

SIUE pharmacy students educate children on poison prevention

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EDWARDSVILLE - Southern Illinois University Edwardsville first-year School of Pharmacy (SOP) students visited nearly 350 kindergarten through third grade classrooms Feb. 20-March 9 in Madison and St. Clair Counties to teach more than 6,500 children about poison prevention. Forty-two teams of SOP students engaged children on the important topic through unique lesson plans and hands-on activities.

In Sina Rowe's classroom at LeClaire Elementary, SOP students Akosua "CoCo" Adu and Britney Nguyen interacted with students as they played a game with "Mr. Big Mouth," categorizing which items could be safely consumed and which required the kids to "Stop. Ask first."

"I tried to put my mind in theirs and present the important content in a way they could understand," said Nguyen, of Vietnam. "I enjoyed helping the children learn and hope they went home with one or two key messages they will remember."

"It's wonderful that the University is close by and that we're able to partner with them to give our students a wider education," said Rowe, a K-2 CASTLE (Collaboration for Autism Spectrum Teaching Learning and Excelling) teacher. "This was a medium that our students in the autism program could access. Visuals are super important for them. The pharmacy students took their feedback well and offered a successful lesson on poison prevention."

SOP students found the annual service learning experience rewarding and appreciated the opportunity to positively impact the community through education.

"While this opportunity helps pharmacy students further their ability to work with others, build communication skills and practice public speaking, the greatest benefit may come from the experience of breaking down a large, complex topic into an understandable and meaningful format for their audience," said Jennifer Arnoldi, PharmD, SOP clinical associate professor and experiential education coordinator. "As future pharmacists, this skill is invaluable for communicating with patients about complicated disease states and medications."

"As first year students, we're working to figure out which avenue of pharmacy we want to pursue, whether it's a hospital setting, community-based setting or otherwise," said Adu, of Ghana. "Either way, we'll be in situations where we need to communicate with and educate children and adults. This has been a great experience."

[SIUE School of Pharmacy](#): 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.