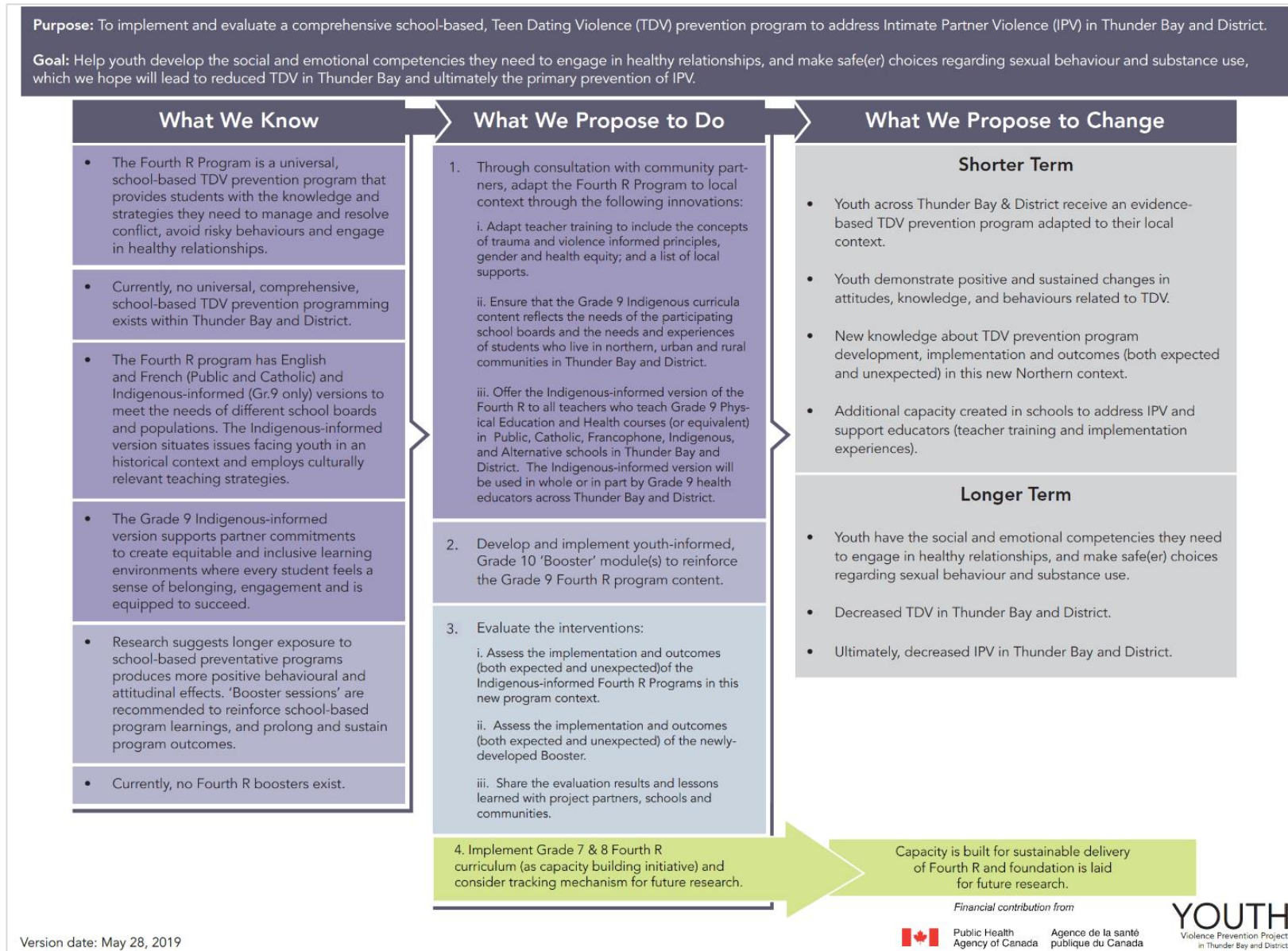


Figure 3. Youth Violence Prevention Project in Thunder Bay & District: Project Overview



Version date: May 28, 2019

Figure 4. Youth Violence Prevention Project in Thunder Bay & District: Theory of Change

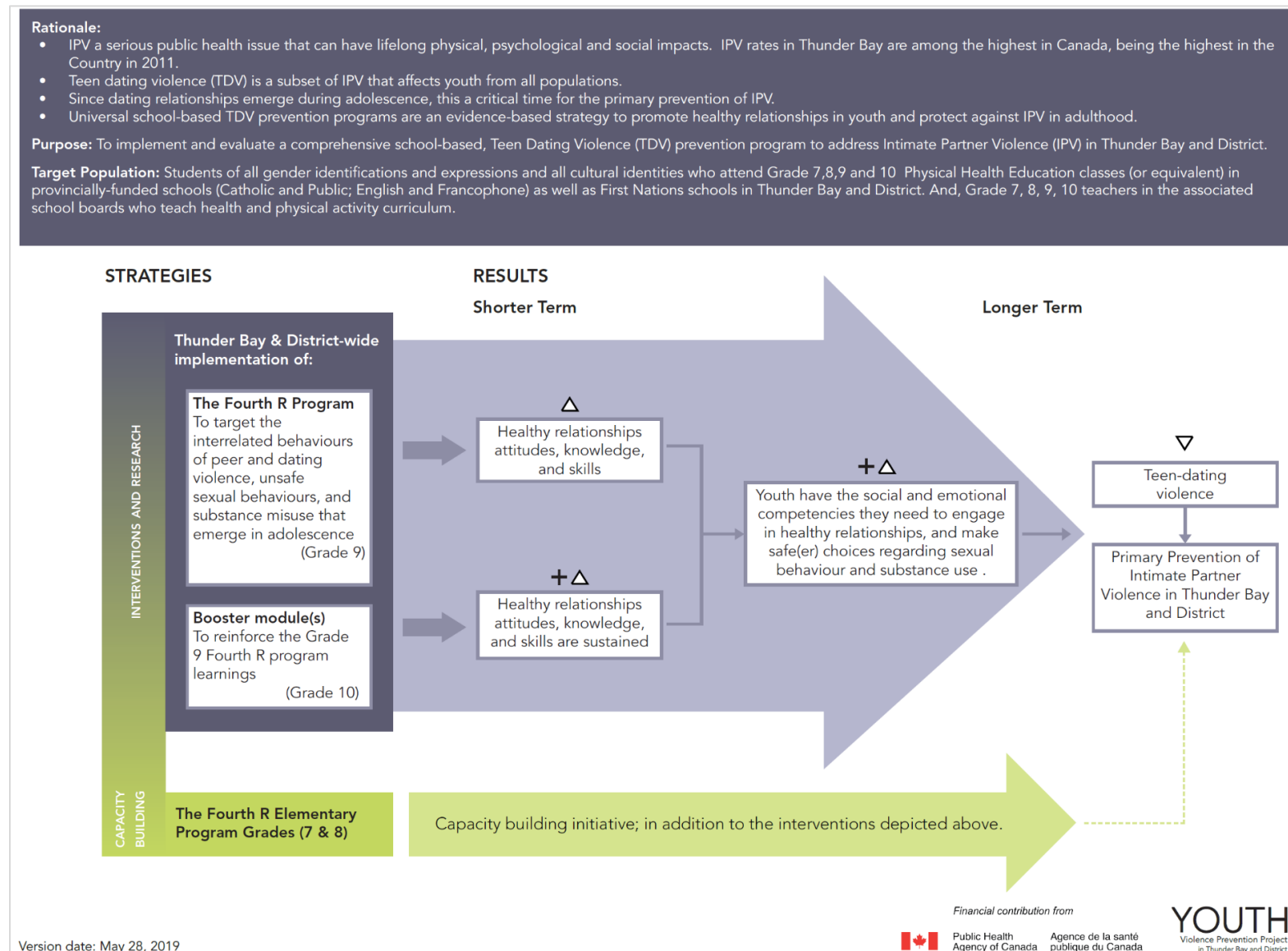
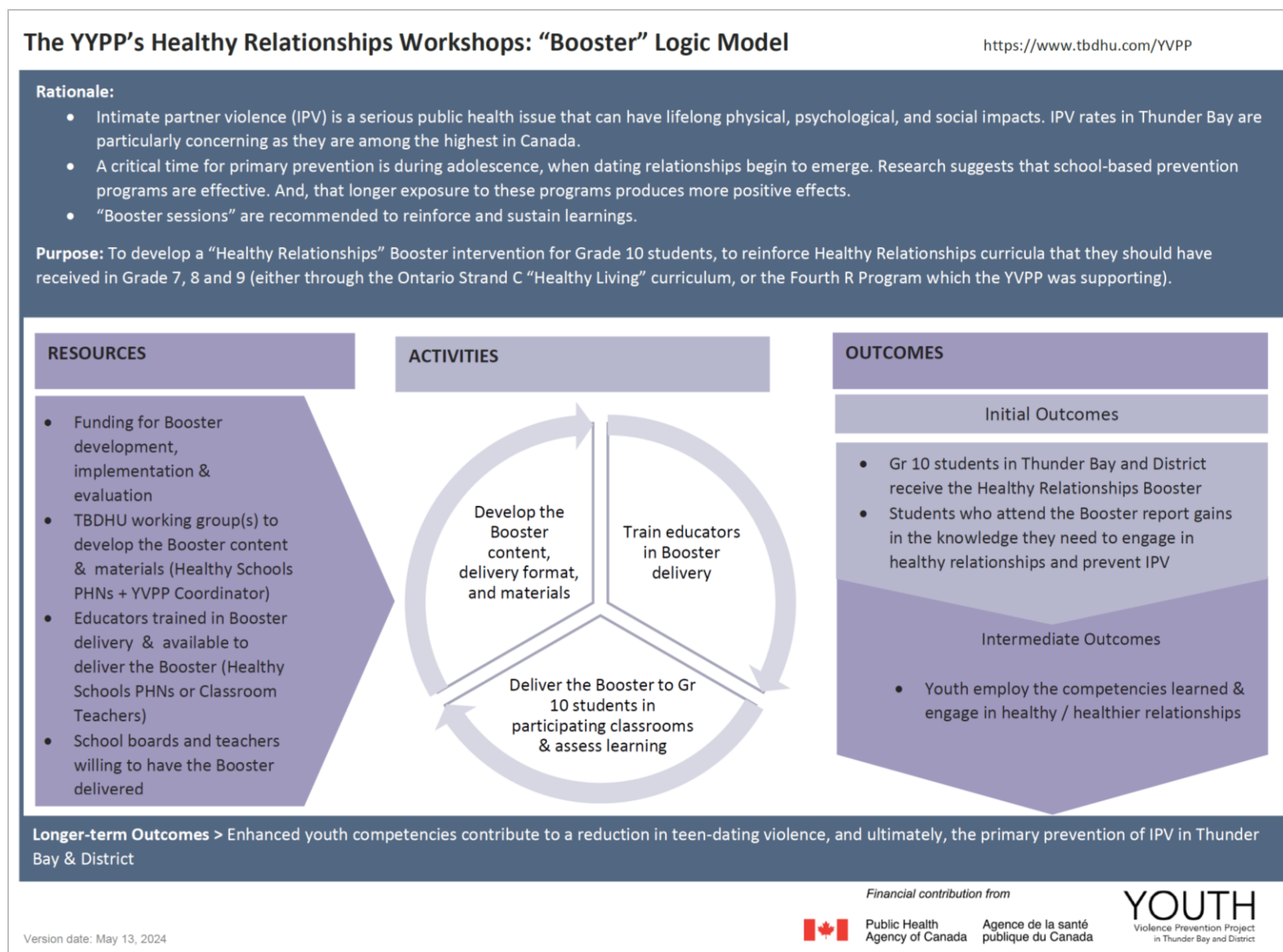


Figure 5. Youth Violence Prevention Project in Thunder Bay & District: Booster Logic Model



Methodology

CRaNHR at Lakehead University was the research partner on the project. With guidance from the YVPP Advisory Committee, CRaNHR was responsible for carrying out the evaluation portion of the grant.



Evaluation Questions

The evaluation sought to assess the YVPP's implementation process and examine the perceived outcomes of the YVPP Overall and the Booster component. It was guided by these questions:

YVPP Overall
<p>Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Was the YVPP implemented as planned?• What process was used to implement the YVPP overall? <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What was the result of the training and capacity-building activities:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Did they contribute to increased knowledge or skill among the professionals and service providers involved in the YVPP?◦ Did the YVPP's activities contribute to changes in organizational policy and practice among participating organizations?• Overall, did educators and service providers see the YVPP as having positive impacts?
The Fourth R
<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What process was used to implement the Fourth R in this unique Northern context?• How many teachers received the Fourth R training? Did they deliver the Fourth R program?
The Booster
<p>Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What process was used to develop and implement the Booster?• How many youth received the Booster?• When implementing the newly developed Booster, what worked well and what needed to be changed/improved? <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Were the intended outcomes of the Grade 10 Booster achieved?• Are there gender or cultural differences in any of the outcomes?

Evaluation Design

An exploratory, descriptive, mixed-methods design was adopted.

