



## **Awareness and understanding of earthquake hazards at school**

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Schools have a fundamental role in broadening the understanding of natural hazard and risks and in building the awareness in the community. Recent earthquakes in Italy and worldwide, have clearly demonstrated that the poor perception of seismic hazards diminishes the effectiveness of mitigation countermeasures. Since years the Seismology's department of OGS is involved in education projects and public activities to raise awareness about earthquakes. Working together with teachers we aim at developing age-appropriate curricula to improve the student's knowledge about earthquakes, seismic safety, and seismic risk reduction.

Some examples of education activities we performed during the last years are here presented. We show our experience with the primary and intermediate schools where, through hands-on activities, we explain the earthquake phenomenon and its effects to kids, but we illustrate also some teaching interventions for high school students. During the past years we lectured classes, we led laboratory and field activities, and we organized summer stages for selected students.

In the current year we are leading a project aimed at training high school students on seismic safety through a multidisciplinary approach that involves seismologists, engineers and experts of safety procedures. To combine the objective of dissemination of earthquake culture, also through the knowledge of the past seismicity, with that of a safety culture, we use innovative educational techniques and multimedia resources. Students and teachers, under the guidance of an expert seismologist, organize a combination of hands-on activities for understanding earthquakes in the lab through cheap tools and instrumentations. At selected schools we provided the low cost seismometers of the QuakeCatcher network (<http://qcn.stanford.edu>) for recording earthquakes, and we trained teachers to use such instruments in the lab and to analyze recorded data. Within the same project we are going to train selected students as communicators so that they can transfer simple educational messages on the seismic risk reduction to other students and/or to the whole community. The experiment is taking place in North East Italy, an area on which OGS detect earthquakes for seismological study and seismic alarm purposes. Teachers and students participating in the project are expected to present their achieved experience during a public event, at University of Udine (Italy).