

More students to get CPR training



Tim Leidl, left, of Tilbury District High School, Tim Allen of Alexander MacKenzie in Sarnia and Cindy Morrison of St. Christopher in Sarnia listen for breathing on CPR mannequins during the ACT High School CPR and automated external defibrillator training program at Chatham-Kent Secondary school Feb. 1. Thirty-two teachers can breathe easier after being certified to teach Level 'A' CPR techniques to their Grade 9 students this semester.

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Diana Martin, The Daily News

Thirty-two teachers can breathe easier after being certified to teach Level 'A' CPR techniques to their Grade 9 students this semester.

Phys-ed teachers from The Lambton Kent District and St. Clair Catholic School boards spent Feb. 1 learning how to perform CPR, use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and methods to teach those skills thanks to the ACT High School CPR and AED Program.

Tara Pettipiece, a teacher at Chatham-Kent Secondary School where the day-long workshop took place, said the certification allows more students to be reached.

"It's important for youth to have (CPR as a) skill because chances are they're going to use it on someone they know," said Pettipiece adding a certified teacher allows for greater flexibility in presenting the program to students.

Paramedic Jackie Dath is thrilled at the opportunities the ACT program offers local schools.

"All the schools that participate in the ACT program are given their own training mannequins and training defibrillator," said Dath, adding "CPR is a skill you learn and hope you never have to use."

Pettipiece said having use of the mannequins and a training AED will help drive home the reality of the curriculum for students.

“It needs to be hands on. There are some things that can be delivered traditionally, but the more hands on the more it’s going to stick with the kids,” she said.

It’s also important to keep the skills fresh, so teachers and students will be required to take CPR every three years to remain certified, said Dath.

“CPR is part of the curriculum now, but we’re taking it to a new level because the teachers will be trained (in CPR) and we’ve added the use of a (training) defibrillator,” said Todd Haskell, principal at CKSS.

Grade 9 phys-ed is targeted as ideal because the course is compulsory, said Haskell.

The ACT Foundation is a national charitable organization that makes the program available to school boards across Canada in order to establish CPR as part of their core curriculum program. The foundation raises funds and support to cover the cost of supplying participating schools with the necessary materials to give students hands on training in CPR and AED.

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