

Area youth get life-saving training

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This past June, high school students in the Belleville, Hastings, Prince Edward County, and Quinte West areas were empowered with lifesaving skills through the ACT High School CPR Program.

The program comes to the area through a unique partnership between the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation and lead community partner, TransCanada Corporation, and provincial partners, the Government of Ontario and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

This program will see more than 1,500 Grade 9 students from eight high schools in the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board empowered to save lives every year. The 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.

As the school year is now over, this means that a total of 2,000 youth are out in the community ready to react in emergencies and save lives!

"CPR instruction for Grade 9 students gives them life-saving training they can use in their community," says Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Education and MPP for Prince Edward-Hastings. "Our government recognizes and supports the important work of the ACT Foundation to empower students and save lives."

The ACT High School CPR Program is built on ACT's award-winning community-based model of partnerships and support. ACT raises funds for teacher training, CPR mannequins, and teaching resources for all high schools and guides schools in program set up. CPR is a mandatory part of the high school curriculum in Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta.

"TransCanada believes in partnering with organizations that help build stronger communities," says Dean Cowling, vice-president, community, safety and environment, TransCanada. "Helping these young students to gain the ability to make a serious contribution to the health and safety of others in their community is a perfect opportunity to do just that and we are proud to be a part of this program."

Twenty physical education teachers have been trained as CPR instructors for their students and 160 mannequins will be donated to schools in Bancroft, Belleville, Madoc, Picton and Trenton. The students will take their lifesaving skills to their current and future families in the area.

"The Ontario Trillium Foundation continues to be impressed with the work the ACT Foundation is doing across the province," says L. Robin Cardozo, CEO of the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

"Building healthier and more vibrant communities through our grant making policies is one of our primary goals and I believe the ACT Foundation's CPR program will continue to further this objective."

The ACT Foundation is a national charitable organization dedicated to establishing CPR as a mandatory program in every Canadian high school. ACT's health partners who are committed to bringing the program to Ontario and to all high schools across Canada include AstraZeneca Canada, Bristol-Myers Squibb Canada, Pfizer Canada and sanofi-aventis.

"We are thrilled with the support of ACT's partners. Without them, this lifesaving program would not be possible," says ACT Foundation Executive Director Sandra Clarke.

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.

To learn about some of ACT's rescue stories, visit www.actfoundation.ca, "like" us on Facebook www.facebook.com/theactfoundation.