This aligns with the aim of the evaluation to provide a *detailed understanding* of the YVPP's implementation process, identifying factors that facilitated or hindered successful delivery. A mixed-methods approach additionally permits more comprehensive answers to evaluation questions than either quantitative or qualitative methods alone.

Literature Reviews

Throughout the YVPP, the evaluators conducted a series of topic-specific literature reviews to inform evaluation of the Fourth R and the Booster. The TBDHU subsequently requested a review of the literature on school-based TDV prevention programs and practice guidelines be prepared for professionals and service providers considering school-based preventive TDV programs. These resources (listed below) can be found on the YVPP website (<https://www.tbdhu.com/YVPP>):

- Mushquash, C.J., Hill, M.E., Nadin, S., Zacharias-Bezanson, R., Kent, A. (2021). *Youth-Informed Boosters: An Evidence-Informed Practice Guide*. Prepared for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Thunder Bay: Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research.
- Mushquash, C.J., Hill, M.E., Nadin, S., Zacharias-Bezanson, R. (2020). *Youth-Informed Boosters: A Quick Guide*. Prepared for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Thunder Bay: Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research.
- Dalicandro, L., Hill, M.E., Nadin, S., Mushquash, C. J. (2024). *Literature Scan: Implementing Universal, School-Based Teen-Dating Violence Prevention Programs: Reflections from the Field*. Prepared for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Thunder Bay, Ontario: Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research, Lakehead University.
- Dalicandro, L., Hill, M.E., Nadin, S., Mushquash, C. J. (2024). *Practical Tips for Implementing School-Based Teen Dating Violence (TDV) Prevention Programs*. Prepared for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (Youth Violence Prevention Project). Thunder Bay, Ontario: Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research, Lakehead University.

Data Collection Methods

This evaluation report draws on quantitative and qualitative data collected from both primary and secondary sources. It expands on data reported in the six project reports that the TBDHU submitted to PHAC annually.



This report draws on 8 sources of information (See Appendix 1 for more details):

① Program Documents Review. Relevant program documents and artifacts were reviewed to help describe the YVPP and identify successes, challenges, and emerging outcomes. These included Annual Reports to PHAC (n = 6), Hackathon Reports (n = 2), and Quarterly Status Reports (n = 21).

② Evaluator Notes. With permission, the evaluators took notes at meetings of the YVPP Coordination Team (n = 76), Advisory Committee (n = 22), and the Trauma, Violence and Indigenous Informed Working Group (n = 5). The intention was to document (in real-time) the YVPP implementation process and identify milestones, successes, challenges, and outcomes.

③ Fourth R Implementation Data. Administrative data on Fourth R delivery were gathered through emailed surveys.

- 81 Teacher surveys were received: June 2020 (n = 13), January-February 2021 (n = 19), and May-June 2024 (n = 49). Results were used to assess Fourth R implementation.

④ Booster Surveys. All students who took part in a Booster session were invited to complete a feedback survey at the end of the session.

- 644 Booster surveys were completed during the Pilot Phase (n = 314 – Jan-Mar 2023; n = 77 – Apr-May 2023; n = 253 – May-Jun 2023). Results were used for Quality Improvement purposes.
- 750 Booster surveys were completed during the Launch Phase (n = 735 Thunder Bay; n = 25 District; Nov 2023 – June 2024). Results were used for Quality Improvement and assessment of Booster Outcomes.

⑤ Expanded Reach Surveys. Participants who received the Booster in the Expanded Reach pilot settings (Grades 9, 11, 12) were asked to complete a feedback survey.

- 105 Expanded Reach surveys were received (Apr 2024). Results were used for Quality Improvement purposes.

⑥ Booster Follow-Up Surveys. Students who had participated in the Booster also were asked to complete a brief follow-up survey at least three weeks after the initial session.

- 159 Follow-up surveys were received (Jun 2024). Results were used to assess outcomes.

⑦ Facilitator Reflections. Staff who delivered Boosters shared their reflections and suggestions about the session.

- Nine facilitators completed 84 forms. Results were used for Quality Improvement purposes.

⑧ End of Project Surveys. At the end of the project, the YVPP Advisory Group and educators were surveyed to assess their views on project success and sustainability of the Fourth R and the Booster.

- 37 surveys were completed (n = 8 Advisory Group; n = 29 educators). Results were used to assess perceptions about the YVPP and its sustainability.

Data Analysis Methods

Information collected from all sources was used to answer the specific evaluation questions, with separate analyses for each question and data set. Quantitative data were summarized using descriptive statistics while qualitative data were content analyzed to identify themes related to the evaluation questions.

This Report



This evaluation report summarizes the insights gained on the process and outcomes associated with the YVPP implementation. There are separate chapters on the YVPP Implementation, The Fourth R, and the new Booster intervention.

★ Key project outputs and achievements are highlighted using this icon

2

Planned vs Actual Implementation



This Chapter describes the YVPP's planned vs actual implementation.

It summarizes the data relevant to these evaluation questions:

- Was the YVPP implemented as planned? What adjustments were needed?

Implementation

Planned Implementation

As outlined in Figure 2 (Project Overview), the initial YVPP plan was to: **1** Adapt the Indigenous-informed version of the Fourth R, as required, to ensure it reflected our local context, and then train teachers to deliver it to students across the Thunder Bay District; **2** Develop and implement a youth-informed Grade 10 Booster to reinforce healthy relationship learnings; and **3** Evaluate the implementation and outcomes of both the Fourth R and the newly developed Booster.



However, things didn't go exactly as planned, largely due to the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the educational system. There were changes to the way the YVPP was implemented, so the evaluation workplan also had to be changed.

The YVPP was originally designed as a 5-year project that would examine cohort differences in attitudes and behaviour among three student groups:

- *Fourth R Only*: Students who received the Grade 9 Fourth R (Indigenous-informed version)
- *Full Intervention*: Students who received both the Grade 9 Fourth R and Grade 10 Booster
- *Booster Only*: Students who only received the Grade 10 Booster (no Fourth R)

A multi-faceted implementation and evaluation plan was in place to support Fourth R delivery, develop a new Booster intervention, and capture the Fourth R and Booster process and outcomes for three succeeding cohorts of students.

Contextual Factors

Several contextual factors impacted the implementation and evaluation of the Fourth R and Booster:

- Labour disruptions Sept-Dec 2019 – Mar 2020; COVID-19 Mar 2020 – Nov 2021; and changes because of COVID-19 2020 – Sept 2022 adversely affected learning environments
- The project Advisory Committee (AC) also paused the evaluation process at various times, due to pandemic-related stresses experienced by educators and students
- There was also a four-month vacancy in the YVPP Coordinator position which understandably affected the project’s implementation (Apr-Jul 2023)



Ultimately, the YVPP rolled out differently than planned...

1 Fourth R Planned vs. Actual Implementation & Evaluation

Initial Workplan: Track Fourth R implementation (fidelity) using teacher-completed lesson logs and assess student learning through student surveys (beginning in Fall 2019 and continuing through the 3 cohorts).

- Delivery of the Fourth R and tracking of implementation processes and outcomes was scheduled to begin as soon as teachers were trained (Sept 2019).
- Plans for the Fourth R delivery were negatively affected by two unexpected events: labour disruptions (Nov 2019 to March 2020) and provincially mandated COVID-19 school closures and the move to remote learning (March 2020).
- Due to COVID, the YVPP Advisory Committee (AC) requested that all evaluation activities be postponed indefinitely until in-person classes could resume (March 2020; November 2021).
- As Thunder Bay and District School Boards did not bring students back to class until Fall 2022, the AC decided there was insufficient time to implement any previously planned evaluation activities before the original project end (November 2022).

Changes to the Workplan: The planned Fourth R tracking and student learning assessments could not be undertaken due to the teacher labour disruptions and COVID-19. Ultimately, there was variable implementation of the Fourth R. Thus, while some descriptive information is available through program documents and administrative emails, detailed tracking of the curriculum delivery and assessment of outcomes were not possible. Instead “Implementation Snapshots” were captured through 3 email surveys with educators.

2 Booster Planned vs. Actual Implementation & Evaluation

Initial Workplan: Develop Grade 10 Booster based on information gathered from the students (surveys & focus groups) and teachers (surveys & interviews) who took part in Grade 9 Fourth R:

- Survey Grade 9 students and teachers in YVPP participating schools who received the Fourth R -> to explore what TDV-related content they would like reinforced, as well as what new content they might like to receive (planned for Fall 2019)
- Hold discussion groups with students from each participating School Board -> to gain a deeper understanding of the themes that emerged from the survey findings and allow for new ideas to emerge (planned for March 2020)
- Evaluate Booster outcomes using a Grade 11 exit survey -> All students in Grade 11 would be administered a survey to compare the intervention and non-intervention groups (Fourth R only; Fourth R + Booster; Booster only)

Changes to the Workplan: Planned Booster development (student surveys & focus groups) could not be undertaken due to suspension of in-person learning and introduction of virtual learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Mar 2020 onward)

- On recommendations from the YVPP AC School Board representatives, plans for student and teacher-informed Booster development and evaluation was postponed indefinitely due to concerns that implementing any evaluation activities during COVID-19 would place undue stress on participants (Nov 2021)
- When schools returned to in-person learning in Fall 2022, the AC decided that planned evaluation activities should not be resumed, due to ongoing post-COVID disruptions that were being experienced in the educational system (Nov 2022)

Consequently, the Grade 10 Booster was:

- Developed using information gathered from health and education professionals, and informed by student feedback through an iterative piloting process
- Designed as a brief intervention that would reinforce Fourth R learnings (if students received the Fourth R) and fill in the gaps for students who did not get the Fourth R (but received the provincial health curriculum)
- Evaluated using end-of-workshop surveys administered at the end of each workshop and a follow-up survey administered to students at least 3 weeks after receiving the workshops

3 YVPP Extension

When PHAC approved a one-year extension for the YVPP (May 2023), the additional resources were used to extend the reach of the Fourth R and the Booster and assess overall outcomes of the project.

Summary: Evaluation Questions & Answers

Was the YVPP implemented as planned? What adjustments were needed?

The YVPP was implemented differently than planned:

- COVID-19 and other contextual factors meant the YVPP could not be implemented as originally intended. This led to changes in the way YVPP was implemented and changes to the evaluation Workplan.
- Ultimately:
 - The Fourth R was implemented, but detailed tracking and evaluation were not possible.
 - A Booster intervention was successfully developed and implemented, but the process of developing and evaluating it differed from what was outlined in the original workplan.
 - A one-year extension was granted to extend the reach of the Fourth R and Booster and to allow for overall assessment of project outcomes.

The next three chapters describe YVPP's actual implementation and evaluation. Respectively, the chapters describe the implementation and evaluation of the YVPP overall; the Fourth R; and the Booster.



3

The YVPP Overall



This Chapter describes the activities and outcomes of implementing the YVPP overall.

It summarizes the data relevant to these evaluation questions:

Process:

- What process was used to implement the YVPP overall?

Outcomes:

- What was the result of the training and capacity-building activities:
 - Did they contribute to increased knowledge or skill among the professionals/service providers involved in the YVPP?
- Did the YVPP's activities contribute to changes in organizational policy and practice among participating organizations?
- Overall, did educators and service providers see the YVPP as having positive impacts?

A Comprehensive Implementation Approach

The YVPP's plan was ambitious: the goal was to offer the Fourth R Program and newly developed Booster far and wide across Thunder Bay and District. Towards this end, the YVPP formed key partnerships with a dozen organizations who worked collaboratively to develop and implement YVPP initiatives. **Partners included:**



