

## **Advocates for Youth Executive Summary**

Since our founding in 1980, Advocates for Youth has worked with school districts across the United States to provide and promote comprehensive sexuality education, which provides young people with the essential knowledge and skills they need to protect their health and well being now and into the future. Advocates for Youth was one of the 50 community-based organizations, health care providers and institutes of higher education that created the National Sexuality Education Standards which were released in 2012. After their release, and with private foundation funding, Advocates for Youth created the first ever K-12, fully online, evidence-informed and free sexuality education curriculum fully mapped to the National Sexuality Education Standards and based on our philosophy of Rights, Respect, Responsibility (3Rs).

Since the release of Rights, Respect, Responsibility (3Rs) in 2016, more than 110 school districts, including 11 of the largest 25, have adopted the 3Rs reaching more than 2 million students annually. 3Rs gives districts the flexibility to select from among 80 lessons to determine a scope and sequence that best meets the needs of their students aligned with state mandates and district policy. Additionally 3Rs encourages districts to adapt lesson plans to better meet their community norms, especially concerning sensitive topics such a reproductive anatomy, teaching students how to use condoms correctly, being inclusive of LBGTQ students and their families, and encouraging all young people to delay sexual involvement until they are adults. With all of our lessons translated into Spanish, all freely available on our 3rs.org website, including prepared PowerPoints, Advocates' curriculum has been universally praised for it's ease of use and it's interactive design to help foster critical thinking skills.

Advocates for Youth is pleased to submit this proposal to Austin Independent School District to consider adopting our 3Rs curriculum for Grades 3-8 to be co-facilitated by a Social-Emotional Learning Facilitator and School Counselor in 80 elementary schools and by science teachers in 20 middle schools. Our 3rs curriculum can be adapted, adopted and implemented by AISD free of charge. Two options for professional development to prepare educators implementing 3Rs have been provided with the hopes of leveraging precious district resources to increase the capacity of AISD to create a sustain system for on-going training. As requested, options are also provided for training school administrators and other building staff who all play a vital role in the successful implementation and support of Austin's new Human Sexuality and Responsibility Curriculum.

## Section 1 – Summary of Experience

Advocates for Youth, 1325 G Street NW, Suite 980, Washington, DC 20005

Advocates for Youth, founded in 1980, is one of only a few national organizations working at the intersection of youth leadership, civic engagement and adolescent sexual health including HIV/AIDS and LGBTQ youth health and rights. Advocates partners with youth leaders, adult allies, and youth-serving organizations to advocate for policies and champion programs that recognize young people’s rights to honest sexual health information; accessible, confidential, and affordable sexual health services; and the resources and opportunities necessary to create sexual health equity for all youth. For more than 35 years, Advocates has been building the capacity of school and community staff, we call youth serving providers (YSPs), to meet the needs of those at highest risk for HIV, including youth of color. Last year alone, Advocates reached 35,000 YSPs with technical assistance and training.

For the past two decades, Advocates for Youth (Advocates) has worked with school districts across the United States, thereby providing the organization with deep roots into the education community. Since we released our free, online curriculum Rights, Respect, Responsibility (3Rs) in 2016, Advocates has been able to train over 1,000 educators, intensively train over 100 master trainers to be ready to turn-key workshops in their home districts and more than 12,800 people have downloaded the 3Rs curriculum from all 50 states and over 85 countries. We know that at least 110 school districts are using the curriculum in whole or in part, including 11 of the 25 largest school districts in the country, reaching over two million students annually. The 3Rs curriculum not only provides medically accurate content on the breadth of sexuality issues, it is LGBTQ-inclusive and is fully aligned to the National Sexuality Education Standards.

The authors of the 3Rs curriculum are Dr. Elizabeth Schroeder, Dr. Eva Goldfarb and Nora Gelperin, Advocates’ Director of Sexuality Education & Training.

**Elizabeth Schroeder, EdD, MSW**, is an award-winning educator, trainer, and author in the areas of sexuality education pedagogy, LGBTQ issues, working with adolescent boys and using technology and social media to teach young people about sexuality. She has provided consultation to and direct education and training for schools, parent groups, and youth-serving organizations in countries around the world for more than 20 years and holds a Doctorate of Education in Human Sexuality Education from Widener University and an MSW from NYU.

**Eva S. Goldfarb, Ph.D.**, Professor of Public Health at Montclair State University is a nationally recognized expert in the field of sexuality education. For the past twenty-five years, Dr. Goldfarb has developed and led sexuality education and sexual health programs with youth, parents, educators, and other professionals and has trained teachers across the country. Dr. Goldfarb holds a Ph.D. in Human Sexuality Education from the

University of Pennsylvania and a Masters Degree in Communications from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.

