

## Students riveted by electrical safety lesson

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Children love SpongeBob SquarePants, it's true, and a cafeteria full of Southern Hills Elementary students can prove it.

On Thursday, youngsters sat and bounced through "Louie, Louie," an educational theater show about electrical safety. Two costumed, energetic children's performers taught them about the dangers of power lines, transformers and outlets.

And just to keep the students' attention, the performers dropped a few references to Nickelodeon's popular cartoon character.

Successful pandering was met with big screams and lingering giggles.

"You have to treat them as your equal," said actress Ann Ehnes. "They have to feel like they know you. If they feel like you're treating them like kids, they're not going to get into it."

Children appeared to get the message of the 25-minute show, which was presented by the National Theater for Children and sponsored by AEP Southwestern Electric Power Co.

They listened quietly when actor Josh Hyman, playing a rapper named Dynamo, warned them not to mess with electricity. "Your first mistake could be your last mistake," he cautioned.

They nodded when Ehnes, playing a superhero named Nicky Neutron, told them never to climb a tall tree or ladder near a power line. And not to stick anything, especially metal, into electrical outlets.

Second-grader Jessica Norris liked what she saw.

"It was good," Norris said, "because I learned about electricity, and you should never leave the lights on."

Her teacher, Carolyn Dupre, also approved.

"It seems to work," said Dupre, adding that her students really got involved. "But you have to reinforce this with what you do in the classroom."

"Louie, Louie" tours schools throughout the Ark-La-Tex for three weeks.




Ann Ehnes (left) and Josh Hyman teach children about electricity safety during a touring theater show sponsored by AEP-SWEPCO at Southern Hills Elementary School in Shreveport on Thursday afternoon. (Val Horvath/The Times)

### On the Web:

- [SWEPCO](#)
- [AEP's Electric Universe](#)

### Multimedia:

 [Print out Louie the Lightning Bug's activity to identify 10 electrical safety hazards around the house](#)