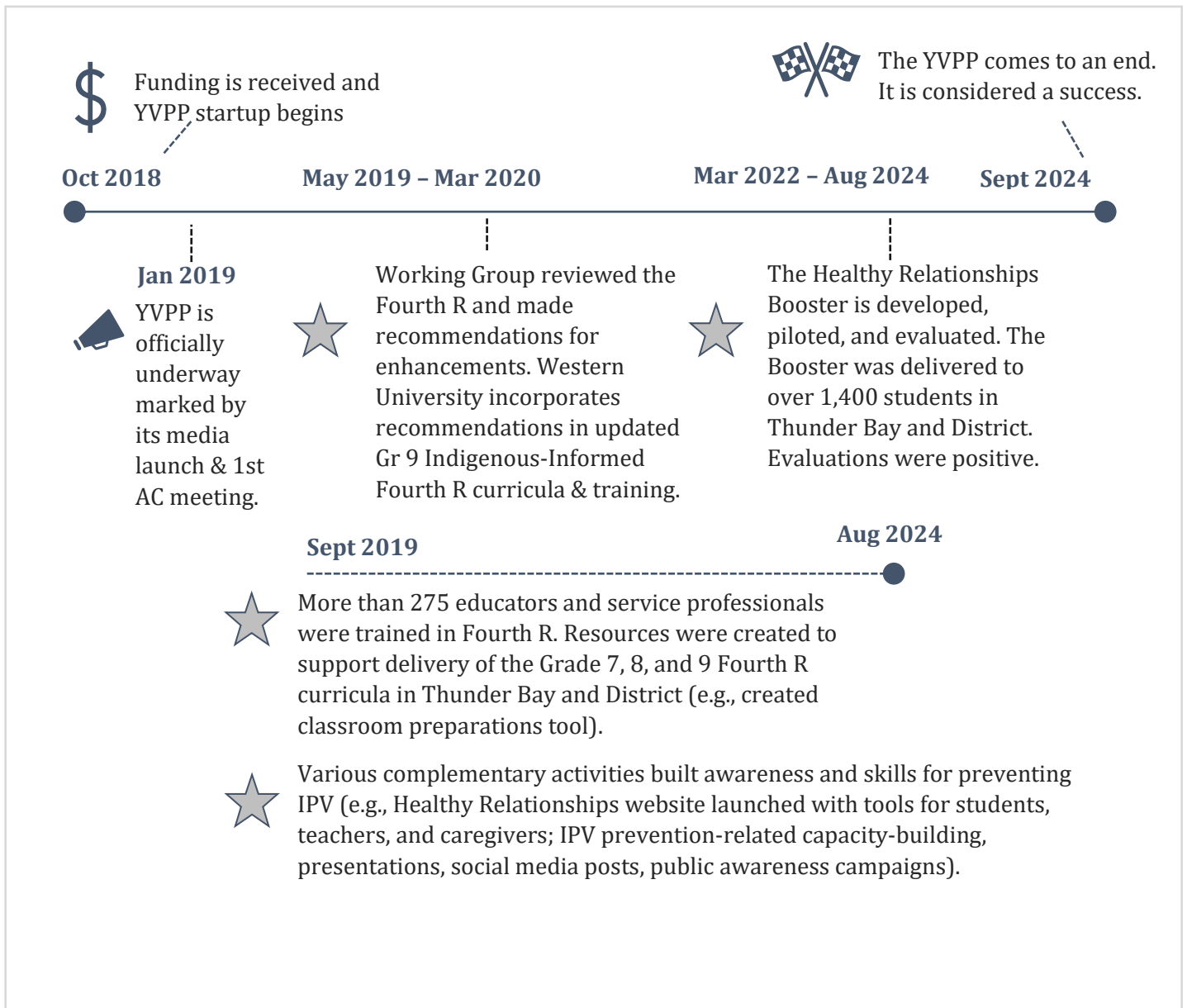
- The TBDHU was the primary organization responsible for developing the proposal, implementing the project, and administering the grant
- The YVPP Project Coordinator was employed by the TBDHU and supported by Manager and Staff of the Family and Healthy Schools Teams
- The Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research at Lakehead University served as the primary academic partner with responsibilities for developing and implementing the evaluation workplan
- Western University School of Mental Health was contracted to deliver Fourth R training for teachers and Master Training
- Eight educational organizations serving students from Thunder Bay and District communities were major contributors to the success of the project, supporting the YVPP from beginning to end

Timeline

Many activities were undertaken and much was achieved during the YVPP's 6 years of implementation.

A summary of the project's implementation is illustrated in the timeline below. More details about each activity and achievement are provided in subsequent chapters of this report.

Figure 6. The YVPP Timeline: Summary of Key Activities & Achievements (2018 -2024)



Guided Implementation



The YVPP was carried out by the TBDHU staff (led by a full-time YVPP Project Coordinator) in partnership with the evaluators, School Boards/Education Authorities and educators in Thunder Bay and District.

The Advisory Committee

At the outset, a YVPP AC was formed to guide the implementation of the YVPP throughout the project (2018-24). AC members provided guidance to the TBDHU and the evaluators on how the project should roll out, offering practical suggestions, working recommendations, and reviews of processes and tools.

- The AC included representatives from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research at Lakehead University, all participating Boards and Education Authorities, as well as representatives from related community partner organizations (Figure 6 and Figure 7).

The AC held its first meeting in January (2019), which effectively 'launched' the YVPP into action. The Committee met 22 times over the next 6 years. The YVPP Coordinator also met with members individually to support Board-specific planning and implementation (ongoing).

The AC's individual and collective contributions were vital to the success of the project.

Figure 7. The YVPP Advisory Committee: Membership (2019 -2024)

Project Lead & Evaluators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Thunder Bay District Health Unit (Project Lead)○ Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research (CRaNHR) at Lakehead University (Evaluators)
School Boards & Education Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores Boréales○ Conseil Scolaire Public du Grand Nord de l'Ontario○ Lakehead District School Board○ Matawa Learning and Care Centre○ Northern Nishnawbe Education Council○ Superior Greenstone District School Board○ Superior North Catholic District School Board○ Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board
Community Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Thunder Bay Drug Strategy○ Thunder Bay Community Safety and Well-Being Council○ Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre

Figure 8. The YVPP's Logo Bar



YVPP's Participating School Boards and Education Authorities

- The six Northern School Boards and two Indigenous Education Authorities that participated in the YVPP are, in many respects, different from those located in Canada's larger urban centres.
 - See Appendix 2 for descriptions of each Board/Educational Authority.
- There is also diversity among them, which necessitated a Board/ Education Authority-Led Implementation.

Board / Education Authority-Led Implementation

Once the Advisory Committee gave their approval, the YVPP Coordinator worked closely with representatives of School Boards and Indigenous Educational Authorities to obtain their permission to move forward with YVPP training and Booster interventions.

As highlighted in Appendix 2, each Board or Education Authority serves a unique geographic area, with distinctive communities and populations. Boards and schools in smaller and more isolated communities face additional challenges, including persistent staffing shortages. A board-specific approach was needed.

- While the proposed YVPP plan was organized around an assumption that *all participating schools* would offer the Fourth R and high schools would employ the *Grade 9 Indigenous Informed Curriculum*, it was recognized very early in the process that a board-specific approach was needed.
- In practice, each board chose to implement the version of the Fourth R that best matched its curriculum. This meant that several versions of the Fourth R were delivered, including Grades 7, 8, and 9 Health and Physical Education Fourth R curricula (Ontario General and Catholic, English and French-language versions) and the Fourth R Indigenous Informed Grade 9 curriculum (General, English language version only).
- None of the Boards mandated delivery of specific Fourth R topics or lessons, so individual teachers chose which elements of the Fourth R curriculum they would provide to their classes. This meant, for example, that some teachers adopted the Fourth R as a whole-course replacement for Grade 9 Health and Physical Education; others spread the Fourth R curriculum over Grades 9 through 12, offering specific topics to each grade. Some Boards also used lessons from Fourth R curriculum in other classes, such as Healthy Active Living or Religion.
- The resulting micro-implementation reflected Board and teacher decisions that affected delivery of the Fourth R and shaped the contexts for the Booster intervention. Frequent consultations were required among the Board representatives, the TBDHU staff, and CRaNHR evaluators, to document the complex YVPP implementation process and its expected and emergent outcomes.

Additional Activities: Creating a Culture of Prevention

Although not identified as a specific goal, the YVPP adopted a "culture of prevention" approach, emphasizing the importance of comprehensive strategies to prevent TDV and IPV.



This upstream strategy aims to embed policy and practice across multiple levels to create conditions that make violence less likely to occur. Through educator training, program and policy

supports, and public awareness efforts, the YVPP contributed to building the awareness, interest, and skill necessary to prevent TDV and IPV.^{5 6}

Beginning in the second year of the YVPP, the Coordinators worked collaboratively with School Boards and youth-serving community organizations to create resources that support school, community, and family awareness of GBV and promote healthy relationship skills among youth.

Activities included:

2019-20	Presentations to local School Boards and the Thunder Bay Drug strategy; workshop for educators and service providers on Trauma Informed Practice (Dr. Jodi Hall); distribution of e-newsletters; and social media posts of tips to maintain teens' mental and physical health
2020-21	Presentations to Ontario Native Women's Youth Group; additional presentations to School Board teachers delivering summer learning classes; distribution of e-newsletters; and social media posts on help-seeking and mental health promotion for youth
2021-22	Collaboration with Thunder Bay Crime Prevention Council (co-lead) on Coalition on Tech-Facilitated Violence; YVPP webpage to publicize project goals and share resources for parents and caregivers; publication of local magazine article on YVPP; and social media posts on GBV for teens and parents
2022-23	Further development of YVPP website to support Booster initiatives; and social media posts about GBV for youth
2023-24	Presentation to School Board social workers; workshop for youth and service providers at local Indigenous youth conference on domestic violence; publication of a local magazine article on GBV; rebranded and revised YVPP website; and social media posts about consent
2024-25	Public awareness campaign focussed on GBV and healthy relationships; YVPP website launch (healthyyouthrelationships.ca); print and social media advertising to highlight issues around consent; publication of local magazine articles; and creation of toolkit on GBV for parents and caregivers

⁵ Crooks CV, Jaffe P, Dunlop C, Kerry A, Exner-Cortens D. Preventing Gender-Based Violence Among Adolescents and Young Adults: Lessons From 25 Years of Program Development and Evaluation. *Violence Against Women*. 2019 Jan;25(1):29-55. doi: 10.1177/1077801218815778. PMID: 30803428

⁶ Exner-Cortens, D., Wells, L., Lee, L., & Spiric, V. (2019). Building a culture of intimate partner violence prevention in Alberta, Canada through the promotion of healthy youth relationships. *Prevention Science*, 22(1), 40-49. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-019-01011-7>

Perceived Impacts

In June 2024, a retrospective End-of-Project Survey was sent to past and former members of the YVPP Advisory Group and trained Educators and Service Providers (n = 35 respondents).

The questionnaire assessed their perceptions about whether the YVPP had enhanced capacity to deliver youth violence prevention programs and whether it had contributed to any changes in organizational practice or policy. Respondents were also asked to offer their thoughts on what impacts the YVPP had on their own practice.



Results confirmed that the YVPP had positive impacts on Thunder Bay and District Educators, Service Providers, and members of the Advisory Group:

Capacity Building Indicators:

- 27 out of 31 survey respondents (87%) who had received Fourth R training reported enhanced capacity to deliver youth violence prevention programs, impacting their awareness, knowledge, or skills
- Comments revealed that the knowledge and skills learned would be equally useful going forward; in the words of an educator, they “learned new information that will be useful for future presentations”
- 5 out of 7 of the AC members who responded to the survey also confirmed they had observed positive impacts of the YVPP on their organization’s culture, policy or practice

Overall, People had Positive Views of the YVPP:

They thought the project activities were important and contributed to favourable outcomes. Perceived outcomes include:

Increased Awareness and Capacity of Educators & Service Providers

Participants noted that participation within the program allowed for increased knowledge leading to better readiness and response. For example, “Increasing capacity to identify and respond to teen dating violence when it arises”, and “Increased awareness for students and professionals”

Strengthened Partnerships & Cross-sector Collaboration

It was explained that the YVPP allowed for opportunities to strengthen collaboration between various healthcare, education, and governmental levels. For example, respondents said:

- “The TBHU has been very flexible and resourceful. I’m thankful for their support and collaboration.”

- “So grateful for the opportunity to partner with the education, academic and public health sector to undertake this project and learning journey about how to improve outcomes for youth through the implementation of a universal relationship-based intervention”

Contributing to Cultural Shifts

Participants note the implementation has had a positive impact on initiating larger cultural changes within their organizations to work towards TDV prevention:

- “Community and school readiness and awareness of the issue has increased significantly over the lifespan of the project, enabling future work to build on its success and reach”
- “YVPP provided an essential foundation to begin doing IPV prevention work in Thunder Bay and District.”
- “Helping shift the understanding surrounding IPV and healthy relationships.”

Fostering Student Engagement & Empowerment

YVPP has allowed for effective and positive engagement of students in discussions surrounding healthy and unhealthy relationships:

- “Been effective at engaging youth in discussions about healthy/unhealthy relationships.”
- “Teaching strategies in the program have enhanced our ability to teach youth the practical communication skills they need in difficult situations [...] beyond telling them to avoid certain behaviours or just saying 'no'.”
- “When students come in, I am able to employ some of the strategies in my conversations with them and help support them when they come to talk.”

Summary: Evaluation Questions & Answers

What process was used to implement the YVPP overall?

- The YVPP adopted a comprehensive approach to implementation. It sought to deliver the Fourth R and new Booster interventions to students across the City and District of Thunder Bay. It also endeavoured to build a culture of prevention among educators and other service professionals across the region.
- An Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from the TBDHU (project lead), the Lakehead University CRaNRH (the evaluators), all participating School Boards and Education Authorities, and related community organizations guided the YVPP’s implementation.
- Because of the diversity and unique contexts of each of the 6 participating School Boards and 2 Indigenous Education Authorities, a Board-Specific/Education Authority implementation approach was needed: Ultimately, the YVPP Coordinator worked with each educational organization to support micro-implementation plans that reflected Board and teacher decisions around delivery of the Fourth R and the subsequent Booster intervention.

Did the capacity-building activities offered through the YVPP contribute to increased knowledge or skill among the professionals/service providers involved?

Yes. The End-of-Project survey revealed that most respondents who had received Fourth R training reported it enhanced capacity to deliver youth violence prevention programs, impacting their awareness, knowledge, or skills

- Comments revealed that the knowledge and skills learned would be equally useful going forward; in the words of an educator, they “learned new information that will be useful for future presentations.”

Did the YVPP’s activities contribute to changes in organizational policy and practice among participating organizations?

Yes. Most members of the YVPP AC who responded to the survey indicated they had observed positive impacts of the YVPP on their organization’s culture, policy or practice.