**Nora Gelperin, M.Ed.** was part of the core team that developed the National Sexuality Education Standards: Core Content and Skills K-12 (2012), National Teacher Preparation Standards for Sexuality Education, (Journal of School Health, 2014) and the forthcoming Professional Learning Standards for Sexuality Education (2019). Nora has written curriculum, trained teachers and supported schools regarding K-12 sexuality education for over 20 years. She holds a Masters in School Health Education from Temple University and was named a 2014 Fellow of the American School Health Association.

## **Section 2 – Scope of Service**

Advocates for Youth is uniquely positioned to provide a free, online curriculum fully mapped to the National Sexuality Education Standards that is flexible in its implementation allowing districts to pick and choose lessons that best meet their state standards and align with district policy. Advocates 3Rs curriculum is the only free, evidence-informed, K-12 sexuality education curriculum being used by over 110 districts, fully translated into Spanish, including parent/family homework extension activities and adaptable so that districts can move lessons to meet their unique scope and sequence. We believe our 3Rs curriculum is well situated to meet all of the requirements of AISD’s desired Human Sexuality and Responsibility Curriculum.

## **Evidence-Informed Practices in 3Rs**

Rights, Respect, Responsibility (3Rs) is an evidence-informed curriculum that is fully meets the National Sexuality Education Standards. The curriculum seeks to address both the functional knowledge related to sexuality and the specific skills necessary to adopt healthy behaviors. 3Rs reflects the tenets of social learning theory, social cognitive theory and the social ecological model of prevention. From social learning theory, which recognizes that “learning occurs not merely within the learner but also in a particular social context,” there are several key concepts addressed within 3Rs, including:

**Personalization.** The ability of students to perceive the core content and skills as relevant to their lives increases the likelihood that they will both learn and retain them. Ensuring that students see themselves represented in the materials and learning activities used can assist in furthering personalization.

**Susceptibility.** It is widely understood that many young people do not perceive that they are susceptible to the risks of certain behaviors, including sexual activity. Learning activities should encourage students to assess the relative risks of various behaviors, without exaggeration, to highlight their susceptibility to the potential negative outcomes of those behaviors.

**Self-Efficacy.** Even if students believe they are susceptible, they may not believe they can do anything to reduce their level of risk. Helping students overcome misinformation and develop confidence by practicing skills necessary to manage risk are key to a successful sexuality education curriculum.

**Social Norms.** Given that young people are highly influenced by their peers, the perception of what other students are, or are not, doing influences their behavior. Debunking perceptions and highlighting positive behaviors among teens (i.e., the majority of teens are abstinent in middle school and early high school, and when they first do engage in sexual intercourse many use condoms) can further the adoption of health-positive behaviors.

**Skills.** Mastery of functional knowledge is necessary but not sufficient to influence behaviors. Skill development is critical to a student's ability to apply core content to their lives.

In addition to social learning theory, social cognitive theory (SCT) is reflected throughout 3Rs. Like social learning theory, SCT emphasizes self-efficacy, but adds in the motivation of the learners and an emphasis on the affective or emotional learning domain, an invaluable component of learning about human sexuality.

Finally, the social ecological model of prevention also informed the development of this curriculum. This model focuses on individual, interpersonal, community and society influences and the role of these influences on people over time. Developmentally, the core content and skills designed for kindergarten and early elementary focus on the individual student and their immediate surroundings (e.g., their family). At the middle and high school levels, core content and skills focus on the expanding world of students that includes their friends and other peers, the media, society and cultural influences.

### **3Rs Alignment with AISD's Scope and Sequence, the NSES & Policy EHAA**

The 3Rs curriculum demonstrates its alignment to AISD's human sexuality and responsibility curriculum's scope and sequence through Attachment 2. The 3Rs curriculum demonstrates its' alignment to the National Sexuality Education Standards through Attachment 1. In Appendix 2, please find the 3Rs compliance with the AISD Policy EHAA noting that we currently utilize the perfect use efficacy rates for contraception so a modification would need to be made to use typical use efficacy rates as outlined in AISD Policy EHAA.

