Title: Program Evaluation of a Service-Learning Program
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Giving Away Psychology (GAP) is a service learning project in which students teach evidence-based skills to their peers. Four-person teams of Psi Beta honor students present psychology-themed workshops to high school and college classes. Workshop topics are Bystander Effect, Expert Learning, Interpersonal Communication, and Orientation to Careers in Psychology. The Bystander Effect workshop covers reasons people commit bystander apathy by failing to help a stranger in need of help. Expert Learning presents evidence-based and efficient study and learning strategies, incorporating cognitive strategies known to improve self-regulation skills like time management (Dweck, 2008; Oettingen et al., 2015; Zimmerman et al., 1992; Zimmerman et al., 1992). The Orientation to Careers in Psychology workshop informs students about graduate school and important job skills. The Interpersonal Communication workshop teaches steps for initiating, sustaining, and tactfully exiting a conversation in a social setting. Research on GAP's effectiveness has found that students having lower academic self-efficacy, compared to those with medium to high academic self-efficacy, were helped by the Expert Learning workshop. Shyer students benefit most from the Interpersonal Communications workshop. In follow-up surveys, workshop participants strongly support continuation of the GAP presentations. Program evaluation research is an on-going component of the GAP program and enables us to replicate previous findings. Further research is needed to determine ways in which the GAP workshops help students make use of the strategies being presented. The GAP program is unique in that honor students prepare, present, and evaluate the workshops.

References

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