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## <sup>159</sup> Poison Control Center celebrates 25th

The University of Kansas Poison Control Center is celebrating 25 years of service to Kansas.

For the last 25 years, anytime someone in Kansas has called a poison hotline number, the call has been answered free of charge by staff of The University of Kansas Hospital Poison Control Center.

Last year, the center handled more than 32,000 calls, including 20,000 in direct response to poisonings, potentially saving hundreds of lives and many millions of dollars in health care costs to Kansans.

"It's a service we provide for the people of Kansas and local health care providers," said Bob Page, president and chief executive officer of The University of Kansas Hospital.

"Our mission is to serve the people of Kansas. Our poison center is special because it immediately connects us with Kansans in crisis, where our highly trained staff can provide accurate information quickly. Most of the time, we are able to resolve the problems over the phone, but about 25 percent of the time, we direct them to the skilled help of their local physi-

cian or hospital for life saving treatment," added Page.

The majority of the calls coming into The University of Kansas Hospital Poison Control Center concern children, accord-

ing to Rick Couldry, director of pharmacy, who oversees the poison control program. "About 64 percent of the poison exposures were children under five years old," said Couldry.

The University of Kansas Hospital Poison Control Center provides access to all Kansans through an 800-telephone number where poison specialists can help determine the risk of a poisoning as well as recommending treatment.

The poison hotline, 1-800-222-1222, is accessible from anywhere in the state of Kansas and is open to health care workers, daycare centers, parents, baby-sitters, school nurses, grandparents, nursing homes, workplaces; anyone can call regarding any kind of poison ex-

posure or for poison information. The center can provide interested individuals or groups with educational materials such as magnets, stickers and brochures.