The 3Rs curriculum is flexible in its design in that any of the 40 lessons between Grades 3-8 can be moved to different grade level, as long as that grade level is within the band outlined in the National Sexuality Education Standards (Grades K-2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8 and Grades 9-12). Most districts that adopt 3Rs select lessons that align with their district policy and then host those on a district file sharing platform for their teachers to access. Family homework activities are included in many of the

Grades 3-8 lessons with the goal of engaging parents and trusted adults in having critical conversations with their children about important sexual health topics including their family's cultural and personal values. While our 3Rs curriculum is not created for students with special needs, we believe students with attention-related, intellectual or learning disabilities have a right to receive honest sexuality education that meets their unique needs. There is a strong body of research that confirms that students with special needs benefit from comprehensive sexuality education just like their peers. The 3Rs, with permission from the Unitarian Universalist Association, published their 15-page resource guide from Our Whole Lives Grades 7-9 containing recommended strategies to help modify sexuality lessons for students with a wide variety of abilities.

The 3Rs curriculum has been translated into Spanish and we welcome districts to translate it into other languages that would best meet the needs of their students. Additionally 3Rs is available fully online, so we invite districts and teachers to save the lessons electronically into an easily accessible format so they can access the lessons wherever they need them, whenever they need them. This also allows us at Advocates for Youth, to update lessons as new medical information emerges, to ensure we are medically accurate and complete. Lastly, 3Rs encourages school districts to modify individual lesson plans to better meet the needs of their students and makes lesson plans available in a Word format to facilitate that modification.

Appropriate professional development is key to the successful implementation of any sexuality education curriculum. While training is not required to use 3Rs, it is strongly recommended that staff be able to attend sufficient professional development to address their lack of comfort with, knowledge about and skills to deliver sex education. Advocates for Youth **highly recommends** AISD adopt the Training of Trainer model described below to create the most sustainable and cost efficient model of training for a district of this size.

AISD will be utilizing a Social Emotional Learning Facilitator and a School Counselor from all 80 elementary schools to implement the curriculum, totaling 160 elementary staff in need of training. AISD will be utilizing all middle school science teachers to implement 3Rs, with each of the 20 middle schools averaging six science teachers totaling approximately 120 middle school staff in need of training. Additionally AISD sees value in training other non-instructional staff in the basics of sex education so that they can answer students' questions, provide appropriate referrals and support successful implementation of the curriculum. Assuming on average 25 staff from each of the 100 impacted buildings that is another 2500 staff to be trained. Lastly, AISD sees value in training school administrators, presumably building principals from all 100 buildings implementing 3Rs, with fundamentals of sex education, particularly answering questions from concerned parents and preventing controversy. In total, AISD would need to train 280 staff implementing the curriculum and approximately 2600 additional administrators and staff supporting the curriculum.



Advocates for Youth seeks to minimize costs while maximizing impact for AISD by recommending a professional development plan that would develop Master Trainers and therefore increase the district's capacity to internally offer on-going training. We **strongly recommend a Training of Master Trainers (TOT)** approach, which is an intensive three-day training for those staff identified by the district as being leaders in their building and having passion for this topic area. Those Master Trainers, generally one per building in middle school and one per every four schools in elementary school, are prepared to provide subsequent professional development for other teachers and staff in the district. They can also serve as resources for teachers once implementation is underway. We have found this TOT model to be more cost effective as you need to train far fewer teachers who are then able to turnkey training for other staff throughout the year. The TOT model would require 20 elementary (one per every 4 buildings) and 20 middle school staff who would each need to receive a three-day intensive TOT, preferably in the Summer 2019 so that turnkey trainings could be held Fall 2019 for Spring 2020 implementation and roll-out. These 40 AISD master trainers could each deliver at least two workshops per year to 65 staff (two workshops each) reaching an additional 2,600 staff per year.

Alternatively, Advocates for Youth can provide two days of professional development to cohorts of 30 staff to familiarize them with the 20 lessons in their grade level bands (Grades 3-5 or Grades 6-8) that they will be responsible for implementing. These workshops are called **Training of Educators (TOEs)**. Given the 160 elementary and 120 middle staff, those 280 teachers would need 10 TOEs that could be offered throughout the 2019-2020 school year by Advocates for Youth staff and trainers.

AISD has also expressed interest in providing professional development for school administrators who are often on the front lines of parental questions and concerns about sexuality education implementation. Advocates for Youth can provide a three-hour workshop geared specifically for school administrators to help them understand public health research on the efficacy of sexuality education, provide them with talking points to address common parental concerns about sexuality education and strategies to prevent and manage any controversy that might occur. Advocates for Youth **strongly recommends** training school administrators to support successful implementation of 3Rs.

AISD has also expressed interest in providing professional development for non-instructional staff in the 80 elementary and 20 middle schools that will be implementing the curriculum. Advocates for Youth can provide a three-hour workshop in the fundamentals of sexual development for staff who will benefit from a basic overview of youth sexual health and how best to support students in making healthy decisions. These workshops are most effective when delivered in person and Advocates for Youth can partner with local Austin sexuality experts (Cardea Services and Planned Parenthood) to reduce travel costs and/or explore developing an online workshop that staff could take.

