

Teaching Safety in an Inventive Way

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By Kirsten Laskey Community Editor

Safety is a lesson that can never be ignored, but to capture students' attention, the presentation needs to be interesting. As one of the winners of Honeywell's Got 2B Safe! Awards, Mountain Elementary School fifth grade teacher Sue Souza received a \$500 Staples gift certificate to assist her in grabbing students' attention about safety.

What is her mechanism to accomplish this objective? Puppets.

Souza said she wants to incorporate puppets in her lesson and wants students to create scripts.

Why puppets?

"I think people can relate to puppets and see in a way (how different scenarios) could happen to them," Souza said.

Through puppetry, students will be taught the Got 2B Safe! Four Rules of Safety, which are check first – always check with parents and guardians before accepting gifts, rides or invitations; go with a friend – never go anywhere alone; it's my body – exercise the right to say no to any unwelcome, uncomfortable or confusing touch or action by others; tell a trusted adult – confine in a trusted parent, guardian, teacher, etc., if anyone or anything is causing fear, discomfort or confusion.

Souza said receiving some money was unexpected.

"It was kind of a surprise," she said.

To get the money, Souza submitted a proposal about how she would implement the program in her classroom. Five grand-prize winners received \$10,000 and 100 teachers earned \$500. She said she isn't too sure what she will spend the money on but is considering purchasing a printer for her classroom.

Souza said she learned about the Got 2B Safe! program through an e-mail. In these troubling economic times when school districts are cutting back, Souza encourages people to seek other avenues such as the Got 2B Safe! program for assistance in the classroom. Donations, for instance, are always welcomed. "I know that would help a lot," Souza said.

Plus, "I found this one but I know there are grants and even donations from businesses that can benefit our education systems," she said.