

What Is “The New 3Rs: Rights, Respect, Responsibility”?

The New 3Rs Mission Statement

To help Oregon youth develop healthy sexual attitudes and behaviors, supported by proven public health strategies that reduce teen pregnancies, births, abortions and the incidence of sexually transmitted infections.

The New 3Rs is a **new way of thinking about adolescent sexual health**. It aims to create a youth-positive climate through **an open-ended set of activities**. The New 3Rs is not a specific program or project. Instead, it is **an organizing principle supported by a host of programs, projects, curricula and policies** that reflect the following core values:

■ RIGHTS

We believe youth have the right to accurate information and access to health services.

■ RESPECT

We respect youth as valued members of the community, with much to offer.

■ RESPONSIBILITY

We trust youth to make responsible decisions when they are provided information, taught skills and given support to do so.

Because The New 3Rs emphasizes an **adaptable research-based public health approach**, it has gained broad-based support throughout Oregon. **Clergy, health professionals, educators, parents, youth, community leaders, and policy makers have endorsed The New 3Rs** and are integrating its values in their own work and/or personal lives.

The proven public health strategies that The New 3Rs employs include:

- family communication,
- comprehensive sex education,
- confidential and accessible health services,
- effective mass media campaigns,
- positive youth development, and
- public policies based on sound public health approaches.

As the catalyst behind The New 3Rs in Oregon, PPHSSO's role is to:

1) **demonstrate New 3Rs values in every aspect of its own work**, including education, advocacy, and clinic services, and 2) **recruit, coordinate, and actively engage a coalition of New 3Rs Advocates** that collectively advances a positive vision of adolescent sexual health.



For additional information about The New 3Rs: Rights, Respect, Responsibility, contact:

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“ Thanks to The New 3Rs, it has taken only two years to normalize sexuality education within our congregation. (We thought it would take four.) Our eighth-graders now expect they will participate in our healthy sexuality curriculum, “Our Whole Lives.” Our progress has been remarkable. ”

—Greg Flint, Pastor,
 First Congregational Church, Eugene

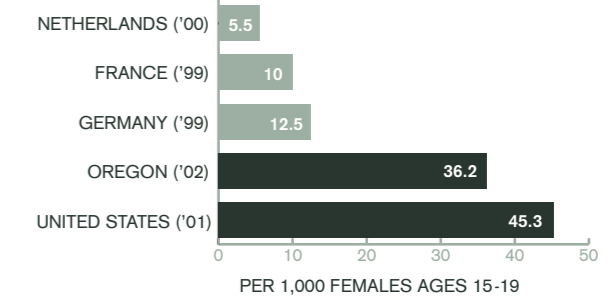


We can do better.

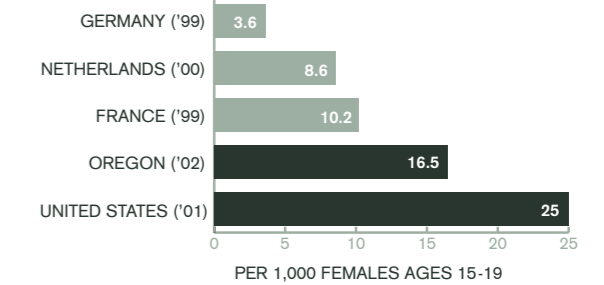


Teen Pregnancy: Can We Do Better?

TEEN BIRTH RATE



TEEN ABORTION RATE



Despite recent improvements, teen pregnancy rates in Oregon and the United States remain among the highest in the industrialized world. The rates for teen births, abortions, and sexually transmitted infections are also dramatically higher in Oregon and the U.S.¹

We can do better.

To address these serious public health issues, Planned Parenthood Health Services of Southwestern Oregon (PPHSSO) — in coalition with state and local organizations, clergy, parents and youth — has launched an initiative called **The New 3Rs: Rights, Respect, Responsibility**.

The New 3Rs is dedicated to **helping youth develop healthy sexual attitudes and behaviors**. This is accomplished by working directly with youth while also **helping adults be supportive, available, and prepared to communicate with the young people in their lives**.

Since 2001, The New 3Rs has reached **more than 27,000 Oregonians** with its positive, forward-thinking message and has **made significant strides toward its long-term vision**. As a result, numerous other states are looking to The New 3Rs as a **national model for supporting communities** in helping young people make informed decisions about their sexual health.



What Has The New 3Rs Accomplished?

