

The Fourth 'R' – Teaching the Next Generation about Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic....and Relationships



In 800 high schools across Canada, the foundations of effective education – reading, writing and arithmetic – are being met by a new essential subject: relationships. A new and innovative curriculum called 'the 4th R Project' is teaching youth how to navigate safe and healthy relationships at this critical time in their lives.

The Royal LePage Shelter Foundation is leading the way to make a long-term difference in violence education and prevention as a major partner and the founding donor of this curriculum based approach. Through the support of our agents and brokers, we are working to end the cycle of abuse by helping to teach the next generation how to prevent dating violence, bullying, substance abuse, and unsafe sexual behaviour.

And it's working!

A five-year randomized control trial (1,700 students in 20 schools) found that students who received The Fourth R Project exhibited significantly fewer acts of violence towards a dating partner by the end of grade 11, compared to those who received standard Health classes.

"The Fourth R would not be where it is today if it were not for the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation's generous gift.

By supporting our early efforts to develop a universal, school-based strategy for preventing violence in relationships, we were able to set up a sustainable network of educators, researchers, and community partners that is growing at a fast pace. This network now facilitates efforts to bring prevention resources and training to schools throughout Canada, and brings us closer to our goal of ensuring that the next generation of youth will promote healthy, positive relationships.

The backing and support of the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation has had an immense impact not only on the Fourth R, but on the field of violence prevention."

- David A. Wolfe, Ph.D., ABPP, the Fourth R Project

Find out more at www.royallepage.ca/shelter or shelterfoundation@royallepage.ca

Royal LePage Shelter Foundation Charitable registration number: 88253 1304 RR0001

Royal LePage is the only Canadian real estate company with its own charity



The Royal LePage Shelter Foundation has raised more than \$10 million to support women and children living in shelters across Canada. Through agent commission contributions and the fundraising activities of the Royal LePage network, we are helping to provide a safe haven and new beginnings to more than 30,000 women and children each year. To break the cycle of violence, the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation also supports long-term violence prevention and education programs. All funds raised by Royal LePage offices remain in their local community and because Royal LePage pays the costs of administration, 100% of all money and effort goes toward this important cause.



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Spring 2010
Volume 8, Issue 1



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Canada's Real Estate Market Expected to Continue Strong Gains into the First Half of 2010

Canada's residential real estate market is forecast to remain unusually strong through the first half of 2010 as economic conditions across the country improve and the stimulus impact of low interest rates continues to stoke demand, according to the Royal LePage House Price Survey and Market Survey Forecast. As confidence in the recovery builds in early 2010, increases in average house price levels and overall market activity are expected to continue.

"The Canadian real estate market enters 2010 with considerable momentum from an unusually strong finish to the previous year, said Phil Soper, president and chief executive, Royal LePage Real Estate Services. "The stimulus effect of low borrowing costs has contributed to a sharp rise in demand that has driven activity levels to new highs. This demand, coupled with a typical seasonal undersupply of homes for sale, should cause home prices to continue to appreciate significantly during the early months of the year. Improving supply as the year unfolds and easing demand as the cost of home ownership rises should moderate home price increases in the second half of 2010."

In contrast to the difficult months during the worst of the recession, house prices appreciated during the later part of 2009, with fourth quarter price averages

surpassing averages from the fourth quarter 2008. The average price of detached bungalows rose to \$315,055 (up 6.0%), the price of standard two-storey homes rose to \$353,026 (up 5.2%), and the price of a standard condominium rose to \$205,756 (up 6.4%). The first two quarters of 2009 saw significant year-over-year price declines across the housing types surveyed and the third quarter provided the first signs of a strong rebound in Canadian home values.

Soper added, "Our forecast is built upon an expectation that interest rates will ease upward before the year's end, which should have a dampening effect on demand, allowing it to come into balance with the supply of resale homes on the market. Further, we expect to see an increasing number of homes listed for sale as the year progresses – as Canadians regain confidence in the economy, they should be more willing to enter into a large financial transaction such as the sale of a home."

For more information, please see the Royal LePage Survey of Canadian House Prices at www.royallepage.ca.

If you are wondering what your home is worth, please contact me and let me put my expertise to work for you!

