

Teachers launching CPR program



Crowe gym teacher Alan Hamilton practices listening for air as coworker Dov Gala pumps the chest of a mannequin during a CPR training course Tuesday.

Valerie Rossi photo

By **Val Rossi - Trail Daily Times**

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It's better to do something than nothing was the message sent to 10 phys-ed teachers participating in a life-saving course Tuesday.

Hovering over CPR mannequins at J. L. Crowe Secondary School, instructors learned how to administer CPR and abdominal thrusts – information they will add to their curriculum and teach their students annually.

This training will result in more than 300 Grade 10 kids being equipped to use this life-saving skill.

"Even if one kid ends up using it some time down the road, it's well worth it," said Crowe's athletic director Larry Reid, adding that while gym teachers have completed first aid training, this is an opportunity to update skills.

The Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) High School CPR program is built on a community based model of partnerships and support, finding partners who donate mannequins, curriculum material and teacher training that schools need to set up the program.

In School District 20, ACT is receiving funding from AstraZeneca Canada, Pfizer Canada and Sanofi Aventis to offer the program, which costs about \$3,800 per school.

As a result, secondary schools in Trail, Rossland and Castlegar received 75 CPR mannequins. "It's nice to see it in the educational system, instead of just the medical system," said trainer Brenda Neil, who has been teaching CPR for 16 years. "It's a saving tool, not a tool to be afraid of."

Neil feels that repetition in a classroom environment will help instill the skills, as it will make students more comfortable and reach a broader group of people.

"It's like a domino effect," she said, noting that educating teachers is a great way to get the word out.

Brad Mason of Stanley Humphries Secondary is pleased to see such crucial skills added to the curriculum. The paid-on-call Fruitvale firefighter and paramedic said kids are more likely to help someone they know.

Crowe gym teacher Alan Hamilton said there's an incident a year where a Crowe student's life may be in danger. He feels giving high school kids the tools to save lives will alleviate future risks.