



Reducing the Risk Summary Sheet

What is *Reducing the Risk*?

The *Reducing the Risk* program (*RTR*) gives teens the **information, skills, and confidence** to protect themselves from unplanned pregnancy, HIV, and other STIs. It empowers young people to change their behaviors and lower their risks by abstaining from sex or by using latex condoms if they choose to have sex.

RTR uses games, brainstorming, roleplaying, skill-building activities, and small-group discussions. It helps adolescents understand how to make healthy decisions to protect themselves.

RTR helps young people:

- Evaluate the risks and lasting consequences of becoming an adolescent parent or becoming infected with HIV or another STI.
- Recognize that abstaining from sexual activity or using contraception are the only ways to avoid pregnancy, HIV and other STIs.
- Conclude that factual information about conception and protection is essential for avoiding teen pregnancy, HIV and other STIs.
- Demonstrate effective communication skills for remaining abstinent and for avoiding unprotected sexual intercourse.

Does *RTR* encourage young people to have sex?

No, *RTR* does *not* encourage sexual activity. It stresses that abstinence is the best way to avoid unplanned pregnancy, HIV and other STIs. It encourages young people to build healthy relationships so they can talk with a partner about the decision to abstain or practice safer sex. It provides information about how to prevent pregnancy, HIV and other STIs to help young people avoid these risks if and when they choose to have sex.

The curriculum sessions include:

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| 1A: Abstinence, Sex and Protection: Pregnancy Prevention Emphasis | 9. Knowing and Talking About Protection: Skills Integration—I |
| 1B: Abstinence, Sex and Protection: HIV Prevention Emphasis | 10. Skills Integration—II |
| 2. Abstinence: Not Having Sex | 11. Skills Integration—III |
| 3. Refusals | 12. Preventing HIV and Other STIs |
| 4. Using Refusal Skills | 13. HIV Risk Behaviors |
| 5. Delay Tactics | 14. Implementing Protection from STIs and Pregnancy |
| 6. Avoiding High-Risk Situations | 15. Sticking with Abstinence and Protection |
| 7. Getting and Using Protection—I | 16. Skills Integration—IV |
| 8. Getting and Using Protection—II | |

Proven effective in 3 studies, *RTR* has been chosen as an effective evidence-based program by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Office of Adolescent Health and other national organizations recognized as authorities on teen pregnancy prevention, including *Emerging Answers* in 2007 and *What Works 2010: Curriculum-Based Programs That Help Prevent Teen Pregnancy*, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy; *Programs That Work*, 2010, Promising Practices Network; and *Science and Success Second Edition: Sex Education and Other Programs that Work to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, HIV & Sexually Transmitted Infections*, Advocates for Youth.