

Introducing High School Students to Neurophysiology. Advances in Physiology Education 18(1): S41-S46.

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Note:

High school students participated in research presentations given by university undergraduates and both the attitudes and perceptions of research by high school students, as well as the presentation skills of undergraduate students, improved. High school students became more interested in, and were more confident, in their ability to participate in science while exposure to positive role models helped many to rethink preconceived ideas about scientists. Interaction of undergraduates with high school students sensitized them to the importance of science communication with the public

Abstract:

University-based scientists are increasingly meeting the challenge to communicate with the public to improve general science literacy, explain their research to a lay audience, and recruit science students. At the University of Western Ontario, graduate student volunteers of Let's Talk Science have launched a project that introduces senior high school students to research presentations given by undergraduate physiology students. The project has given the undergraduate students an opportunity to present their work to an interested audience other than their peers or faculty, while it provides the high school students with positive role models and a greater awareness of postsecondary science. This project was judged a success by all participants, because many of the high school students became interested in physiology and claimed to be more confident in their ability to participate in science, and it also appeared to improve the presentation and communication skills of the undergraduates. This innovative and cost-efficient project is an effective way to demonstrate the excitement of physiology to potential future scientists while showing undergraduate students that public communication of science is not only important but can also be fun.