Overall, did educators and service providers see the YVPP as having positive impacts?

Yes. Overall, stakeholders felt the YVPP had positive impacts on educators and students including increasing TDV prevention capacity building and increased student engagement.

The next chapter describes the implementation of the Fourth R.



4

The Fourth R



This Chapter describes the key activities and outputs related to the Fourth R.

It summarizes the data relevant to these process-related evaluation questions:

- What process was used to implement the Fourth R in this unique Northern context?
- How many teachers received the Fourth R training? Did they deliver the Fourth R Program?

Implementation of the Fourth R

Key objectives of the YVPP were to ① adapt the Fourth R to the local context, ensuring a trauma and violence-informed perspective was embedded; ② build capacity and readiness for Fourth R delivery in Thunder Bay and District by providing Fourth R training to educators in all participating school boards; and ③ implement the Fourth R in Grade 7, 8, and 9 classrooms in Thunder Bay and District.

① Adapting the Fourth R Program to Local Context

The YVPP sought to embed trauma and violence-informed practice throughout the project. The intent was to ensure that the curriculum was sensitive to local contexts and supported a trauma and violence-informed delivery of the Fourth R across the Thunder Bay District. Following recommendations from the YVPP AC:

- The project team consulted school board partners to assess community needs and identify strategies to enhance trauma and violence awareness
- At the request of the AC, a Trauma and Violence Indigenous Informed Working Group (TVIIWG) was formed
- The TVIIWG held a series of meetings (May 2019 – Mar 2020, 7 meetings) to review the Fourth R Indigenous Informed Grade 9 Curriculum and identify potential improvements
- Suggestions for enhancing the Indigenous Informed Fourth R curriculum were shared with Western University, which included the suggestions in its subsequent revisions
- The Project Team also worked closely with the TVIIWG to create additional resources to support teachers implementing the Fourth R curriculum

Review of the Indigenous Informed Fourth R Grade 9 Curriculum



The Fourth R
Strategies for Healthy
Youth Relationships

In its statement of purpose, the TVIIWG emphasized the importance of ensuring that the Fourth R curriculum reflected the priorities of the participating school boards and education authorities and addressed the needs and experiences of students who live in northern, urban, and rural communities in Thunder Bay and District.

To this end, the working group reviewed all lessons, activities, and resource materials included in the Indigenous Informed Grade 9 curriculum. They identified areas in which content could be enhanced or adapted at a high level, acknowledging that teachers will use the program based on their expertise, community, and classroom needs. Special attention was given to:

- Highlighting areas in which cultural teachings could be shared in an authentic way with the support of Indigenous Elders and traditional knowledge keepers
- Identifying and modifying lessons or activities where there was potentially triggering or stigmatizing content, including negative visuals or wording
- Noting topic areas in which best practice guidelines for safe communication and school protocols for help-seeking should be followed

The TVIIWG also recommended that training should discuss strategies for integrating local contexts into the Fourth R; specifically, they suggested educators and service providers:

- Invite Elders and traditional knowledge keepers into Fourth R classes to share their teachings about holistic health and wellness
- Preview videos and assess lessons for safety and replace any potentially triggering or stigmatizing wording or content
- Invite mental health workers to co-facilitate help-seeking lessons and offer information about local support pathways for students
- Ensure that help-seeking handouts list local in-person, telephone, and online supports, including those offered by Indigenous organizations
- Ask Board curriculum leads to conduct a detailed review the Fourth R content *before* they approve it being offered to their teachers and students

The TVIIWG also offered several suggestions to Western University about ways that Fourth R training sessions could be strengthened; they recommended that Western:

- Have an Indigenous Education Lead (or equivalent) present to answer questions about First Nations and Métis perspectives
- Inform the Fourth R trainer about our unique situation in Northwestern Ontario, especially limited access to mental health and addiction services
- Provide local context around GBV in Thunder Bay and District, including community-specific needs and local resources that are available



Suggestions Accepted by Western University

A major achievement of the TVIIWG was the review of the Grade 9 Indigenous Informed Fourth R curriculum suggestions and acceptance of their recommended Fourth R training enhancements by the Western University curriculum team:

- A detailed outline of considerations specific to the Grade 9 Indigenous Informed Fourth R curriculum was submitted to University of Western Ontario (Aug 2019)
- Lesson-specific suggestions were integrated into the Indigenous Informed Grade 9 curriculum when it was revised (Sept 2019)
- Western also included TVII recommendations in the Fourth R training sessions which were delivered to educators and support staff



Creation of Fourth R Classroom Preparation Checklists and Evaluation Tools

Additionally, the TVIIWG provided feedback to the YVPP project team on local resources that were designed to support and evaluate the Fourth R delivery. The group:

- Reviewed the YVPP *Fourth R Classroom Preparation Considerations* document for educators and support staff; this summary contained a list of questions that teachers could use to assess their readiness for delivering the Fourth R
- Suggested revisions to the YVPP evaluation tools including Fourth R teacher logs, end-of-semester reflection log, and student surveys; recommendations included the addition of questions to capture teacher and student well-being



Distribution of Resources to Support Trained Teachers

As directed by the TVIIWG, the TBDHU staff continued to share resources to support educators, emailing materials to teachers and posting resources to the YVPP project website; these resources included:

- Western University Fourth R materials for teachers delivering the curriculum (e.g., implementation manuals, flyers, newsletters for families, toolkits for staff working with Indigenous youth)
- TBDHU staff created and distributed additional resources to help educators with delivery of the Grade 9 Fourth R Indigenous Informed curriculum (e.g., PDFs of Handouts for Students and PowerPoint Presentations on Fourth R lessons)
- Additionally, TBDHU worked to create a preventive community through posting online resources supporting youth help-seeking and wellness (e.g., help-seeking and decision guides for teachers; classroom posters highlighting student wellness self-care)

2 Fourth R Training

Training rolled out sequentially, with sessions available on an annual basis, and was open to educators and support staff that were assisting with delivery of the Fourth R:



A total of 91 Fourth R training sessions were offered:

2018-19:	3 sessions in-person
2019-20:	6 in-person
2020-21:	3 virtual
2021-22:	3 virtual
2022-23:	4 in-person; 2 virtual
2023-24:	70 asynchronous virtual

- Although the YVPP initially offered in-person training sessions in Thunder Bay, Western University discontinued in-person training and shifted to a virtual delivery model for Fourth R training during the COVID-19 pandemic and afterward
- The YVPP Project Coordinators also created online training supports, including an onboarding module and an orientation for educators and service providers who received Fourth R training virtually (Feb 2021)
- During the final year, TBDHU staff developed asynchronous orientation materials that participants could access anytime during virtual training (Feb – Mar 2024)



Overall, 278 people were trained:

- In total, 225 educators and 53 support staff (e.g., administrators, guidance counsellors, social workers, school mental health staff, public health nurses) received Fourth R training throughout the YVPP project:

2018-19:	40 people
2019-20:	120 people
2020-21:	11 people
2021-22:	7 people
2022-23:	30 people
2023-24:	70 people

- In addition, Master training sessions were offered to 7 educators and TBDHU staff in March 2022 and November 2023; **6 became certified as master trainers**

Fourth R Implementation: “Snapshots”

Although planned evaluation activities were interrupted (2019) and eventually suspended (2022) (See Chapter 2), the TBDHU YVPP managers and staff needed feedback from educators and service providers to guide the development of resources for those individuals who were delivering the Fourth R. Thus, alternative methods were used to gain “snapshots” of Fourth R implementation. At three points in time, invitations to share feedback were sent to people who had received Fourth R training: a) Implementation Survey (2020); b) Administrative Email (2021) and c) Administrative Email (2024).⁷ Overall, the results were positive:



Many trained teachers had delivered the Fourth R and were planning to continue delivering topics and lessons in future:

2020

11/13 of the responding educators had delivered some of the Fourth R since they had been trained:

- Topics from all four of the Fourth R units were addressed and specific lessons within each unit both in-person and online (during COVID-19).
- All but one educator (who was “not teaching Phys Ed next year”) planned to use the Fourth R in future.

2021

Just over one-half of the responding educators (n = 10) had delivered some content in the preceding two semesters, in-person and online:

- They had covered topics from all four units, including skills-based activities; however, they conceded that teaching skills online was difficult.
- Overall, 12 were considering using the Fourth R as a resource in the following two semesters.

2024

More than three-quarters had taught some Fourth R in the past (n = 38) and two-thirds would deliver in future (n = 33).

Those who did not plan to teach Fourth R explained that their roles had changed and that they were no longer teaching subjects in which the Fourth R content would be relevant.

⁷ a) Online Implementation Survey (2020): 23 educators were invited to participate; 13 responded; b) Administrative Email (2021): 19 educators replied to an email asking them what Fourth R content they were delivering; c) Administrative Email (2024): 49/174 individuals who had registered for Fourth R training during the YVPP project replied to an email asking whether they’d delivered the Fourth R and if they planned to deliver in future.

Sustainability & Future Directions

- ✓ In June 2024, a retrospective End-of-Project Survey was sent to past and former members of the YVPP Advisory Group and trained Educators and Service Providers
- ✓ The questionnaire assessed their perceptions about whether the YVPP had enhanced capacity to deliver youth violence prevention programs
- ✓ It also assessed intentions to deliver the YVPP programming in future

Suggestions for Sustainability

Twenty respondents shared their suggestions to ensure the sustainability of the Fourth R:

- Incorporating more supports and resources for educators, such as posters, reminders of training opportunities, and a “community support” group to share tips and best practices
- Ongoing professional development and capacity building including in-person and virtual training and collaboration sessions, staff turnover training solutions, youth-led sessions, and specialized training for facilitators to ensure sustained effectiveness
- Extended funding to ensure program stability and delivery

Summary: Evaluation Questions & Answers

What process was used to implement the Fourth R in this unique Northern context?

The YVPP supported the delivery of the Fourth R in Thunder Bay and District by:

- Forming a Trauma and Violence and Indigenous Informed Working Group tasked with reviewing the Fourth R Grade 9 Indigenous Informed Curriculum and making suggestions so it may be adapted to address the needs and experiences of students who live in northern, urban, and rural environments.
- Distributing existing resources and creating new resources to support educators in delivering the Fourth R (e.g., classroom preparations checklists, PDFs of handouts, PowerPoint Presentations, etc.).

How many educators received the Fourth R training? Did they deliver the Fourth R Program?

- In total, 278 educators and support staff received Fourth R training throughout the YVPP project (2018-24), 6 of whom became certified as Master Trainers.
- These trained educators are delivering the Fourth R:
 - Most of the educators who responded to the implementation surveys said they had delivered some of the Fourth R and would continue to use it in the future.

The next chapter describes the development implementation and evaluation of the Booster.



5

The Healthy Relationships Booster



This chapter describes the Booster development process, and summarizes key activities, outputs, and outcomes.

It summarizes the data relevant to these evaluation questions:

- **Process:**
 - What process was used to develop and implement the Booster?
 - How many youth received the Booster?
 - When implementing the newly developed Booster, what worked well and what needed to be changed/improved?
- **Outcomes:**
 - Were the intended outcomes of the Gr 10 Booster achieved?
 - Are there gender or cultural differences in any of the outcomes?

Key objectives of the YVPP were to ❶ develop and pilot a Grade 10 Healthy Relationships Booster (an educational intervention intended to reinforce ('Boost') the Ontario Healthy Relationships curricula students should have received in Grades 7, 8, and 9); ❷ finalize the Booster, then ❸ deliver the finalized YVPP Booster in Grade 10 classrooms in Thunder Bay and District and evaluate this new intervention.⁸

The YVPP Booster development, implementation, and evaluation timeline are summarized in **Figure 6** (Booster Timeline). More details on each activity are provided in this chapter.

❶ Developing & Piloting the Booster

Developing the Booster

Although the original plan for booster development could not be implemented, alternative development strategies were explored and a "Hackathon" was identified as a promising option (Jan 2022)⁹. With PHAC approval and school board support, Booster development proceeded with a Hackathon with health and educational professionals (Feb - Mar 2022).