### **Section 3 – Financial Proposal**

Advocates' 3Rs curriculum is the only K-12 sexuality education curriculum that is available free of charge, meets the National Sexuality Education Standards and is LGBTQ-inclusive, affirming and culturally reflective. We are pleased to make all 40 lessons and all relevant PowerPoint files for Grades 3-8 available in English and Spanish for **free** to Austin Independent School District.

### **Professional Development for Staff Who Will Implement Curriculum**

**Training of Master Trainers (TOTs)** are each three days in length and require two trainers to increase the capacity of a maximum of 30 lead teachers. These lead teachers, to be selected by AISD, would be trained to provide at least two subsequent TOEs to other staff implementing the curriculum. Advocates for Youth would provide TOT participants with workshop agendas, a sample slide deck and all of the materials they need to turnkey their trainings. Participants need to be clustered by elementary or middle school grade bands and AISD would need two TOTs to create enough trainers to train all 2600 staff supporting implementation.

Training of Trainers - 30 Participants	
Cost Without Substitutes	\$18,660
Substitutes (3 days x \$100 x 30)	\$9,000
Total TOE Workshop Costs	\$27,660

Please refer to Appendix 3 for detailed financial information about TOTs.

**Training of Educators (TOEs)** for staff implementing curricula are each two consecutive days in length and need to be clustered by grade level bands (Grades 3-5 and Grades 6-8). Each TOE could accommodate a maximum of 30 participants and AISD would need 10 TOEs to train all 280 staff implementing curricula.

Training of Educators – 30 Participants	
Cost Without Substitutes	\$8,360
Substitutes (2 days x \$100 x 30)	\$6,000
Total TOE Workshop Costs	\$14,360

Please refer to Appendix 3 for detailed financial information about TOEs.

### **Professional Development for Staff Who Will Support Implementation of the Curriculum**

#### **Training of School Administrators – 3 Hours**

School administrators are often on the front lines of parental questions and concerns about sexuality education implementation. Advocates for Youth can

provide a three-hour workshop geared specifically for school administrators, clustered by grade level bands, each accommodating a maximum of 50 participants. The cost for a School Administrator workshop is \$3,000 and AISD would need two workshops to cover one administrator for each of the 100 buildings implementing curriculum. This cost does not include any substitutes needed for this training. Please refer to Appendix 3 for detailed financial information about this training.

### **Professional Development for Staff Who Will Support Implementation of the Curriculum**

Parent Support Specialists, SEL staff, counselors and other teachers are often a vital resource and support for students in elementary and middle school. Once instruction begins it is very common for other staff to find issues related to sexuality and growth and development arising for students. We find having support staff trained in the fundamentals of sexual development is critical component for successful implementation. This three-hour workshop is ideally presented in-person and can be done in groups with a maximum of 50 participants. Given an average of 25 staff per building, that is an additional 2500 staff, which would require 250 workshops. To remove travel costs, Advocates for Youth would partner with local Austin sexuality experts (Planned Parenthood and Cardea Services) to provide this workshop.

Training for Supporting Staff - 50 Participants	
Cost Without Substitutes	\$1,500
Substitutes (1/2 day x \$50 x 50)	\$2,500
Total TOE Workshop Costs	\$4,000

If that is not feasible, either the number of staff per site can be reduced or Advocates for Youth can explore creating an online version of this workshop to be taken during non-instructional time, thereby removing the cost of substitutes. Please refer to Appendix 3 for detailed financial information about this training and if an online version is selected, Advocates for Youth would explore what those creation costs would entail.

### **Technical Assistance for District Staff**

Advocates for Youth is also available to provide on-going technical assistance to district administration and staff as training and curriculum implementation begins. Frequent services provided through technical assistance include but are not limited to:

- Assisting district staff with selecting 3Rs lessons that align with AISD's scope and sequence
- Assisting district staff with modifying 3Rs lessons to best meet state and district policy while not compromising the efficacy of the lesson
- Creating parent-involvement workshops for district staff to facilitate
- Drafting a parent letter regarding the implementation of 3Rs highlighting the evidence-based practices and alignment with



National Sexuality Education Standards and AISD's Scope and Sequence

- Creating and/or presenting on the 3Rs to the district School Health Advisory Committee
- Supporting district administrators as they respond to concerned parents and/or community members

This technical assistance can be purchased at a rate of \$100 per hour or, if the district prefers, Advocates for Youth can be on monthly retainer of \$1500, which would guarantee 15 hours per month of technical assistance for any district staff.

#### **Section 4 –Five References**

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