



Monarch Media, Inc., &
ETR Associates
Case Study

RTRworks!

*Online Teacher Training for a
High School Health Curriculum*

Regina Firpo-Triplett, *Principal Investigator*
Claire Schneeberger, *Learning Design*

Monarch Media, Inc.
406 Mission Street, Suite J
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
www.monarchmedia.com
831.457.4414

Industry

Public health education

Challenge

To prepare high school health teachers to teach an evidence-based curriculum about sexual health.

Solution

Monarch Media, using the subject matter expertise of ETR Associates' Center for Sexual and Reproductive Health Promotion, developed the RTRworks! online training. RTRworks! models critical skills through relevant and impactful video examples, offers social learning opportunities, and delivers real classroom simulations.

Key Benefits

- Effective — by increasing the level of fidelity with which educators teach the curriculum, it will improve student outcomes;
- Quick and easy to acquire — after purchase, users have immediate access;
- Inexpensive — a cost-effective alternative to face-to-face training;
- Convenient — it can be accessed anytime from any internet-connected computer.

Overview

- Research shows that public school teachers who receive skills training for sexual health and safety curriculum are most likely to achieve positive student outcomes. Online training offers low cost, easily accessible, skill-based trainings that are needed to meet the growing training demand of schools.
- The RTRworks! elearning course models critical skills through relevant and impactful video examples, offers social learning opportunities, and delivers real classroom simulations.
- This training is notable for its innovative approach to teaching behavioral skills (also referred to as social or soft skills), such as “how to answer sensitive questions,” that are not normally taught online, in part because they are much more difficult to teach in an elearning format than technical skills.
- Initial study results show higher than expected user participation and a mastery of key concepts.

your turn!

Observe these five role play groups. Do they have the **knowledge**, **comfort**, and perceived **relevance** they need to succeed?

Group 1 Group 2 Group 3

Group 4 Group 5

When you are done, **CLICK HERE** to complete this module.

“RTRworks! uses video to provide opportunities for teachers to practice and receive feedback, as well as online class resources to support teachers for every lesson in the curriculum.

Training the Teachers

Skills Training

The RTRworks! project involved the design and deployment of an online training for high school health teachers who are preparing to teach students how to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. (More information about the program is available at <http://www.rtrworks.com>.)

RTRworks! includes training of critical teacher behaviors, such as:

- Teaching students refusal and delaying skills
- Creating an inclusive and safe classroom
- Answering sensitive questions

Mastering these skills requires more than intellectual understanding. Successful educators communicate information to their students through body language and intonation and gain important insights into their students through their ability to read non-verbal cues—skills that need to be seen and practiced. Our skills trainings therefore use video to model and provide opportunities for the teacher to practice and receive feedback.

The skills trainings build from teaching isolated skills toward the culminating interactions in which teachers complete simulations where they manage and mentor five student groups. These story-based scenarios transport educators into a dynamic, virtual classroom where they interact with and learn from compelling, real-world characters. Each scenario maintains dramatic momentum and keeps users clicking through to the end.

Classroom Support

In RTRworks!, online class resources give teachers support for every lesson in the curriculum through:

- video modeling of classroom activities
- access to all class handouts
- tips for overcoming common challenges
- video models of student skills for teachers to share with their students
- templates to guide teachers in making effective adaptations



To truly learn a new behavioral skill, the learner must practice and receive feedback.

Challenges

Teaching Behavioral Skills

While online training is used for a variety of learning outcomes, behavioral skills (also referred to as social or soft skills), such as “how to answer sensitive questions,” are not normally taught online, in part because they are much more difficult to teach online than technical skills. To truly learn a new behavioral skill, the learner must practice and receive feedback (Joyce et al., 2003).

Our learning design includes

- Videos for modeling and skills practice with feedback;
- Modeling the skill multiple times in a variety of situations;
- Interactive video sequences that allow the learner to identify characteristics of the skill and even practice—while accessing a “virtual expert” if they need assistance.

Quick Access to Content

Educators, especially classroom teachers implementing prevention curricula, want to access training information quickly and easily.

The online, asynchronous format of RTRworks! is ideal for our audience. Users can access the content anytime and from any location. Our customized Moodle LMS uses SCORM to track user progress, so that during completion of the skills training phase, users always return to where they last left off in the training.

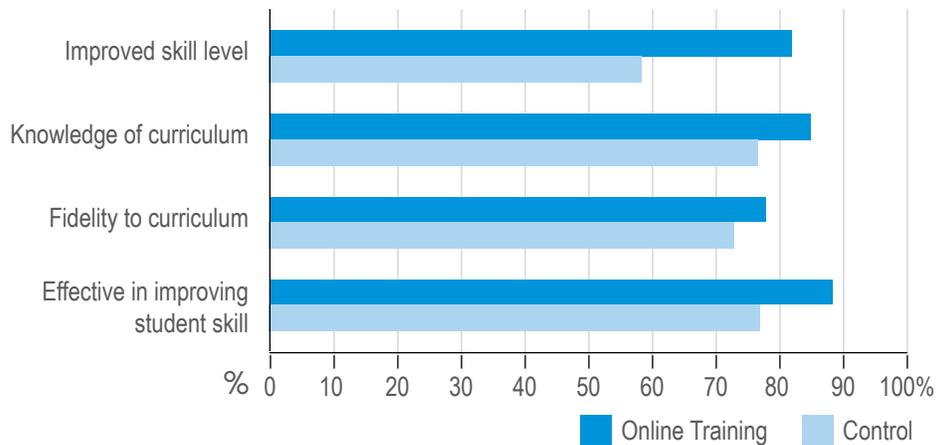
Results

The launch of the RTRworks! online training began in Fall 2010 with 80 teachers participating throughout the 2010-2011 school year. Our research team collected lesson logs and classroom recordings, and performed live classroom observations and surveys of both our users of the online training and of a control group of about 80 teachers who received no supplemental training. Completion rate for the training was excellent, with 92% of users completing the required four modules of the training.



When asked to identify the content most useful to them, our users consistently reported that the video models and downloadable resources were the most useful.

Outcomes from User Surveys of Online Training Group vs. Control Group



Conclusion

By developing the RTRworks! online training course using a proven curriculum, Monarch Media and ETR Associates have provided teachers with a methodologically sound way to present pregnancy and HIV prevention lessons to teens. The training's blending of video-based behavior modeling, social learning, and frequent practice and assessment opportunities helps teachers develop the key skills necessary to effectively teach challenging and sensitive materials to their students. Ongoing research indicates the course may help contribute to long-term positive public health benefits, such as reductions in teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease rates.

More Information

To learn more about how Monarch Media can help you with your next eLearning project, please call, email, or visit our website:

Monarch Media, Inc.
www.monarchmedia.com
 831-457-4414
info@monarchmedia.com

This project was supported by Award Number R44MH072035 from the National Institute of Mental Health. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institute of Mental Health or the National Institutes of Health.