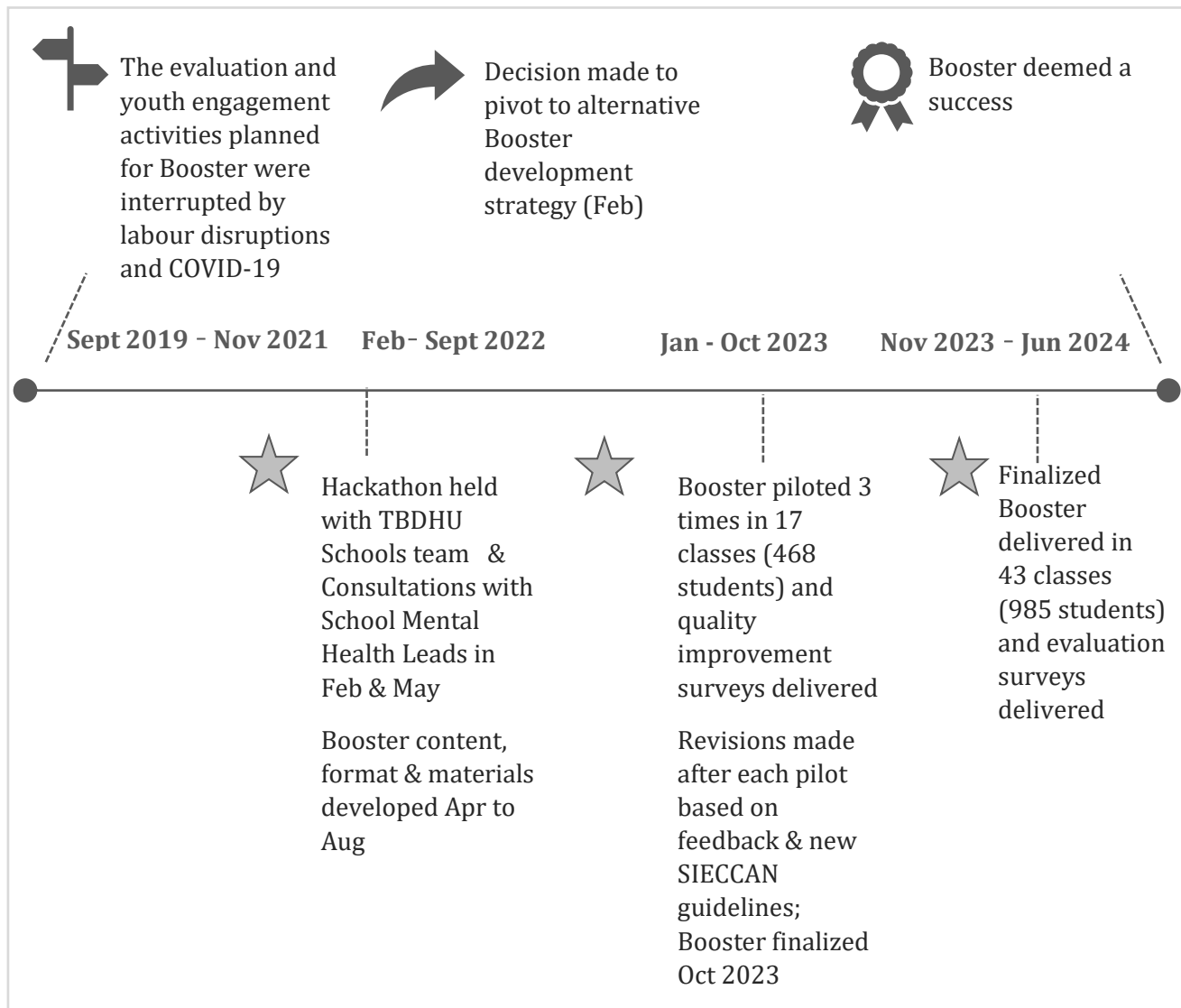
⁸ See Figure 4 (Booster Logic Model, p.10) for details on the rationale, activities, and intended outcomes of the YVPP Booster.

⁹ A Hackathon is a fast-paced, collaborative, and innovative event in which participants engage within a group structure to create or improve upon usable software, services or programming.

i. Booster Hackathon Event

- **February 2022:** TBDHU Healthy Schools Team met twice to plan and prepare for Booster Hackathon event; an online Hackathon platform was purchased and a Hackathon facilitator hired
 - **March 2022:** Hackathon conducted with TBDHU Healthy Schools Team (13 people participated: 12 Public Health Nurses (PHNs) and the YVPP Coordinator):
 - Hackathon activities included brainstorming, group discussion and facilitated problem-solving, and work-play exercises
 - The focus was on clarifying Booster purpose and expected outcomes; identifying content themes; and discussing preferred Booster delivery methods
 - The consultant prepared a report summarizing the main themes, considerations and subtopics covered during the Hackathon, with the content representing the 'starting point' for Booster development

Figure 9. Booster Development, Implementation, and Evaluation Timeline (2019-2024)



ii. Working Groups

- **March – September 2022:** The YVPP coordinator reviewed the Hackathon report and formed smaller working groups (comprised of TBDHU Healthy School Teams members):
 - The working groups were tasked with building on the Hackathon results and identifying the Booster content and delivery
 - The working groups met 12 times; they determined that the Grade 10 Careers class was the most appropriate target for Booster delivery; next, they developed the Booster content, supporting materials, and delivery strategies

iii. School Mental Health Lead Consultations

- **May 2022:** While the Working Groups were developing the Booster, the YVPP Coordinator consulted with participating School Board Mental Health Leads to further inform the Booster:
 - The Mental Health Leads provided their feedback on Booster themes/priority areas identified in the Hackathon; they also shared the top three mental health concerns they were seeing in their schools
 - This feedback informed decisions about the topics and material that was included in the Booster sessions.

The Initial Product



In September 2022, the content and format of the initial Booster Pilot were finalized.

The Pilot Booster consisted of two 70-minute workshops:

- Workshop 1 covered the general topic of “Coping Strategies & Support”; Workshop 2 covered “Healthy Relationships”
- The workshops were designed to be delivered by TBDHU Public Health Nurses (School Teams) in Grade 10 Careers Class (a mandatory class in Ontario)
- Materials included: facilitator guides, Prezi presentations, and accompanying student workbooks; both English and French versions were created

The Booster also included a website component with help-seeking resources for students in Grades 7 - 12.

In October 2022, PHNs were trained in Booster delivery. The Booster was ready for piloting.

Piloting the Booster

Once the Booster was ready, the YVPP Coordinator sought Board approvals to pilot the Booster in a small number of classes. In the end, the Booster was piloted three times, with revisions made after each pilot. The key activities and outputs are summarized in **Figure 9** below.

The Booster Pilots

Figure 10. Summary of Booster Pilot Activities & Reach

<p>1</p> <p>1st Pilot</p> <p><i>January - March 2023</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booster piloted in 5 Grade 10 classes, 1 board • Quality improvement feedback collected from students and PHNs <p>Minor revisions made to Booster content and delivery based on feedback received (<i>March</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop length was shortened to allow “wiggle room” for the evaluation and other things that may come up - Content and format were revised to make the Workshops more youth-friendly and engaging
<p>2</p> <p>2nd Pilot</p> <p><i>April - May 2023</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised Booster piloted in 2 Grade 10 classes, 1 board • Quality improvement feedback collected from students and PHNs <p>Minor revisions made to Booster content and delivery based on feedback received (<i>May</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content and format were further revised to make the Workshops more youth-friendly and engaging
<p>3</p> <p>3rd Pilot</p> <p><i>May - June 2023</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised Booster piloted in 10 Grade 10 classes, 1 board • Quality improvement feedback collected from students and PHNs
<p>Total Reach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 468 Students; 17 Grade 10 Classes



More than 468 students attended the Booster Workshops during the 6-month Pilot Phase (January - June 2023)¹⁰

¹⁰ Attendance was not recorded at a few Workshops, so the actual number of students participating is higher.

Booster Pilot Evaluations

Students and PHNs shared their feedback on the Workshops after each one was delivered (Booster Surveys & Facilitator Reflection Forms). After each pilot, the evaluators summarized the feedback and forwarded it to the YVPP Coordinator, who then revised the Workshop.



Across all three pilots, the feedback from students and PHNs was positive:

- ✓ The PHNs perceived the Workshops favourably and had no major delivery issues
- ✓ Students also rated the Workshops positively: most gave the Workshops a “thumbs up”; they found the content informative, relevant, and practically useful; they liked the presentation format, especially the various activities and games
- ✓ Many students thought the workshops were good the way they were and that no changes were needed. Some did offer suggestions for improvement: the most common suggestion from both the students and PHNs was to add more interactive and “hands-on” activities to increase student engagement in the material

2 Finalizing the Booster

Aug – Sept 2023:

- The YVPP Coordinator reviewed the feedback received from students and PHNs from the third pilot, which suggested further revisions were needed to make the Booster delivery strategies more youth-friendly
 - Delivery strategies were revised to make the Workshops more engaging (more interactive components were added and materials revamped)
- The Coordinator also reviewed the Booster to see how well it aligned with the new Sex Education and Information and Education Council Canada (SIECCAN) guidelines for integrating GBV prevention in schools (released after the initial Booster was developed) and then revised the Booster content to align with the SIECCAN guidelines
- The revisions made to the content and delivery strategies during this time were significant, so the Coordinator sought another round of Board approvals before delivering the Final Version of the Booster in classes

The Final Product

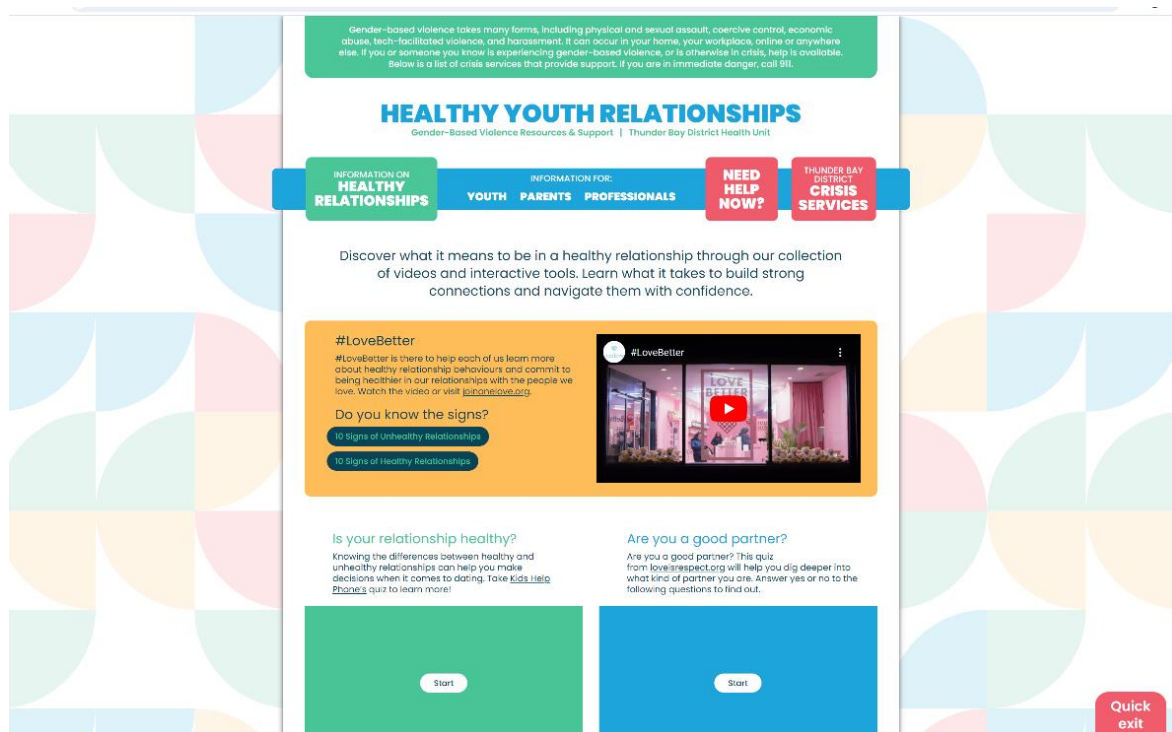


In October (2023), the content and format of the Booster were finalized.

The Final version of the YVPP Booster consists of two 70-minute workshops:

- Workshop 1: “Relationships in Society”; Workshop 2 covers “Skills for Healthy Relationships”
- The workshops are designed to be delivered by TBDHU Public Health Nurses (School Teams) in Grade 10 Careers or Civics Classes (mandatory in Ontario)
- Materials include: Facilitator Guides, Classroom Preparation Checklist, Menti Activities, Canva Slide Presentation, Materials Checklist, Emotions Wheel, and a Healthy Relationships Rack Card handout for Students (which replaced the workbook from the pilots)

The Booster also includes a website component with information and resources for youth, parents, and professionals.



<https://www.healthyyouthrelationships.ca/>

In October (2023), 9 PHNs were trained in the revised Booster delivery. The Booster was ready to be launched and evaluated.

③ Delivering & Evaluating the Finalized Booster

Booster Delivery

The finalized Booster had a wide reach:

Booster delivery extended well beyond the Boards and classrooms that participated in the Grade 9 Fourth R. Overall, this includes:

- Public and Catholic School Boards
- Francophone and Indigenous Schools
- Schools in Thunder Bay and District

Of note:

- Although the Booster was originally developed to be offered in Grade 10 Careers classes, it was successfully delivered in other Grade 10 classes, including Civics, Religion, and Healthy Active Living Classes (43 classes, 4 School Boards, 1 Indigenous Education Authority).
- Once the Booster was up and running in Grade 10 classes, some teachers suggested it could be delivered in other Grades too – citing the content applies to all high school students (not just Grade 10s). With additional Board approval, the decision was made to expand the reach beyond Grade 10. In April 2024, the Booster was piloted in 4 additional classes.

The number of students reached, by setting, is summarized in **Figure 10** below.

