



# **SIUE School of Pharmacy hosts drug education event: Locked In to Stay Out**

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Pharmacy hosts “Locked In to Stay Out” at the Vadalabene Center from 8 p.m. Saturday, April 22 until 7:30 a.m. Sunday, April 23. The event engages 6th and 7th grade students in discussions about prescription drug abuse and the associated dangers.

The SIUE School of Pharmacy (SOP) American Pharmacists Association – Academy of Student Pharmacists Organization (APhA-ASP) was the recipient of an award to develop and execute a prescription drug abuse prevention event that is novel in its delivery. The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy provided the award in November 2016.

“The SIUE APhA-ASP chapter has sought out great involvement from other student chapters and individual students in the School of Pharmacy, public health and social work to create learning activities that will be discussed throughout the night with the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders,” said Dr. Jessica Kerr, assistant chair of the SIUE Department of Pharmacy Practice and associate professor of pharmacy practice in the SOP.

The night will include interactive sessions and games through active learning about the health, social and legal consequences surrounding misuse and abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medications. Students will engage in activities such as a rock wall, volleyball, racquetball, wally ball, basketball, indoor soccer, arts, crafts and dance.

In addition to educating the students, parents will be encouraged to stay for the 20-minute orientation. Parents will be provided information regarding statistics of the opioid problem, what their children will engage in during the lock-in, and how to continue the discussion with their children after the event and throughout the challenging times during young adulthood.

The need for drug education is critical. During the past decade, there has been an increase in the number of cases documented for the misuse and abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medications among adolescents. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) reports 16.8 percent of high school students (grades 9-12) nationally use one or more prescription medications (opioids, stimulants or anti-anxiety drugs) in non-medical manners.

The 2016 National Institutes of Health (NIH) Monitoring the Future (MTF) assessment states that 14 percent of those using prescription drugs for a non-medical use met the criteria for abuse or dependence for those medications. The statistics demonstrate that high school students are at high risk for abusing medication and illicit drugs.

“By providing drug abuse education to adolescents before they enter high school, they will already have the necessary skills to handle future high risk situations when students are statistically shown to be around others who misuse and abuse drugs,” Kerr said.

The NIH funded a longitudinal analysis of three trials evaluating the implementation of a universal preventative intervention on prescription misuse in middle school students (grades 6 or 7) from small towns and rural communities. All three studies demonstrated that students are less likely to abuse prescription medication as a young adult (17-25 years old) if they attended a community-based prevention program. The interventions in the studies addressed general risks and protective factors for substance abuse, much like the “Locked in to Stay Out” event.

SIUE has partnered with its campus Police Department, the City of Edwardsville Police Department, the Madison County State's Attorney Office and the Illinois Pharmacists Association to provide input or sponsorship for the event.

Other organizations or initiatives assisting with the program include: College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (CPNP), Pediatric Pharmacy Association (PPAG), Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA), the SIUE School of Pharmacy Class of 2019 and the SIUE iCARE team—Suicide Prevention Initiative at SIUE.

For more information, visit the Locked in to Stay Out Facebook page [facebook.com /SIUELockinToStayOut](https://facebook.com/SIUELockinToStayOut).

Today's pharmacists improve patients' lives through the medication and education they provide. Dedicated to developing a community of caring pharmacists, the [SIUE School of Pharmacy](#) curriculum is nationally recognized as a model that offers students a unique combination of classroom education, research, community service and patient care. The School of Pharmacy's areas of excellence include a drug design and discovery core; pediatric practice; chronic pain research and practice; and diabetes research and practice. As the only downstate Illinois pharmacy doctorate program, the SIUE School of Pharmacy is addressing the growing need for highly trained pharmacists in a rapidly growing field.