

## **Ontario provides CPR training funds to high schools**

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Ontario premier Dalton McGuinty says the province will provide \$650,000 to support teaching cardio-pulmonary resuscitation to Grade 9 students.

The project is a partnership with the Advanced Coronary Treatment foundation. Mr. McGuinty made the announcement yesterday at Hillcrest High School. The coronary foundation launched the original CPR pilot program at Ottawa high schools in 1994.

"In Canada, about 15 per cent of our citizens know how to perform CPR," said Mr. McGuinty. "They tell me that if we can get that to 30 per cent, we can save over a thousand more lives every year."

Mr. McGuinty has a personal connection to this project, as his father suffered a fatal heart attack in March 1990 while shovelling snow.

The government's support will allow CPR to be taught in every high school across the province. The provincial funds will cover half the cost; the rest will be provided in partnerships with communities and businesses.

"Phys-ed teachers will receive teacher training by local instructors," said Sandra Clarke, executive director of the coronary foundation.

In 1999, the Ontario Ministry of Education made CPR training compulsory for Grade 9 students. Foundation spokeswoman Micheline Joannis said at that time, the Harris government did not provide extra funding. This meant training often amounted to no more than a one-time demonstration and smaller schools in rural areas have not been able to afford it.

The survival rate of outside-of-hospital cardiac arrests triples if someone is present to perform CPR before the emergency services arrive.