Figure 11. Finalized Booster Delivery Settings & Reach – November 2023 – July 2024

Delivery Setting	# of Classes	# of Students
Grade 10 Classes ^a	43	871
Expanded Reach Pilot ^b	4	114
Total	47	985

^a Includes Careers, Civics, Religion, Health, Healthy Active Living classes, a Hockey Class, and classes in 3 community settings where students were completing their Gr 10 equivalent

^b Grade 11 Food & Culture; Grade 11 Fashion; Grade 10/11/12 Band; and Grade 11/12 Health



985 students attended the Booster Workshops over the 9-month Delivery Phase
(Nov 2023 – Jul 2024)

Booster Evaluations

Process Evaluation

Students and PHNs shared their feedback on the Workshops after each one was delivered (Booster Surveys, Expanded Reach Surveys & Facilitator Reflection Forms).

★ **Feedback from students and PHNs was positive:**

The PHNs perceived the Workshops favourably and had no major delivery issues.

They noted a **key strength was the interactive activities** used to deliver the Workshop content. Students were strongly engaged in the interactive activities and found activities involving personal devices particularly appealing.

Students liked the Workshops and found the content useful:

- ✓ Most students gave the Workshops a **Thumbs UP** (e.g., Figure 10):

Figure 12. Illustrative Example of Student Booster Ratings



- ✓ Almost all students thought the topics covered would be **practically useful** for people their age (98 - 100% Workshop 1 & 2)
- ✓ Almost all students thought the material could **help people develop healthier relationships** (97 - 98% Workshop 1 & 2)

Detailed summaries of all the student evaluations from the finalized Booster (Gr 10 + Expanded Reach Pilot) can be found in Appendix 3.

Outcomes Evaluation

At the end of each Workshop, students in the Grade 10 classes were asked to reflect on what they had learned (See Methods section, Booster Surveys). At least three weeks later, they were asked whether they had applied any of what they learned (Booster Follow-Up Surveys).



The evaluations suggest the Booster was achieving its intended outcomes:

Students reported gains in knowledge they need to promote and engage in healthy relationships:

- ✓ When answering an open-ended question about learning, most students (86%) said they learned something new. Their answers depicted as a Word Cloud (**Figure 12**), show that their learnings were related to key Booster topics.
- ✓ When asked to rate the extent of their learning on key topics the Booster was targeting, most students indicated they knew more about each topic after having taken the Workshops. See **Figure 13** (Knowledge Gains-Workshop 1) and **Figure 14** (Knowledge Gains-Workshop 2) which illustrate most students knew more (either a Little More or a Lot More) after each Workshop.
- ✓ When asked at follow-up (at least 3 weeks after the Workshops), many students (67%) described something they learned in the Workshops (Q: “What did you learn in the Workshops, something you didn’t know before); indicating they retained some of the knowledge they had gained.

These findings are important. The intended initial outcome of the Booster intervention is that “Students who attend the Booster report gains in the knowledge they need to engage in healthy relationships and prevent IPV” (Figure 4).

This is an important step in the intended results chain as the hope is that these enhanced youth competencies contribute to a reduction in TDV, and ultimately, the primary prevention of IPV in Thunder Bay & District (Longer-term Outcomes, YVPP Booster Logic Model, Figure 4).



86% said they learned something new... Topics they described learning include:

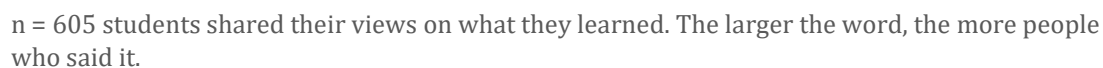


Figure 14. Knowledge Gains for Key Topic Areas: Workshop 1



Most students knew more about each key topic after the Workshop:

Knowledge Gains - Workshop 1: Relationships in Society

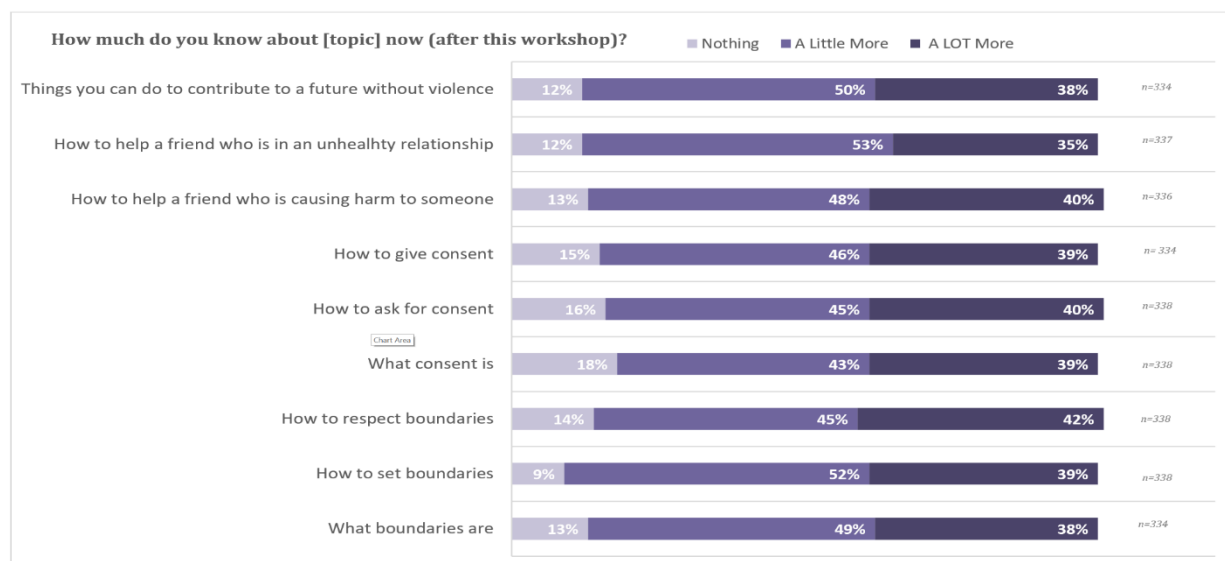


Figure 15. Knowledge Gains for Key Topic Areas: Workshop 2



Most students knew more about each key topic after the Workshop:

Knowledge Gains - Workshop 2: Skills for Healthy Relationships



Students described how they applied (or plan to apply) their Booster learnings:

- ✓ When asked, “Have your views on relationships changed since the Workshops?” Almost one-third of students surveyed **said their views had changed** (49/159 students, or 31%). 45 of those students shared their reflections on how their views had changed. They described:
 - Now knowing the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy relationship, being aware of the signs of an unhealthy relationship, and know they can seek help if they need it
 - Having gained strategies for fostering healthier relationships. For example, they described having healthier communication strategies, respecting others’ feelings and boundaries, and setting boundaries

The following quotes are illustrative:

"I now know how to identify unhealthy relationships and how to make sure that I don't end up in and/or be the cause of one."

"Some things in relationships I thought was normal is apparently unhealthy"

"I think differently of my partner and we communicate better."

"I am allowed to feel uncomfortable and speak out on that without being made to feel guilty about it."

- Significantly, some students described how they have applied this new knowledge to their own lives, and understand they can “leave if they feel unsafe”. For example:

"I think more about how my relationship is going and how its starting to be unhealthy"

"Having the knowledge in the back of my mind that I can always reach out for help if I need it."

- ✓ When asked, “Do you think you’ve made any changes in your behaviour because of what you learned in the Workshops?”, 37 of the 159 (23%) students surveyed **said their**

behaviour had changed. 33 students shared their reflections on how they changed. They described:

- ***Having Improved Communication Skills:*** Students explained that they were using some of the knowledge they gained related to healthier communication. Generally, they described being "less toxic" and "more respectful" with "family and friends"; They explained that since taking the Workshops they "communicate feelings more freely", "listened more attentively", and have "learned to communicate more in my relationships"
- ***Setting Boundaries & Recognizing Red Flags:*** A few students described applying their new knowledge to their own lives, giving examples of setting new boundaries and recognizing warning signs in a relationship they were in. For example:

"Noticed more red flags in my most recent relationships that I thought were 'normal'."

"My self-respect has changed; I only allow what I know I am okay with."

- ✓ When asked, "Do you think you will make any changes in your behaviour because of what you learned in the Workshops?", just over one-third of students (58/159, or 36%) **thought they would apply this new knowledge in the future.** 49 of them shared their reflections on how they may change. They described:

- Generally, students felt the knowledge and skills they gained through the Workshops would help them in the future to recognize if they're in an unhealthy relationship, what to do about it if they are, and what they can do to contribute to making relationships "more healthy". The following quotes are illustrative:

"I will always ask for consent, and if they don't want to do it to respect their answer."

"In my future relationship I may be more aware about what I am doing and if what they are doing is unhealthy."

"I will know how to handle an unhealthy relationship if I'm ever in one."

"Think more before I act, make sure my actions won't hurt anyone."

These are important findings as outlined in the Booster Logic Model (Figure 4). The intended intermediate outcome of the Booster intervention is that students employ the competencies learned in the Booster and engage in healthy / healthier relationships.

This is another step in the results chain. The hope is that youth employing these enhanced competencies will contribute to a reduction in TDV, and, ultimately, the primary prevention of IPV in Thunder Bay & District (Longer-term Outcomes, YVPP Booster Logic Model, Figure 4).



Gender Differences in Knowledge Gains

The knowledge gains data were analyzed to assess whether there were any gender differences in numbers of individuals reporting gains. Looking at data on knowledge gains from students who completed one of the Grade 10 workshops (Session 1 or Session 2):

- There were no significant differences in knowledge gains among Grade 10 students who reported male, female, or gender-nonconforming/non-binary identities -- almost all students reported knowledge gains:

Grade 10 Workshops Knowledge Gains	Gender Identity		# Non- binary	# Grand Total
	# Female	# Male		
Yes	283	277	29	595
No	11	8	2	21
Grand Total	294	285	31	610

Future Directions & Sustainability

Because of its demonstrated success (as described in this chapter), there are hopes that Booster delivery continues beyond the YVPP funding period. Some steps have been taken to facilitate ongoing Booster delivery.

As of August 2024:

- The Booster is included in TBDHU's Schools Team Program Guide; this means that teachers can request PHNs to come into their classrooms to deliver the Booster
- PHNs in Thunder Bay and the District are trained in Booster delivery, and, to the best of their ability, will deliver the Booster upon request from teachers/boards
- The Booster is available open-access on the YVPP website; this means it is available to teachers who may want to deliver it in their classrooms themselves. Considerations are being made to have PHNs available to coach teachers in Delivery:
<https://www.tbdhu.com/resource/educator-resources-healthy-relationships>

Suggestions for Sustainability

In June 2024, a retrospective End-of-Project Survey was sent to past and former members of the YVPP Advisory Group and trained Educators and Service Providers. Respondents were asked what suggestions they would make to ensure the sustainability of the Booster.

23 people shared their thoughts. Their suggestions are summarized below:

- Extending funding to ensure the program can be delivered effectively, updated regularly and modified as needed; it was suggested that the TBDHU make the Coordinator position permanent to support ongoing development needs and ensure up-to date resources
- Continued professional development opportunities with calls for ongoing training for teachers and maintaining collaboration with community partners and public health professionals to ensure their involvement in delivery and ongoing support
- Offering flexibility in delivery mode of the program curriculum, such as introducing options regarding the timing and content of program (e.g., grade levels) to ensure relevancy to students' evolving interests and social dynamics
- Consider developing youth-led sessions that enhance engagement and ownership

Summary: Evaluation Questions & Answers

What process was used to develop and implement the Booster?

A Hackathon with public health staff and consultations with school mental health leads informed the initial development of the Booster. It was then piloted and revised iteratively based on feedback from students and facilitators.

How many youth received the Booster?

More than 1,400 youth received the Booster:

- More than 468 students during its pilot phase and 985 during its final launch.

When implementing the newly developed Booster, what worked well and what needed to be changed/improved?

The Booster was consistently well-received by both the facilitators delivering it and the students receiving it. In the spirit of quality improvement, a series of iterative revisions were undertaken to make the delivery strategies more youth-friendly and engaging.

- A key strength of the finalized Booster is the interactive activities used to deliver the content. Students were strongly engaged in the interactive activities and found activities involving personal devices particularly appealing.

Were the intended outcomes of the Booster achieved?

Yes. The data suggest the Booster achieved its intended outcomes: Grade 10 students gained knowledge they need to engage in healthy relationships and were applying their new knowledge to their lives.

Are there gender or cultural differences in any of the outcomes?

No. There were no differences in knowledge gains among students who identified as Male, Female, or Gender non-conforming:

- Almost all students, regardless of these demographic characteristics, reported knowledge gains.

The next chapter outlines the key learning from this evaluation offered to contribute to the knowledge base of what works in teen-dating violence prevention (an intended outcome of this funding stream).



6

Key Learnings

Key Learnings



This chapter outlines the key learnings from this evaluation. The learnings are organized by the 3 chapters on the YVPP overall, the Fourth R, and the Booster. These are offered to contribute to the knowledge base of what works in teen-dating violence prevention (an intended outcome of this funding stream).

The YVPP Overall

Implementing School-Based TDV Prevention Interventions Across Multiple Organizations Takes Time & Requires Flexibility

Address Priority Needs of Project Partners

- Overall, the implementation of the YVPP demonstrated the challenges and opportunities inherent in delivering a curriculum-based intervention across multiple education organizations.
- It also underlined the importance of negotiating the conditions under which the intervention and evaluation would be delivered; as this project discovered, the time required to consult with multiple organizations and achieve consensus around objectives, processes and anticipated outcomes can be considerable.

