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Translating Research into Practice: HEADS UP and K-12 Science Inspiring Health and Careers in Youth

Nancy G. Murray DrPh
UT School of Public Health at Houston

Nathalie Sessions BBA
UT Medical School at Houston

Rojana Luecken
Spring Forest Middle School, Houston

Melissa Cleaver

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Translating Research into Practice: HEADS UP and K-12 Science Inspiring Health and Careers in Youth, Nancy G Murray, DrPh. UTHSC-H School of Public Health, Houston, TX, 77030. Nathalie Sessions, BBA. UTHSC-H School of Public Health, Houston, TX, 77030. Rojana Luecken. Department Chair, Spring Forest Middle School, Houston, TX, 77079. Melissa CleaverHouston, TX, 77043.

Introduction: HEADS UP {Health Education And Discovering Science while Unlocking Potential} aims to improve health literacy and increase student interest in health science careers by providing cutting-edge content from world-renowned researchers in the Texas Medical Center and beyond to the K-12 school community

Purpose: This presentation will be given jointly by HEADS UP project staff and Spring Branch ISD teachers to highlight teacher and student perspectives of HEADS UP modules that feature University of Texas Health Science Center experts.

Methods: A case study of the development and implementation of K-12 school materials.

Results: Materials aligned with state and national science education standards, as well as district-level curricula, bring research and disease experts into the classrooms of students who may not otherwise have the opportunity to learn about how they can not only improve their own health, the health of their loved ones, but also have the potential to fulfill the growing demand for well-trained health science workers. A variety of careers are highlighted with biographies of scientists and other professionals. Presented primarily in a video format with student role models, researchers, other experts, and eye-catching visuals, content is reinforced with classroom activities and assessment tools. Module topics include: basic and advanced genetics, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, nutrition, physical activity, the nervous system, and the immune system (in development).

Conclusions: HEADS UP fosters strong networks between the health science center and the K-12 community by assembling a design team of science teachers/curriculum specialists, research scientists, project management experts, media production professionals, the University Clinical Research Center, other health care and academic institutions, and community organizations.