Survey of Canadian Average House Prices in the Fourth Quarter 2009

	Detached Bungalow		Standard Two Storey		Standard Condominium	
	2009 Q4 Average	Annual Change	2009 Q4 Average	Annual Change	2009 Q4 Average	Annual Change
Halifax	\$238,000	10.7%	\$265,333	1.8%	\$167,000	4.7%
Charlottetown	\$160,000	1.9%	\$195,000	3.7%	\$122,000	1.7%
Moncton	\$152,300	1.5%	\$131,000	4.0%	N/A	N/A
Fredericton	\$182,000	12.3%	\$210,000	0.0%	\$145,000	9.0%
Saint John	\$228,000	1.3%	\$299,000	1.5%	\$160,000	1.1%
St. John's	\$217,167	14.3%	\$298,833	14.1%	\$230,333	13.5%
Montreal	\$248,157	4.3%	\$357,888	3.3%	\$220,625	5.0%
Ottawa	\$332,417	3.4%	\$331,917	3.7%	\$218,167	5.0%
Toronto	\$446,214	9.9%	\$564,175	3.5%	\$309,316	2.9%
Winnipeg	\$241,650	9.9%	\$275,500	10.0%	\$153,929	15.7%
Regina	\$273,000	-0.4%	\$259,000	5.7%	\$185,000	7.0%
Saskatoon	\$310,500	3.5%	\$338,750	3.0%	\$197,500	5.9%
Calgary	\$412,478	0.5%	\$427,067	2.3%	\$256,056	-0.4%
Edmonton	\$299,286	-0.7%	\$340,557	-1.2%	\$213,380	3.2%
Vancouver	\$828,750	11.4%	\$917,500	9.6%	\$452,750	11.8%
Victoria	\$474,000	7.7%	\$449,000	3.7%	\$265,000	0.0%
National	\$315,055	6.04%	\$353,026	5.2%	\$205,756	6.35%

Average house prices are based on an average of all sub-markets examined in the area except for the smaller markets of Charlottetown, Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John and Victoria.

Seven Ways to Set Up Your Bedroom for Better Sleep

Your home is your haven, and your bedroom is your retreat. At the end of a busy day, you want to be able to forget about the outside world and focus on getting a good night's sleep. Does your bedroom beckon you with a restful and relaxing ambiance? If not, here are some simple ways to create a bedroom that is comfortable, peaceful, and perfect for catching quality zzz's.

1. Clean and de-clutter

Clean your bedroom to help clear your mind. Tidy away clothes, papers, dishes and anything else that is not conducive to relaxation. Get into the habit of hanging clothes in the closet or putting them in the laundry basket rather than heaping them on the nearest chair. Now all you have to do is vacuum, dust or polish, and you've made a great start.

2. Decorate for relaxation

Keep the colours in your bedroom neutral using soft, light tones. If you prefer a little more colour, you can contrast the walls with deeper, dramatic shades in your accessories, such as pillows and throws. Add some greenery – a healthy plant can act as an air filter and absorb potential toxins from furniture or carpets.

3. Create a breeze

Consider installing a ceiling fan in your bedroom. Ceiling fans can add an attractive decorative touch while providing a soothing breeze and ventilation. Ceiling fans are also great for muffling external noises, so you can drift away to sleep uninterrupted.

4. Lose the lights

Exposure to even moderate levels of light at night can throw off the body's internal clock. Consider room darkening shades or curtains to help keep the light out while you rest. When adding light is necessary, use soft white lights or candles to help create serenity.

5. Play some soft sounds

Classical music can set a tranquil mood. A CD of natural sounds (waves or rain), or even a small water fountain in your room can provide a calming effect and quiet an active mind. Some people find a white noise machine to be comforting as well.

6. Keep distractions out

Keep the computer, T.V., and PDA out of the bedroom. Stimulating the mind before trying to get a good night's sleep is counter-productive. Electronic devices can be very distracting. It's important to make a mental separation



between your bedroom and the outside world so you can concentrate on sleeping.

7. Set-up snug bedding

There's nothing more inviting at the end of a day than falling into a comfortable bed with a good quality mattress, clean sheets and plump pillows. Cool cotton sheets are lovely to slip into in the summer, while flannel provides winter warmth and jersey knits offer a happy medium, cozy without being too heavy, suitable for the spring and fall.

