

Headline **Secret to 3Rs success**
Date **13. May 2009**
Media Title **The Star**
Section **StarTwo**
Circulation **293375**
Readership **1026812**

Language **ENGLISH**
Page No **6,7**
Article Size **582** cm2
Frequency **Daily**
Color **Full Color**
AdValue **21787.86**



Secret to 3R's success

**The popular TV show
returns for its 14th
season.**

IAN YEE

**»3R is about
presenting issues in a
fun way«**

RAFIDAH ABDULLAH

HAVING been on the air for almost 10 years now, the popular TV show 3R is still going strong with its 14th season coming out soon.

The show's concept is simple enough – three hosts breaking down current issues with quirky sketches. But according to the show's hosts, that's exactly what their secret to success has been.

"We are keeping to a formula that works," said Rafidah Abdullah, the only host left from the original 3R trio in 2000. "It's about presenting issues in a fun way."

Fellow host Kartini Ariffin, better known as Tini, added: "We're laymen too, and sometimes I cannot understand certain issues because the way they're presented on TV is so complicated! What 3R does is to take these issues, make them fun and simple, so the audience gets it."

The latest addition to the 3R cast, Celina Khor, who joined the show in 2004, says that though the manner in which the issues are explored has not changed, the type of issues they've chosen over the years has evolved.

"This season, a lot of issues are skewed

towards people 18 and above," she revealed. "In previous years, we used to wear secondary school uniforms with the pinafore, addressing issues for people in school. But this season, for example, I wrote one part on financial planning and passive income."

Having been on the show for close to a decade now, Rafidah knows all too well the need to keep up with the growth of their audience.

"People in different age groups have different issues. We're older now (all three hosts are in their early 30s), so naturally, we explore more mature topics," she said.

One of the things that pains her however, is how certain issues remain the same.

"Some say we keep talking about the same issues, but those are issues that won't go away! Like AIDS. Since I was I secondary school we've had all these campaigns and posters.

"But I met a patient whose sister told her she shouldn't eat with the same plates and

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Still with it: As *3R* hosts (from left) Celina Khor, Kartini Ariffin and Rafidah Abdullah mature as hosts of the long-running TV programme, so has the content and issues featured on the show.

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cutlery as the rest of the family, and that her sickness was a punishment from God! It's amazing how people can still be so ignorant," added Rafidah.

The three believe that Malaysians tend to "live in their own bubble" and ignore issues facing people around them, but are thankful to the show for keeping them on their toes.

Said Tini: "People are not sensitised towards the problems around us these days, but thankfully I've grown and kept learning through this show.

"It's like when I met this cancer patient once, who is so absolutely full of life! She has two kids, but she still goes for dance classes, and does all these things she loves to do. Then I look at other more fortunate people, and they're complaining about their lives."

That doesn't mean that the three don't have complaints of their own – they just deal with them differently.

"I do get tired of the long hours filming the show, and the challenge to come up with something fresh," said Rafidah. Mind you, she's had to do it for quite some time now.

"Our show is so successful, a lot gets copied, and we get frustrated. So we always need new ideas and fresh ways to deliver them.

"But it's very rewarding when we get letters from fans who say we've helped. From advice on health, to helping their sisters escape from criminals, that makes all the hard work

Meet the gang

JOIN the hosts of 3R for a special launching event called "Jom Bersama 3R" at CapSquare, KL on May 17. There will be performances, a flea market, festival booths as well as a marathon. The event starts at 8:30pm and will end at noon. The theme of the event is on women's safety, so if you're looking to learn more about how to keep yourself or those around you safe, make sure you drop by.

worthwhile."

Celina added: "We've had fans come to us saying they grew up with 3R, who are now they're in their 20s.

"But the show works because of the show. Not us. The hosts might change, but 3R will go on."

■ *The latest season of 3R will air on June 7, 7:30pm, on TV3. For more details on the show, log on to www.3R.com.my.*