

## Students learn CPR and defibrillator use

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Jocelyn Beaulieu and Ashtyn Bartlett know what to do if they see someone having a heart attack.



Stephen MacGillivray/The Daily Gleaner

The Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation launched a program for Fredericton area high school students to learn CPR and how to use a defibrillator. Above, Leo Hayes High School students Ashtyn Bartlett, left, and Jocelyn Beaulieu demonstrate performing CPR.

First, the two 15-year-old, Grade 10 students at Leo Hayes High School would check that it's safe to approach the person lying on the ground, making sure there's no broken glass or an electrical hazard nearby.

Then they call 9-1-1.

But they don't wait for the paramedics because they know if a person suffering a cardiac arrest has to wait more than eight minutes for aid, his or her survival rate is only 20 per cent, compared to 70 to 80 per cent, if they get help within three minutes.

If the person isn't breathing, they would perform CPR, counting aloud the 30 chest compressions.

Then they administer mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

If the person is still not breathing they repeat the process.

And if there's a defibrillator available, they also know how to use it to shock the person's heart back to life.

Beaulieu and Bartlett are among the 1,000 students in Fredericton's two high schools who will be trained each year in the use of CPR and a defibrillator as part of the new Advanced Coronary Treatment Foundation program in the capital.

They took part in a demonstration of the training at the Leo Hayes High School on Monday.

"I want to become a lifeguard," said Beaulieu, explaining why she is taking the training.

"It's part of learning how to save people."

She said she is confident she could now save a life using what she has learned.

"It tells you what to do step by step and it goes very slow and will repeat itself," Beaulieu said about the defibrillator, which gives verbal directions on how to hook it up to someone having a heart attack.

Bartlett admitted that, at first, she was intimidated by the two week, 10-hour course.

"I didn't know how to do it," she said.

She said she had done no CPR training before the course but now she, too, says she can perform the life saving technique.

"I can do it now," she said.

Bartlett said the students' nickname for the CPR dummies - which consist of a head and upper torso - is Elliot, named after the school mascot Elliot Moose.

Beaulieu said the training will remain with her long after she graduates from high school and moves on to another life.

"After lots of practice, it is just something that sticks in the back of your mind," she said.

"It's always with you."

That's exactly what Leo Hayes High School principal Kevin Pottle wants to hear.

He said it was easy to welcome the safety training into his school.

"This is an opportunity to impact in ways we can't begin to understand and appreciate," he said Monday, after the demonstration.

Pottle said there aren't going to be a lot of heart attacks in the hallways of Leo Hayes or Fredericton High School, but those students are going to graduate and go out into the community.

"Being in the rinks and the fields and the malls and situations where we know these things are going to happen," he said.

"The potential to save lives anywhere our students go in the future is tremendous. There's no value that can be put on that."

The Advanced Coronary Treatment Foundation is a national organization that has set up high school training programs in more than 1,600 schools across Canada and which have trained more than 1.8 million students in CPR and the use of a defibrillator.

The training program in Fredericton will involve Grade 9 students in Leo Hayes High School and Fredericton High School using 120 practice dummies and 16 training defibrillators.

The program works with local partners, such as the Fredericton Community Foundation, which provided a grant of \$15,000.

"We are thrilled with the support of ACT's partners," said ACT foundation executive director Sandra Clarke. "Without them, this lifesaving program would not be possible."

Clarke said the local program becomes self-sustaining because 14 teachers are trained to become instructors.

"We believe that equipping 1,000 Grade 9 students every year with the skills and the knowledge to save lives will create a substantial and lasting effect on our community," said Pam Clark, chairwoman of the Fredericton Community Foundation.

"It epitomizes our vision for the impact grant."

District 18 Supt. Dianne Wilkins said partnership is the key to bringing an important lifesaving program into the school system.

"The partnership realizes the importance of providing Fredericton High School and Leo Hayes High School with this important lifesaving program," she said.

ACT Foundation's health partners are AstraZeneca Canada, Pfizer Canada and Sanofi.