



Minister of Education and local MPP Leona Dombrowsky promote CPR courses and refreshed her own skills with Quinte Secondary School (QSS) student Cole Goodfellow.

Training breathes life into students' lifesaving skills

By Jerome Lessard

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More than 1,500 Grade 9 students in Quinte are now empowered to save lives.

The Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation launched the ACT High School CPR program for all high schools in Belleville, Hastings and Prince Edward County, and Quinte West at Quinte Secondary School Friday.

The program was launched in partnership with lead community partner such as TransCanada Corporation and provincial partners, the Government of Ontario, and the Trillium Foundation.

"CPR instruction for Grade 9 students gives them life-saving training they can use in their community and with their families," said Minister of Education and local MPP Leona Dombrowsky. "As a mother of four, I wanted to make sure that if something would happen to my family I would be able to do something the help them. That's why I did the CPR training years ago, but now I am glad that I am here to get a needed refreshment."

Dombrowsky added that Queens Park recognizes and supports the important work of the ACT Foundation to empower students and save lives.

According to the foundation, teachers are breathing life into the program. Overall, 20 local physical education teachers have been trained as CPR instructors for their students, and 160 mannequins will be donated to schools in Belleville, Bancroft, Madoc, Picton and Trenton.

"Today's launch completes the program set-up in all high schools in the area which includes the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board and the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board," said Sandra Clarke, executive director of the ACT Foundation. "What can be better than empowering young persons to be able to help a grandparent or a stranger on the street who needs CPR? And we are thrilled with the support of ACT's partners. Without them, this lifesaving program would not be possible."

To date, the ACT Foundation has set up the ACT High School CPR program in more than 1,500 schools nation-wide, "empowering more than 1.8 million youth to save lives," added Clarke. "As the school year comes to an end, a total of 2,000 youth will be out in the community ready to react in emergency situations and save lives."

"The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) continues to be impressed with the work the ACT Foundation is doing across the province," said Robin Cardozo, chief executive officer of the OTF. "Building healthier and more vibrant communities through our grant making policies is one of our primary goal and I believe the ACT Foundation's CPR program will continue to further this objective."

Once politicians and officials spike in glowing terms about the project, it was time for practice. Dombrowsky and Mayor Neil Ellis were matched to Quinte Secondary School students to refresh their CPR techniques by using one of the dozen mannequins made available by ACT Foundation in the high school's gym.

"Being here today (Friday) to refresh my knowledge and techniques related to CPR hits so close to home for me," said the mayor of Belleville. "My wife is a nurse and she kept reminding me that I have to refresh my CPR training, and she is right. We never know when we're going to need it."