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# Gratitude Club Donates Baby Blankets to East Georgia Regional Medical Center

July 10, 2019



The Georgia Southern University School of Nursing is making strides to prepare future nurses to think of mental health on a continuum of function and to learn about interventions for reducing the risks of mental illness and promoting mental health through the course “Mental Health Nursing”. This past spring, nursing students enrolled in the course were given the opportunity to collaborate with the SHINE Clubhouse to initiate the Gratitude Club as a way to reduce risks for mental health disorders. The SHINE Clubhouse is partnered with Pineland Behavioral Health System to provide an appropriate and safe environment for children after school.

Under the supervision of Assistant Professor Pam Worrell-Carlisle, Ph.D., RN, six groups of nursing students formulated activities using the curriculum from the Nurturing Gratitude from the Inside Out: 30 Activities for Grades K–8 (2017) developed by the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley. The activities, designed to foster a sense of gratitude and to teach how acts of kindness lead to positive emotions for both the giver and receiver, were then implemented at the Gratitude Club meetings.

“I strive to develop learning experiences where benefit flows to our students and also back into the community,” stated Worrell-Carlisle. “Research shows gratitude can be effective in reducing risks for mental health disorders in both children and adults and finding something to be grateful for can be a way of increasing resilience to life’s challenges”.

The culmination of the semester’s work was a project where Gratitude Club members edged fleece blankets that would later be donated to the newborn nursery at East Georgia Regional Medical Center. Students met with an average of 14 children approximately twice a month to complete the project.

After the blankets were completed, Nikiya Lewis, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, assistant professor, assisted in organizing a field trip to East Georgia Regional Medical Center for the blanket donation. During the visit, participants were also privileged to observe two newborn twins receiving care in the nursery. The blankets were received by the unit manager, Ellen Augustine, and several staff nurses, and will be given as a gift to a mother who may be economically challenged and need a new blanket for her baby.

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