

Butler Eagle

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DISPLAY OF LIGHT
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Detention site benefits from college lessons

BC3 nursing teaches skills

By **MEGAN DUNCAN**
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ALLEGHENY TWP — Shalaina wants to learn about first aid because she plans to have foster children someday and thinks that knowledge will come in handy later.

What she learned Tuesday from nursing students at Butler County Community College was how to clean wounds, apply splints and wrap sprains.

Nursing student Dusty Olczak said she didn't expect the students would want to learn. But when she met five teens at Western PA Child Care, she found them full of questions and eager to do the lessons.

Steve, one of two boys in the room, proudly piped up when asked what to do first in an emergency situation.

"Ask questions," he said.

The center asked that only the first names of students be used to protect their privacy.

Getting the students in the detention center to think was one of the goals Sherry Neely, associate professor of nursing and allied health, had for the expanded program.

In the spring, BC3 nursing students did obstetrics-gynecological site work at the 1-year-old facility with females. This fall, Neely had groups of her students meet with small groups of youths at the center as their community pediatrics work.

Beth Gaza, dean of nursing at the college, said pediatric site work is hard to schedule because area hospitals don't have inpatient pediatric units. Students from the college teach at the center two days per week for about five hours each day.

Students at the center earn a chance to participate by advancing in their treatment and by staying well behaved.

At Tuesday's session, which was the second between the nursing students and the five from the center, the topic was quick first aid.

Nursing students Wendy Sellers, Becky Pomposell and Diana Lehnera joined Olczak under the direction of Neely and Ann Stahura, program specialist from the family services unit at Butler Memorial Hospital. The hospital got a \$1,200 grant that bought textbooks and supplies — such as the

first aid kits — for the students.

Some of those supplies were wrapped around the arm of Shalaina as she pretended to have a broken arm.

In another role-playing session, Sellers asked student Anastasia what she would do if someone had a severe cut. She picked some cotton swabs from her kit and pressed it hard against Dakota's arm. She told him to raise it above his heart.

Sellers told the students that this action minimizes blood loss.

Next, the students talked about what to do if a friend has overdosed on drugs.

Sometimes, there's nothing to do but call for help and stay with the friend, Sellers said.

That's something Shalaina said she learned from the two lessons. When there's nothing she can do, she knows she will try not to feel guilty.

She said, for example, if she came upon a burning car, even if she wanted to help a person inside she knows to put her own safety first.

Neely said the center's students are eager to interact with the BC3 nursing students and she thinks that is because of the backgrounds of the nursing students.



DAVE PRELOSKY/BUTLER EAGLE
Western PA Child Care in Allegheny Township, a youth residential treatment facility, is planning an expansion of 24 beds this spring, raising the number of students that can be housed at the facility to 96. The center has a secure area stay program for youth that are flight risks, as well as a shelter program for those awaiting court-assigned locations for treatment. The facility has a waiting list of about 30.

"If Harvard or Penn State Main Campus were to come here and introduce themselves, it wouldn't work the same," Neely said.

The interaction has led to a return community service from the center's students. Shalaina and other students have started crocheting scarves and hats that the nursing students can donate to other schools that they visit.

Shalaina said she likes to donate her time because she's glad to have a chance to participate in the first aid lessons.

"I never thought I'd have an experience like this here," she said.

Another center student said she wanted to be in the program to get a certificate to add to her college resume. But, Kenya said, she participated to learn some tips she thinks she may actually use.

Anastasia agreed: "I live around a lot of babies and I want to know what to do."

The students will get to take the first aid kits and cardiopulmonary resuscitation masks from their first lesson with them when they are discharged from the center.