Now all you have to do is keep the temperature just right. Most people sleep best in a slightly cooler room. Adjust the windows and/or thermometer to find the optimal temperature for you. Sleep tight!

Dealing With Dampness in Your Home



When it comes to your home, a musty smell of dampness is definitely undesirable. Dampness can produce mold on hard surfaces, mildew on soft surfaces, and potentially even lead to health or safety issues. But before dampness in your home can put a damper on your spirit, here's the 411 to help you detect it, deal with it, and avoid it in the future.

Identifying dampness

The geographical region of where you live could be a predictor for dampness in your home. Check with your real estate agent or online for information on the humidity and rainfall in your area. Damp homes are often caused by an influx of water from the outside or by increased humidity from showering, drying clothes, and cooking. If water is entering your home from the outside, you may be able to determine where by looking for water tides on painted walls or white salt deposits (called efflorescence) on brick.

Dealing with dampness

If your home is showing signs of dampness, it is important

Let Spring Cleaning Come Naturally

Did you know that your home can sparkle this spring without using any chemicals? Choose from a wide array of eco friendly cleaners on the market or simply make your own with household ingredients such as vinegar, baking soda, and lemon juice. Here are a few tips to help you become a natural when it comes to spring cleaning:

The Bathroom

Want to bring out a natural shine to your sinks, toilets, and tubs? Generously sprinkle either table salt or baking soda into the sink or tub and use the cut end of half a fresh lemon as a scrubby-pad. Rinse with hot water and your ceramics will be gleaming! Undiluted lemon juice can also be used to dissolve soap scum and hard water deposits.

The Kitchen

Vinegar, a natural antibacterial, has a high acid content which makes it an effective alternative to caustic cleaners for the kitchen. Mix together 1 part water to 1 part vinegar in a new spray bottle and you have a natural solution that will clean stovetops, appliances, countertops (except marble), and floors. For troublesome stains, add a touch of baking soda to the mix.

To help remove finger marks from stainless steel appliances use a microfibre cloth or try a dab of baby oil on a clean cloth. For microwaves, put a few slices of fresh lemon in an uncovered bowl of water and cook on high for about three minutes. Grease and dirt should wipe away easily.

Windows

Let the sunshine in by washing away winter's grime. Fill

to address these issues as quickly as possible to mitigate any significant damage or health issues. The first thing to do is locate the source of the problem. Check for obvious causes such as blocked gutters, missing tiles, objects stacked against an external wall, leaking pipes, or damage to your roof or foundation. If you cannot find the source, hire an expert to help. Once you have identified the problem, it is time to seal the deal. Depending on the complexity and severity of the problem, there may be some solutions you can take care of yourself (e.g. caulking a window to keep moisture out), whereas others may be better suited for a professional (e.g. fixing leaks to pipes or addressing foundation problems).

Avoiding dampness

Prevention is key. Here are some steps you can take to keep dampness away from your home:



a bucket with 25 per cent vinegar and 75 per cent warm water. Put on rubber gloves and soak an old cotton towel in the solution. Rub on windows, and then scrunch up some old newspaper to buff up a shine. If there are any streaks, simply finish off with a dry cloth.

Fabrics and Carpets

Have a stubborn fabric stain? Dab white vinegar onto the stain followed by a mild soap solution such as all natural dishwashing liquid and water. Rinse with a clean damp cloth and blot with a dry towel. Salt can also be used to soak up fresh carpet stains such as red wine, coffee or ink. Simply pour salt on the wet stain, let dry, and then vacuum. Natural ingredients can not only get rid of stains, they'll help eliminate odours from fabrics too!

- Limit moisture during humid weather by keeping windows and doors closed.
- Use an air conditioner and/or dehumidifier to keep humidity below 60%.
- Ensure all vent fans are clear and connected directly outdoors and not to the attic.
- Use exhaust fans in the kitchen and bathrooms to control humidity.
- When possible, consider limiting the boiling time of water, covering saucepans when cooking, and discontinuing use of portable gas heaters.
- Position the downspout runoff so it's directed away from the foundation of your home.
- Increasing or improving the insulation of your home and around pipes.