



NEWS LOCAL

Teaching youths to save lives in Cornwall



By [Todd Hambleton](#), Cornwall Standard-Freeholder
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Teams of two, including in front Jillian Stewart (left) and Claudia Sherrington (in white), demonstrated their life-saving abilities at the Holy Trinity Secondary School gym on Friday morning, when the ACT High School CPR and Defibrillator Training Program in Cornwall had its official launch, on Friday November 20, 2015 in Cornwall, Ont. Todd Hambleton/Cornwall Standard-Freeholder/Postmedia Network

It was the official launch on Friday for the ACT High School CPR and Defibrillator Training Program in Cornwall.

But Grade 9 student Nolan Laframboise for a couple of months now, since the school year started, has been receiving training as part of his phys-ed class's health component at Holy Trinity Secondary School, and he's grateful for it.

"I think it's very important, it's something that if a real-life situation occurred before this (the start of the training), I wouldn't have a clue what to do," the well-spoken Laframboise said.

"Now I have a better understanding of it, if a situation occurred I feel I would be better able to contribute."

That seemed evident from the short demonstration, performed in front of a lot of dignitaries who had gathered for the launch ceremony.

Laframboise and about 30 other students displayed some of their skills at Holy Trinity's gym, where the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation and its supporting partners officially launched the program that's going on in five Cornwall high schools in both the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario and the Upper Canada District School Board. Each year will empower more than 600 students in the city and region.

"I thought our students did very well," said Holy Trinity teacher and athletic director Marc Poirier.

Added phys-ed teacher Mindy Gibbs: "They're excited about this (demonstration and program) because it's hands-on."

The ACT Foundation is the charitable organization which is establishing free CPR and defibrillator training programs in high schools throughout Ontario and across Canada, working in partnership with lead community partner TransCanada, provincial partners the Ontario government, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Hydro One, health partners AstraZeneca Canada, Pfizer Canada and Sanofi Canada, and community partner BASF Canada, to bring the program to Cornwall high schools.

"I'm pleased to welcome (the program)," said MPP Jim McDonell. "Training in CPR skills and defibrillator use builds students' confidence and contributes to saving lives.

"This program is also a testimony to the great achievements that are possible when community organizations, the (provincial government) and private-sector stakeholders work in partnership."

Funding will see the Cornwall high schools receive training equipment, including Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training units, AED training mannequins and program setup to enable teachers to train students before graduation with the skills and knowledge to save lives.

"These resources are amazingly invaluable to us, and they will be put to good use," said Trevor Wheeler, the principal at St. Lawrence Secondary School and one of several speakers at the podium during the launch ceremony.

To date, the ACT Foundation has set up the program in more than 1,700 high schools across the country, empowering close to three million youths to save lives.

Eight in 10 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur at home or in public places, and the high school training is expected, over the long term, to increase citizen CPR response rates.

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.

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