



CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR 2013 PROJECT SUMMARY

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Project Title The Effectiveness of Reducing Social Isolation in Senior Citizens through a Website	
Objectives/Goals Computers are a source of great information and have helped mankind achieve the impossible. Yet the full potential of computers has still been untouched. Utilizing computers and the internet, we hoped that we could help the majority of senior citizens who face social isolation as a daily problem in their lives. According to research conducted by the University of Phoenix, by 2020, a staggering 75% of all seniors are estimated to face social isolation. Social isolation leads to many other negative changes such as depression, anxiety, and stress. This is why we created a website, seniorstudentconnect.com, an ideal website to connect seniors with others in their community and to get them more involved. We hypothesized that if senior citizens use seniorstudentconnect, then they will become less socially isolated because seniorstudentconnect.com is very simple and allows senior citizens to connect with other seniors, students, and look at events in their community. Abstract Methods/Materials By building seniorstudentconnect.com, using Wix (a website building tool), we were able to connect seniors with both students, and other seniors, and test whether or not a website is effective in reducing the levels of social isolation seniors face on a daily basis. To analyze data, we sent a pre-survey (using Google forms) to seniors when they first joined the website. After a month of using the website we sent the seniors a post-survey, which showed the impact seniorstudentconnect had on the levels of social isolation they faced. Results Our data from the pre and post surveys showed that 3 out of 4 of the senior citizens that used our website reported a reduction in social isolation, 4 out of 4 interacted with more students, and 3 out of 4 of the seniors attended more events. Conclusions/Discussion Overall, we found that our data was inconclusive, thus we were unable to resolve whether our hypothesis was supported or not. Our website was effective in lowering social isolation for seniors that joined, however it was inefficient in getting seniors to join in the first place. Because of our small sample size of only four seniors, we were unable to conclude whether or not seniorstudentconnect was effective in reducing social isolation among seniors. For this reason we would like to continue this study by collecting more data, which would reduce our margin of error, increase our sample size, and help senior citizens around the globe.	
Summary Statement This study aimed to test whether a website would be effective in lowering social isolation among senior citizens.	
Help Received Mountain View senior center let us present our idea to seniors; dad helped with thinking of a good website builder; akhil's mom helped us get in touch with professionals	