Chances' Choices: An Interactive Module to Study Human Genetics

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Chances' Choices is an interactive human genetics module designed by GENESYtems that uses pedigrees to study a large number of human genetic disorders and genetic issues with a fictional family. The story opens with Paul and Stacy Chance and their newborn daughter, Michelle, who has just been diagnosed as having PKU. The storyline continues involving additional family members with both biochemical and behavioral genetic disorders. With the introduction of each new member, a descriptive narrative sets the scene involving the students into the story. Along with a description of the biochemical malfunctions, each disorder is discussed in detail and methods of treatment are outlined. Moral and ethical issues are interwoven into the narrative and many discussion questions are generated.

The topics covered include PKU, hemophilia, alcoholism, high risk pregnancies, prenatal diagnostic procedures, familial hypercholesterolemia, Fragile X Syndrome, HLA testing, prenatal screening, twinning, consanguinity, Tay Sachs, and Huntington Disease. The material is best used in a laboratory/discussion setting. Although no wet-lab procedures are used, pedigrees can be generated for hands-on activities or critical-thinking techniques can be used for small-group discussions and presentations (either oral or written).

Chances' Choices is commercial available for $50 US from Education Division, Foundation for Blood Research, P.O. Box 190, Scarborough, ME 04074.

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