Family Genetics Education Through School and Community Partnerships

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Background
The Utah Department of Health Chronic Disease Genomics Program and Genetic Science Learning Center identified a substantial need for culturally appropriate genetics education materials for 5th grade and high school students and their families.

Methods
- Master Teachers attended three-day workshops and developed draft classroom activities.
- Hispanic/Latinx community members adapted classroom activities and developed new take-home activities.
- The 5th grade curriculum module titled Introduction to Heredity (ISG) consists of 3 classroom activities, 3 take-home family activities, and a teacher guide.
- The 10th grade curriculum module titled Using Family History to Improve Your Health (UFH) consists of 8 classroom activities, a promenotional video, 2 take-home activities, and teacher materials.
- Materials meet national and state-level Health Education and Biology Standards.
- Materials are available in English and Spanish.

Results
- The ISG module was tested with six 5th grade teachers and 150 students.
- The UFH module was tested with 8 high school Biology teachers and 536 students.
- Classroom materials were culturally appropriate, engaged students, and achieved learning objectives.
- Family activities were effective in engaging parents in their student’s education.

Conclusion
- The Introduction to Heredity (ISG) and Using Family History to Improve Your Health (UFH) curriculum modules are an effective way to teach genetics to students and their families.
- Teachers are the ultimate gatekeepers for increasing students’ genetic literacy.
- Hands-on learning is important for engaging community members, teachers, students, and families in genetics.

Log in as a teacher at http://learn.genetics.utah.edu to access these curriculum materials or visit www.health.utah.gov/genomics