Be Prepared to Pivot

- When unforeseen events negatively impact your plans, address priority needs that are identified by project partners: over the first four years of the YVPP, the workplan was adjusted several times to accommodate challenges experienced by project partners.
- Between spring 2020 and fall 2022, the Thunder Bay and district school boards and educational authorities were impacted by labour disruptions, and COVID-19 lockdowns, so teachers and students had to transition several times between in-person and online learning.
- As requested by the AC, the TBDHU implementation team and the CRaNHHR evaluators made major changes in the YVPP roll-out and, in 2021, plans for tracking the Fourth R and developing the Booster intervention were put on hold indefinitely. When plans were restarted in 2022, the evaluation workplan and tools had to be redesigned.

Success Emerges When You Least Expect It

- As outlined in the preceding chapters, the YVPP ended up being a success. Despite the project's complexity and the many obstacles encountered in implementing planned activities, the project and its partners persevered and, over six years:
 - Trained more than 275 educators and service professionals in delivering the Fourth R and developed additional resources to support the curriculum for Grades 7, 8, and 9.
 - Developed a brief Booster intervention that was enthusiastically welcomed by teachers and students in schools and alternative education settings.
 - Evaluations indicate that, overall, the YVPP achieved its goal of giving students the knowledge they need to engage in healthy relationships and prevent IPV.

The Fourth R

There has been great enthusiasm among School Boards and teachers in getting trained in the Fourth R:

- Overall, the YVPP trained 278 people, including teachers and other professionals (e.g., administrators, guidance counsellors, social workers, school mental health staff, public health nurses)

Teachers are delivering the Fourth R in classrooms across the District and reaching students with this relevant and timely material:

- Administrative data confirmed that educators and other professionals were delivering the Fourth R; the End-of-Project indicated that they overall had positive views of the training and the Fourth R program

The Booster

Developing Interventions take Time, Continuous Quality Improvement is Important

The Booster development experience illustrates the value of seeking ongoing feedback and allowing time for program improvements:

- Though student and PHN feedback was consistently positive through the pilot phase, recommendations were provided to improve the Booster. Most of the feedback was to increase the “interactive” and “hands on” elements. This proved beneficial as a key strength of the Workshops is the interactive activities included

The Booster is a Promising TDV Prevention Intervention

Evaluation data suggest the Booster was a success:

- Booster evaluations were consistently positive; the Workshops have been well received by the PHNs who found the Workshops easy to delivery, and by students who liked the Workshops and found the content practically useful for promoting healthy relationships
- The knowledge gain and behaviour change data suggest the Booster is having a positive impact on students, giving them the knowledge they need to engage in healthy relationships

List of References & Acronyms

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Acronyms

AC	Advisory Committee
CRaNHR	Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research (Lakehead University)
EQs	Evaluation Questions
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
PHAC	Public Health Agency of Canada
PHN	Public Health Nurse
REB	Research Ethics Board
SEICCAN	Sexual Information & Education Council of Canada
TBDHU	Thunder Bay District Health Unit
TDV	Teen Dating Violence
TVIIWG	Trauma and Violence and Indigenous Informed Working Group
YVPP	Youth Violence Prevention Project in Thunder Bay & District

Appendices

Appendix 1: Detailed Methodology

This report drew on 8 sources of information:

① Program Documents Review. Relevant program documents and artifacts were reviewed to help describe the YVPP and identify successes, challenges, and emerging outcomes. These included Annual Reports to PHAC (n = 6), Hackathon Reports (n = 2), and Quarterly Status Reports (n = 21).

② Evaluator Notes. With permission, the evaluators took notes at meetings of the YVPP Coordination Team (n = 76), Advisory Committee (n = 22), and the Trauma, Violence and Indigenous Informed Working Group (n = 5). The intention was to document (in real-time) the YVPP implementation process and identify milestones, successes, challenges, and outcomes.

③ Fourth R Implementation Data. Administrative data on Fourth R delivery were gathered through emailed surveys.

- Through email, trained teachers were asked: Have you delivered any of the Fourth R and do you plan to in the future? 81 Teacher surveys were received: June 2020 (n = 13), January-February 2021 (n = 19), and May-June 2024 (n = 49). Results were used to assess Fourth R implementation.

④ Booster Surveys. With School Board and Advisory Committee approval, all students who took part in a Booster session were invited to complete a survey at the end of the session.

- 644 Booster surveys were completed during the Pilot Phase (n = 314 – Jan-Mar 2023; n = 77 – Apr-May 2023; n = 253 – May-Jun 2023).
 - Developed for this evaluation, the surveys asked students to rate the Workshops (content, delivery format, relevance, etc.), share what they liked about the Workshops, and offer suggestions on how the Workshops might be improved.
 - Results were used for Quality Improvement purposes.
- 750 Booster surveys were completed during the Launch Phase (n = 735 Thunder Bay; n = 25 District; Nov 2023 – June 2024).
 - Developed for this evaluation, these surveys were designed as a quick learning assessment tool. Students were asked to rate the Workshops (do they feel the content is relevant and useful), and whether changes might be needed (quality improvement). To assess their learning, an open-ended question asked whether they learned anything new; closed-ended questions asked whether they gained knowledge in 15 key topic areas (learning assessment).
 - Results were used primarily for assessment of Booster Outcomes.

5 Expanded Reach Surveys. Participants who received the Booster in the Expanded Reach pilot settings (Grades 9, 11, 12) were asked to complete a feedback survey.

- 105 Expanded Reach surveys were received (Apr 2024).
 - Developed for this evaluation, the surveys were designed to capture student perceptions of the Booster in Grades 9, 11, and 12. Surveys were distributed in-class and students were asked to rate the Workshops (content, delivery format, relevance, etc.), share what they liked about the Workshops, and offer suggestions on how they might be improved.
 - Results were used for Quality Improvement purposes.

6 Booster Follow-Up Surveys. Students who had participated in the Booster also were asked to complete a brief follow-up survey to share their perceptions about effects on their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour related to TDV.

- 159 Follow-up surveys were received (Jun 2024).
 - Developed for this evaluation, the surveys were designed to assess whether students had retained the knowledge they gained in the Workshops, the extent to which students had applied what they learned in the Booster, and whether any behavioural changes may have occurred as a result. Students were invited to complete these surveys in class (the same class they received the Booster in) at least 3 weeks after they received the initial Booster (time ranged between 3 and 12 weeks).
 - Results were used to assess outcomes.

7 Facilitator Reflections. Staff who delivered Boosters shared their reflections and suggestions about the session.

- Nine facilitators completed 84 forms.
 - Developed for this evaluation, the forms were designed to assess the facilitators' implementation experiences. They were asked to provide information on implementation fidelity and on what worked well and what changes might be needed.
 - Results were used for Quality Improvement purposes.

8 End of Project Surveys. At the end of the project, the YVPP Advisory Group and educators were surveyed to assess their views on project success and sustainability of the Fourth R and the Booster.

- 37 surveys were completed (n = 8 Advisory Group; n = 29 educators).
 - With School Board and Advisory Committee approval, educators, service providers, and Advisory Committee members (past and present) were invited to complete an online survey. The survey asked them to share their thoughts about

the potential successes and impacts of the project and to offer their ideas about sustainability.

- Results were used to assess perceptions about the YVPP and its sustainability.

Research Ethics Board Approvals

- Methods 1 – 3 (Program Documents Review, Evaluator Notes, Administrative Survey) did not require REB approval.
- The Booster surveys were exempt from the Research Ethics Board review as the purpose of these activities was purely evaluative (assessment and quality improvement), and did not constitute research for as per the Tri-Council Policy statement.
- The End-of-Project reflective survey was reviewed and approved by Lakehead University's Research Ethics Board.

Appendix 2: YVPP – Participating School Boards & Education Authorities

Six Northern School Boards and 2 Indigenous Education Authorities participated in the YVPP.

These Boards/Education Authorities are, in many respects, different from those located in Canada's larger urban centres.

As illustrated in the description of each below, there is also diversity among them:



Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores Boreales: Straddling two districts, Thunder Bay and Kenora-Rainy River, the Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores Boreales covers 34,000 km² and serves nine communities from Red Lake in the west to Longlac on Highway 11 east and Marathon on Highway 17 east. CSDCAB oversees French education at nine elementary schools, and one secondary school.

Northern Nishnawbe Education Council (NNEC): NNEC is a First Nations, band-empowered, non-profit educational organization under the direction of the Sioux Lookout District Chiefs. NNEC delivers secondary and post-secondary education programs and services for First Nations people through the Pelican Falls First Nations High School and Centre, Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School, and Wahsa Distance Education Centre. NNEC also hosts post-secondary programs and has offices in Lac Seul, Sioux Lookout, and Thunder Bay.

NNEC exists to support the advancement of First Nations self-government, self-determination, and economic self-sufficiency through its provision of culturally relevant, values-based education for the Sioux Lookout District First Nations.

Lakehead Public Schools (LPS): LPS oversees all secular English-language public schools in the Thunder Bay CMA and small townships, and administers education at 22 elementary schools, 3 secondary schools, and one adult education centre. The Board employs nearly 2,000 staff members, including more than 840 teaching staff, with a total enrolment of over 10,000 students.

Matawa Education and Care Centre: The Matawa Chiefs established Matawa Education and Care Centre, formally known as Matawa Learning Centre in 2010 in order to provide an educational alternative for youth from remote Matawa Communities.

Superior Greenstone District School Board (SGDSB): SGDSB is a publicly funded educational organization in Northern Ontario, Canada. It oversees a range of elementary and secondary schools within a vast geographic region, including rural and remote communities. Committed to fostering excellence in education, SGDSB emphasizes innovative teaching practices, inclusive learning environments, and the holistic development of students. The board aims to inspire and empower students to reach their full potential through a diverse and engaging curriculum, prioritizing mental health and well-being, integration of culture and comprehensive support services, and a strong focus on community engagement and partnership.

Superior North Catholic District School Board: Superior North Catholic District School Board is a separate school board located in Northwestern Ontario which covers a vast area. The board provides elementary (Kindergarten to grade 8) education in the communities of Geraldton, Longlac, Manitouwadge, Marathon, Nakina, Nipigon, Red Rock, Schreiber and Terrace Bay. Its head office is located in Terrace Bay.

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board (TBCDSB): TBCDSB oversees Catholic schools in the city of Thunder Bay and the townships of Gorham and Ware. It administers education at 15 elementary schools, 3 senior elementary, and 2 secondary schools.

Conseil scolaire du Grand Nord: The Conseil scolaire du Grand Nord is a French-language Public District School Board which manages 15 elementary schools and 8 secondary schools across 64,238 km² in Northern Ontario.

Appendix 3: Evaluation Summaries from the Finalized Booster

3.1. Grade 10 Evaluation (Process & Outcomes)

3.2. Expanded Reach Pilot Evaluation (Process & Quality Improvement)

3.1: Grade 10 Healthy Relationships Booster Evaluations 2023-2024

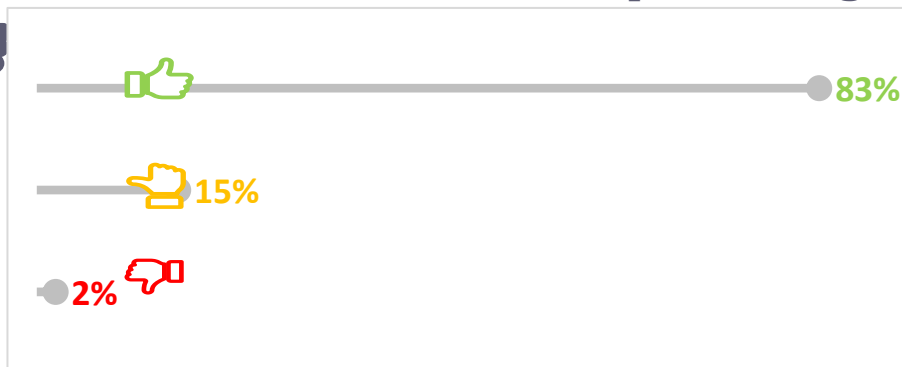
Highlights from Student Feedback

Prepared September 2024

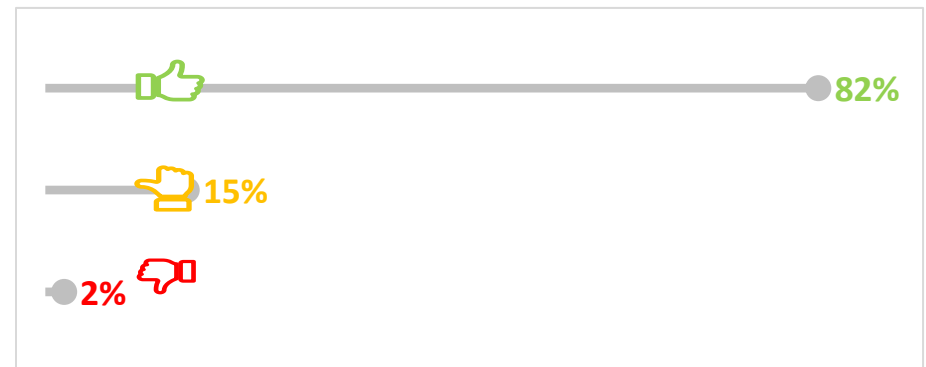
The Youth Violence Prevention Project (YVPP) is a school-based initiative to give youth the social and emotional competencies they need to engage in healthy relationships and make safe(er) choices regarding sexual behaviour and substance use. A new “Booster” intervention was developed through the YVPP: It consists of 2 workshops, meant to “Boost” Grade 10 students’ knowledge on various topics related to Healthy Relationships. Last year, between November 2023 and June 2024, TBDHU staff delivered the Booster to 871 students in Grade 10 classes. We checked in with students immediately after each Workshop (n=750), and a few weeks later (n=159).

