

Teaching Mission students lifesaving skills

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Mission Senior Secondary teachers Shaun Windt and Danny Jakobs receive CPR and defibrillator skill training on Thursday morning. — Image Credit: Kevin Mills Photo

Mission high school students will be receiving more advanced mandatory lifesaving lessons starting next year. Teachers from School District #75 are being trained as instructors to empower students with CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and defibrillator skills, as well as heart health knowledge, through the ACT High School CPR and Defibrillator Program.

As a result, more than 450 students will be trained every year by their teachers to use these life saving skills.

“We’ve been running CPR training in Grade 10 phys-ed classes for the last 10 years,” explained Jim Pearce, principal of Mission Senior Secondary. “What they did this time is to bring in the AED (automated external defibrillator) training. That’s a step up from the CPR training they provided many years ago.”

The course is taught as part of Grade 10 PE, a mandatory course that every students must take. That means, eventually, every student that goes to Mission Senior Secondary will leave having completed the lifesaving training. “At a minimum, 400 Grade 10 students will receive it next year and any Grade 11 or 12 student who selects a PE class will also receive it.” In conjunction with the training, the school has been given several of the AED devices which Pearce said will remain on the school property, and on occasion, a unit would be sent with a traveling sports team to have on hand at different venues.

The Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation is working with B.C. Emergency Health Services, B.C. Ambulance Service and other community partners to bring this program to Mission Secondary. Thanks to a donation from RBC the Mission school is receiving AED training units, training mannequins, curriculum materials and program set-up.

Mission secondary school is receiving: Eight AED training units; Eight AED training mannequins; This initiative will result in: Five teachers trained as CPR and AED instructors for their students; and More than 450 students to learn CPR and AED skills each year.

With eight in 10 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occurring at home or in public places, empowering youth with CPR training as part of their high school education will help increase citizen CPR response rates over the long term. Moreover, early CPR, combined with early defibrillation, can increase survival rates for cardiac arrest victims by up to 75 per cent, according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation.