

Reduce Your Risk

Abstract

Students design a promotional campaign that educates their peer group about how to prevent common diseases (i.e., heart disease or obesity). Students submit a proposal form highlighting the key points and ideas for the campaign; creating a product from their proposed campaign is optional.

Learning Objectives

- Certain measures can be taken to reduce an individual's risk of developing common diseases.
- Educating the public about how to reduce their risk of developing common diseases is important.

Estimated time

- Class time 50 minutes
- Prep time 10 minutes

Materials

- Student handouts
- Computers with Internet access

To engage students in this topic

- As a class, generate a list of common diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc.
- Point out which diseases have both a genetic and environmental component (this should apply to most of the diseases you have listed). Discuss the fact that controlling certain environmental factors (i.e., diet or whether you smoke) can decrease the risk of developing some of these diseases. Urging people to reduce their risk by controlling these factors is the topic of many public health campaigns.

Instructions

- Give each student a copy of the handout describing the assignment (page 1) and the accompanying Official Proposal Forms (page 2). Students may work individually, with partners or in groups at your discretion.
- Encourage your students to come up with a new approach that is not currently in use.
- Provide time for students to research common diseases and ways to reduce the risk of developing them. You may wish to have them explore the online disease information pages in the Using Family History to Improve Your Health module, or print out these pages for your students to read.
- Students need only to fill out the Official Proposal Forms to complete the assignment. You may or may not wish to have them create a product from their proposed campaign.

NOTE: If doing the fillable pdf, you may fill the topics list (page 1) yourself, save it, and then send out.

Discuss

- Diet and exercise are often listed as ways to reduce the risk of many diseases. Despite the ubiquitous campaigns encouraging a lifestyle that includes a healthy diet and exercise, obesity rates are on the rise. Why haven't these campaigns been successful?
- What are some effective ways to get a message across? What are some new ideas?

Extension

Analyze an existing health campaign. What works well? What can be improved?

Grading Rubric

	3	2	1
Topic	Disease target(s) or purpose of the campaign is clearly stated in the proposal.	Disease target or purpose is stated, but hard to find in proposal.	It is unclear which disease is the target or what the purpose of the campaign is.
Key Points	The campaign is obviously designed around key points that are easily identified.	The key points of the campaign are not easily identified and/or the campaign is not organized around them.	The key points are not evident.
Medical Merit	The key points of the campaign are complete and include appropriate suggestions for: a) reducing the risk of developing the disease(s) on which the campaign focuses or b) addressing the general purpose of the campaign.	The key points of the campaign do not entirely address preventing the disease chosen for the campaign or they do not fit the general purpose of the campaign.	The key points of the campaign are not appropriate for the disease or purpose on which the campaign focuses.
Write Up	The proposal write up describes the campaign in detail. It is easy to visualize the campaign from reading the proposal.	The proposal write up communicates a general idea of the campaign but some details are left out.	The proposal write up gives only a vague idea of the campaign; it is hard to discern what the campaign will entail after reading the proposal.
Innovation	The campaign uses a different approach than existing campaigns.	The campaign is not a new approach, but a creative modification of an existing one.	There is nothing new or different about the campaign. It is very similar to health campaigns currently in use.

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