Here is some of what students had to say....

Students liked the Workshops ... Most gave them a Thumbs UP:



Workshop 1: Relationships in Society (n=362)



Workshop 2: Skills for Healthy Relationships (n=365)

They found the Workshops useful...

- ✓ Almost all the students thought the topics covered would be **practically useful** for people their age (98% W1 & W2).
- ✓ Almost all also thought the material could **help people develop healthier relationships** (98% W1 & W2).



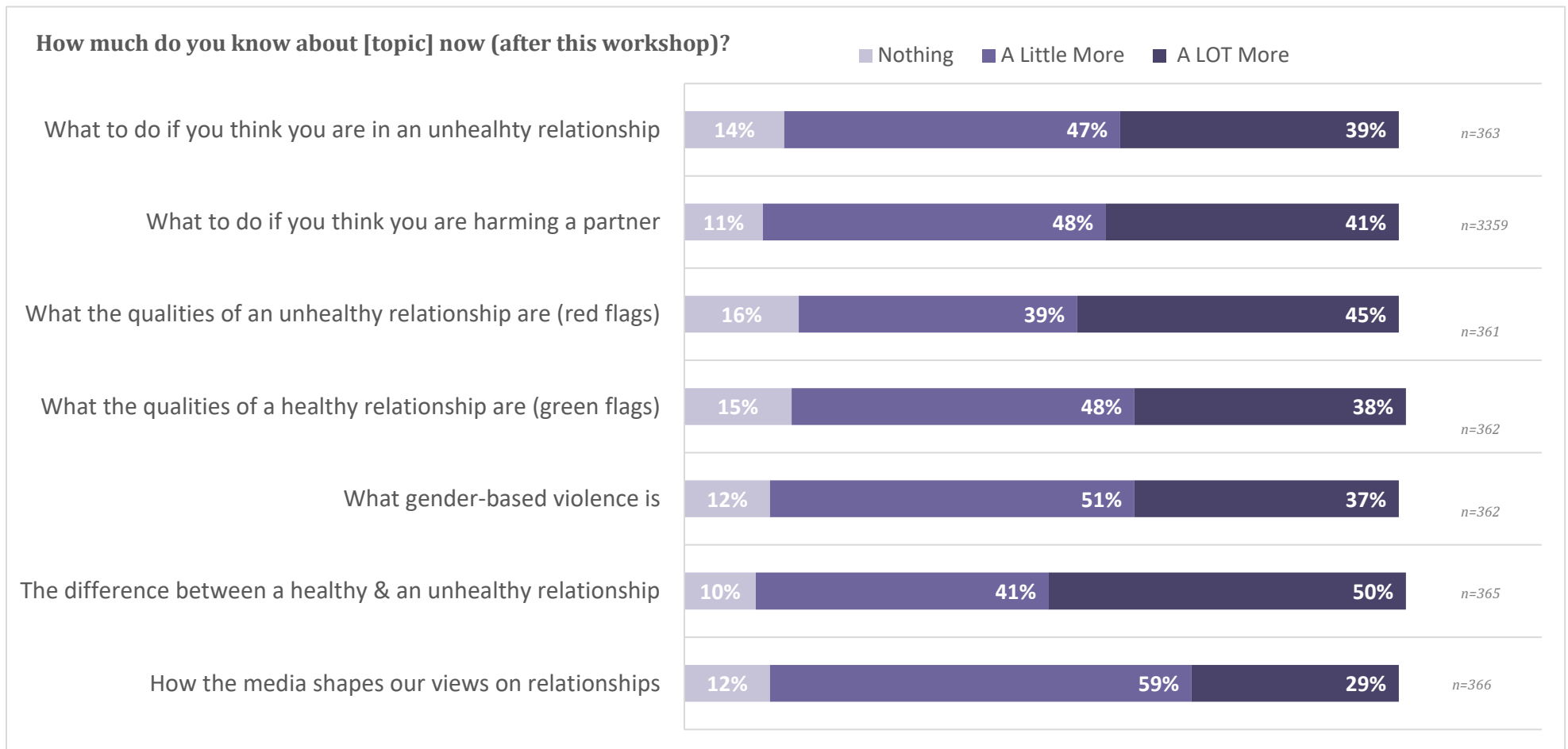
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Youth Violence Prevention Project

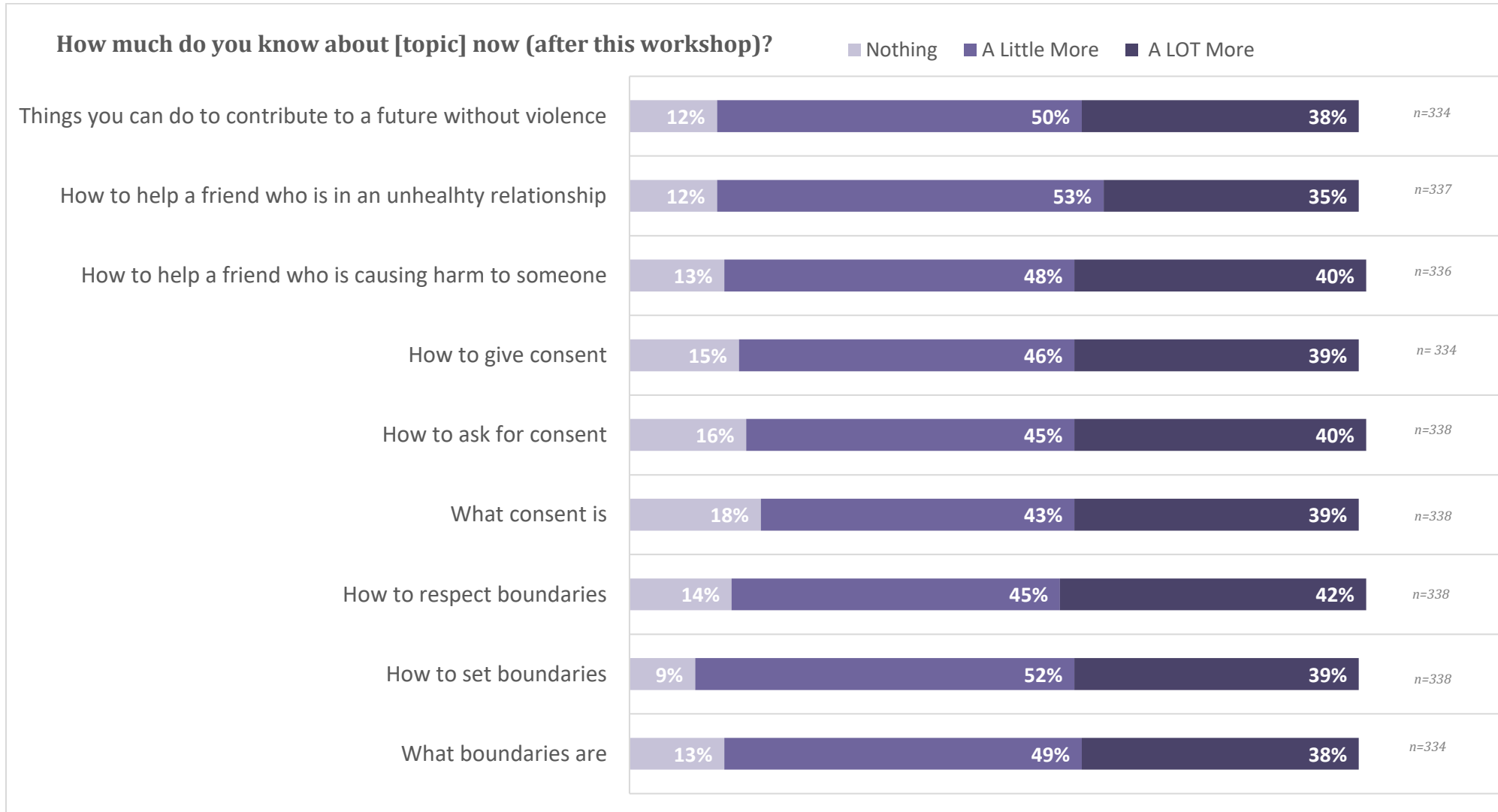


Most students knew more about each key topic after the Workshop:

Knowledge Gains - Workshop 1: Relationships in Society



Knowledge Gains - Workshop 2: Skills for Healthy Relationships





Since taking the Workshops, some students had applied their new learnings:

31% said their views on relationships had changed

23% said they've made changes in their behaviour because of what they learned

36% said they thought they'd be able to apply their new knowledge in the future

Students completed a follow-up survey at least 3 weeks after the initial Booster. n = 159 students shared their views

”” *Here is how they said they had (or would) apply their new knowledge...*
““

"I now know how to identify unhealthy relationships and how to make sure that I don't end up in and/or be the cause of one."

"I will always ask for consent, and if they don't want to do it to respect their answer."

"I think differently of my partner and we communicate better."

"In my future relationship I may be more aware about what I am doing and if what they are doing is unhealthy."

"I think more about how my relationship is going and how it's starting to be unhealthy"

"My self-respect has changed; I only allow what I know I am okay with."

3.2: YVPP Booster Summary of Student Feedback

“Expanded Reach” Pilot (April 2024)



- The Booster was originally designed to be delivered in Grade 10 classrooms (Civics/Careers or Religious Ed). But, after the Booster had been up and running in Grade 10 classrooms, some teachers suggested it could be delivered in other classes too. They noted the content is applicable to all high school students (not just Grade 10s).
- So, the decision was made to expand the reach of the Booster beyond Grade 10 classes. In April 2024, the Booster was piloted with 114 students (2 schools; 4 classes: Gr 11 Food & Culture; Gr 11 Fashion; Gr 10/11/12 Band; and Gr 11/12 Health).
- After each Workshop, we checked in with students to hear their feedback. We asked them to rate the Workshops and whether they had any suggestions on how they could be improved. Overall, 105 student surveys were received.

Here is what students had to say

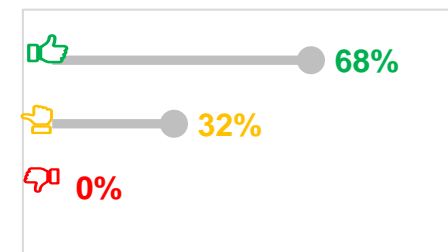
- ✓ Most students liked the Workshops, rating them a ‘thumbs up’.
- ✓ Students liked the way the material was presented.
- ✓ They thought the content is relevant and useful.
- ✓ Many students thought the Workshops are good as they are, and that no changes are needed.
- ✓ Some suggestions for improvement were offered, mostly around including more interactive activities.



A summary of their feedback from each workshop follows



Students liked the Workshop ... Most gave it a Thumbs UP:



They liked how the material was presented and found the content useful...



All the 55 students surveyed said they liked the way the material was presented (100%).



All the 55 students surveyed thought the topics covered would be **practically useful** for people their age (100%).



Almost all the students also thought the material could **help people develop healthier relationships** (97%).



Though they thought the Workshop was “good the way it is”,



Many students said they enjoyed the workshop as it is and felt that no changes were needed (n=14).

... some suggestions were offered:

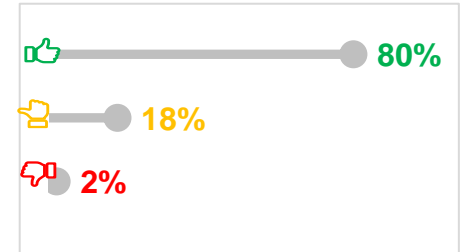


Some suggested adding more activities and “interaction” (n=4). Other suggestions included: bringing food (n=1), adding more “in-depth” information about topics (e.g., statistics and abuse towards males) (n=4), adding photos (n=1), not breaking students up into groups (n=2) and delivering the content in a more attention-grabbing manner (n=1).

A few students had felt that others were being immature, suggesting tools for future facilitators to ensure appropriate engagement (n=3).



Students liked the Workshop ... Most gave it a Thumbs UP:



They liked how the material was presented and found the content useful...



- Almost all (all but one) of the 49 students surveyed said they liked the way the material was presented (98%).
- Almost all the students thought the topics covered would be **practically useful** for people their age (98%).
- Almost all the students also thought the material could **help people develop healthier relationships** (98%).



Though they thought the Workshop was “all good”,

- Many students said they enjoyed the workshop as it is and felt that no changes were needed (n=13).

... some suggestions were offered:

One



student felt the presentation was slightly longer than needed and suggested shorter presentations in the future (n=1).

Some students felt the “How to ride a bike video” should be replaced with the tea video (n=7) and that more interactive activities should be included (e.g., Kahoots games) (n=5).