

Defibrillators now in all secondary schools

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At Sands Secondary School in North Delta, a grade 10 physical education class is grouped in pairs kneeling next to mannequins. They remove yellow electronic training defibrillators from red cases, turn on the devices and follow the audio prompts. They are learning how to save lives.

“The ACT CPR and Defibrillator program in our secondary schools is an incredibly valuable learning initiative for our students, teaching them crucial life-saving skills,” said Doug Sheppard, Assistant Superintendent, Delta School District.

The Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation is a national charitable organization that establishes CPR and defibrillator programs in secondary schools across Canada. Several years ago, ACT supported the Delta School

District with CPR mannequins and training resources so that all secondary school students in the school district receive CPR training. Now, this program has been expanded to include automated external defibrillator training units and also real defibrillators in all seven secondary schools in Delta.

In the Delta School District, this program means that roughly 1,500 students annually will receive CPR and defibrillator training. Students are trained in how to recognize and respond to a developing medical emergency. They are taught CPR by their teachers and how to use an automated external defibrillator.

“We have been hearing from parents, staff and community members over the years that having defibrillators in our schools is important. It is even more powerful to also train students how to use them. We are very thankful to the ACT Foundation for supporting our schools in this regard,” said Laura Dixon, Chairperson, Delta Board of Education.

ACT has generously donated all of the CPR and defibrillator training resources. Five of the seven real defibrillators (one in each secondary school) were also donated by ACT, with the additional two units purchased by the Delta School District.

The ACT program in Delta schools has been made possible by partnerships with BC Emergency Health Services and the BC Ambulance Service. Royal Bank, AstraZeneca Canada, Pfizer Canada and Sanofi Canada have also been critical sponsors of the program. Other community partners include Ausenco, Triwest Mechanical Ltd., Unitech Construction Management Ltd., and Westshore Terminals.

“We are thrilled with the support from our partners,” said Sandra Clarke, Executive Director, ACT Foundation.

“With their support we have enhanced the CPR program in the Delta School District by adding the defibrillator component. These are lifesaving skills that students will be able to bring to their current and future families and communities.”

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. To date, the ACT Foundation has established the high school CPR program in more than 1,700 schools across the country, empowering more than 2.9 million youth to save lives.

Read more: <http://web.deltasd.bc.ca/news/577>