



# LETHBRIDGE HERALD

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## **CPR now taught in schools**

By LISA DOERKSEN

Jenelle Feller hopes she never has to use her CPR skills. But, she's glad to have them. "I don't want to use this but it reassures me to know I can use it," said the Grade 10 Catholic Central High School student.

Feller is one of thousands of Grade 10 students across southern Alberta who will receive CPR training as part of their physical education curriculum. The high school CPR initiative, spearheaded by the ACT Foundation, was launched Tuesday at CCH.

Through the program, all schools will receive CPR mannequins, student manuals and training for teachers, who will teach the four-hour course to students. In Lethbridge, the mannequins have been paid for by the Kiwanis Club of Green Acres, the teacher's training will be provided by St. John Ambulance and the Lethbridge Herald has agreed to publish manuals for the next three years.

Other community partners include the Lethbridge Fire Department, Alberta Learning and STARS Air Ambulance, which provides a grant. Every student will learn CPR and the Heimlich Manoeuvre.

The program will be implemented in all five high schools in the Lethbridge Public School District and Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate School Division.

Over 100 schools in Alberta have already implemented the program, and when provincewide implementation is completed, 45,000 high school students will be trained in CPR every year.

Lee Sagert, a Lethbridge paramedic speaking on behalf of STARS Air Ambulance, told students how important it is that they be prepared to help in an emergency situation.

"When I hear the voice at dispatch say bystanders have started CPR, that takes my nerves and calms them right down," he said. "I know that person's chances of survival have gone way up."

Carmen Mombourquette, principal at CHH, said the school began integrating CPR into its curriculum about five years ago. But having this new initiative provide proper mannequins and supplies, he said, makes training the students much easier.

The importance of turning students out into the world with CPR training can't be underestimated, he said.

"Just look at society," he said. "We just have the potential of that many more people available to save lives."