Since its launch in 2001, *The New 3Rs: Rights, Respect, Responsibility* has inspired numerous **collaborations and innovative activities:**

- **State-level health and policy leaders** have signed on to integrate the vision and values of The New 3Rs into Oregon's "action agenda" on teen pregnancy prevention and sexual health.
- **Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski** has endorsed The New 3Rs and also taped a public service announcement with PPHSSO's Teen Theater to promote parent-child communication about sex.
- **Leaders from 74 diverse faith communities** participated in forums designed to support them in bringing the principles of The New 3Rs into their congregations in a way that is in keeping with their beliefs. Clergy have endorsed comprehensive sex education in schools, written pastoral letters in support of healthy sexuality, and implemented sexuality education for their congregations and curriculum training for faith leaders.
- **Jackson County Health Department** collaborated with Planned Parenthood in the production of two television ads that promote family communication and responsible condom use for sexually active youth.
- **Town Hall Forums** (in Eugene, Springfield, Grants Pass, and Wolf Creek) have given teens an opportunity to speak out to adults on the realities they face each day: sexual pressures and their need for accurate information, accessible services and honest conversation about sex.
- **More than 2,200 free parent packets in English and Spanish** were distributed in 2005. These packets contain a wealth of information to assist parents in talking with their kids about sex. Packets can be obtained by calling toll-free 1-866-Kits4Us (1-866-548-7487).
- **A New 3Rs Teen Action Council** has been formed, which aims to give youth a direct role in decision making, policy planning and activism, thereby empowering and encouraging young people to make change in their communities.
- **Three successful forums, focusing on the power of media partnership in supporting sexual health**, were held with mass media professionals, public health professionals and policy makers. Experts from Germany, France and the U. S. showcased effective campaigns that are thoughtful, well-researched, entertaining and responsive to public need.
- **Parent-advocacy trainings** have taken place in communities as diverse as Grants Pass, Coos Bay, Florence and Medford. These trainings prepare parents to advocate for comprehensive sex education in local schools.
- **A core of "New 3Rs Advocates" has been activated.** These include individuals from youth-serving agencies, churches, educational institutions, and state and local agencies, as well as parents and youth. In 2006, this base of Advocates will be greatly expanded, while programs and materials to support them will be significantly enhanced.



What Makes Oregon Ready for The New 3Rs?

Enthusiastic response throughout the state tells us that clearly, this ambitious and bold initiative resonates with Oregonians. In addition:

- Oregon's **Family Planning Expansion Project** has dramatically reduced barriers to contraceptive health services and significantly contributed to a substantial statewide decline in unintended pregnancies and abortions over the past several years.
- The **Oregon Teen Pregnancy Prevention Action Agenda** calls for multiple strategies that are closely aligned with The New 3Rs approach.
- **Oregon law requires that sex education in public schools be comprehensive** (ORS 336.355).

Moreover, public support is strong across our region. Surveys conducted in four diverse communities² — Eugene, Springfield, Grants Pass and Medford — showed that:

- 93% believe that young people deserve comprehensive, medically accurate sex education in schools;
- The majority believes that sex education should begin by the late elementary school years;
- 88% (of parents) are talking with their children about sex;
- 90% believe that sexually active teens should have access to birth control and related health services;
- Over half support condom advertising.

“ Keeping teens in school and preparing them for work or college requires more than helping them avoid risky behavior. We need to help young people make healthy decisions. That's why I support the Rights, Respect, Responsibility initiative. ”

—Ted Kulongoski, Governor,
State of Oregon



Where Are We Headed?

Oregon has an outstanding opportunity to develop a cooperative discussion that embraces The New 3Rs of adolescent sexual health. It may take many years, even decades, to achieve **the cultural shift that is at the heart of The New 3Rs**. But the process of creating that shift is well under way and momentum is building.

In 2006, The New 3Rs will:

- continue to build on its work with **faith communities**, engaging larger circles of clergy, religious leaders and congregations,
- expand its activities and programs supporting **family communication about sex**,
- strengthen the **skills of parent advocates** and their work on behalf of comprehensive sex education,
- actively create opportunities that **support young people in developing a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and empowerment**,
- advance the individual and collaborative efforts of a **statewide network of New 3Rs Advocates**, and
- **partner with mass media professionals** to advance messages that reflect the vision and values of The New 3Rs.



How Will We Know When We're Successful?

When The New 3Rs has achieved its ideal:

- Parents, families, teachers, community leaders, policy makers and opinion leaders will be able to talk about sex in a natural way, and will be *committed* to open, honest communication with young people regarding sexuality.
- Comprehensive, age-appropriate sex education will be provided: standardized, expected, and welcomed. It will be available through multiple, easily accessible channels of communication.
- Contraception, sexual protection, and sexual health services will be universally accessible and affordable.
- A fourth R — Research — will be the basis for selecting programs and strategies. Policy related to sexuality will be driven by proven public health approaches. Personal values and morals regarding sexual decisions will be respected and addressed within families and faith communities.
- Young people will have a voice in matters pertaining to their sexual health.
- Young people will be equipped to make informed, thoughtful and healthy decisions about sex; they will automatically think about protecting themselves and their partners if and when they choose to have sex.
- The media will convey sexually responsible messages — in terms of both what it chooses to cover (sex as a healthy, natural part of being human) and how it chooses to cover it (frank, open, honest discussion, free of innuendo and fear-baiting).
- Prevention efforts will be successful. Unintended pregnancies will be reduced to the point that the abortion debate will be greatly diminished.

¹ These graphs reflect the most current data available for each country for the year indicated. Sources: Oregon Department of Human Services, Center for Health Statistics, Family Planning Perspectives, 2000; 32(1): 14-23; Center for Disease Control Prevention; Rademakers, J. Abortus in Nederland 1993-2000. StiSan, Heemstede 2002.

² Survey conducted by Northwest Survey and Data Services, 2003.