



Project CRESST was developed to enhance understanding of the clinical trials process in the local community through a partnership among clinical and translational scientists, VCU faculty, and middle and high school science teachers, students, and parents. The project features inquiry-based curricular tools for teachers to introduce students to the clinical research process, using childhood obesity research as a model.

CRESST

VCU | Virginia Commonwealth University

Clinical Research Education for Science Students and Teachers



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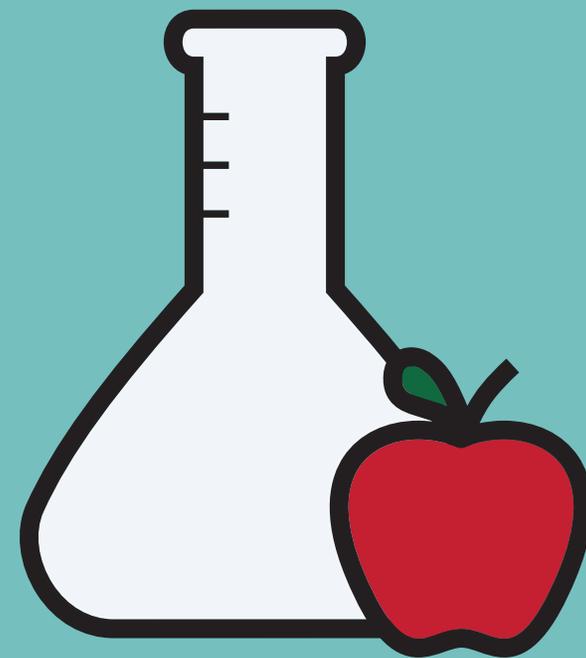
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SEPA SCIENCE EDUCATION
PARTNERSHIP AWARD

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Project CRESST:

Provides content-rich, inquiry based curricular tools for teachers to introduce middle and high school life sciences students to the clinical research process, including protection of human subjects, within a healthy lifestyle and wellness framework.

Integrates family members in the learning process through take-home family involvement activities that encourage discussions about research, ethics, and health.

Engages classroom teachers in an innovative week-long professional development academy focusing on the clinical research process and the CRESST curriculum.

Highly qualified middle and high school teachers developed an inquiry-based curriculum aligned with state and national science standards that encourages students to interact with research concepts and the clinical research process.

Objectives that guided the curriculum development:

- Describe the steps of the scientific method
- Define and discuss elements of clinical trial methodology
- Discuss protection of human subjects in clinical research
- Design a clinical trial to study obesity, health, and wellness

The curriculum will be supplemented by videos and accompanying lessons that address:

- Protection of human subjects and participation in clinical research
- The clinical research process
- Childhood obesity research

CRESST Summer Academy

The academy includes an innovative, week-long, professional development workshop for secondary science and physical education teachers.



CRESST Academy fellows are exposed to the clinical research process through interactions with VCU investigators with ongoing research programs in childhood obesity, health, and wellness. During the CRESST Academy, teachers:

- Discover curricular tools that easily integrate into their classrooms
- Explore how clinical research is related to state and national science standards
- Investigate methods for adapting instructional practices by infusing concepts of clinical research into curricula using inquiry-based methods



Participants continue their involvement during the academic year through a series of follow-up activities, including:

- Incorporating Academy curriculum into their instructional plans and classroom instruction
- Reflecting upon the impact of the new instructional strategies on student understanding
- Discussing future modifications to their instructional plan and the CRESST Academy

“I feel more confident about introducing students to the research process and how to use a real-life application to support my teaching of research.”

“Teachers don't often have the opportunity to interact with scientists and doctors who are doing real research. It was very interesting and informative to hear them.”

“I liked the information from the direct sources, such as the people doing the work in that field. I liked the hands on labs that we learned to do, and seeing the labs in person.”

-2011 CRESST Academy Participants



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