

# THE DAILY COURIER

## Westside students learn CPR

### ***Session at Mount Boucherie Secondary part of national program to train 900,000 students at 12,000 secondary schools each year***

Thu 04 Dec 2008  
Page: A4  
Section: News  
Byline: J.P. Squire

A group of nervous Grade 10-12 students practised CPR on mannequins under the watchful eyes of paramedics, an emergency room physician and sponsors of the national high school program on Monday.

Chris Carter, head of the phys ed department at Mount Boucherie Secondary, took them through the life-saving drill step by step, a technique that 25 Central Okanagan teachers taught by paramedics will pass on to 1,900 students in Grades 9-12 at six schools.

Some MBSS students received one-on-one instruction from the local paramedics and Westside Coun. Rosalind Neis, an operating room nurse at Kelowna General Hospital.

"The way they teach it now gives kids a lot more confidence," said Carter.

When he received his training four years ago, examiners were strict. Any deviation from the accepted procedure resulted in failure.

"Everyone can call 911 and do chest compressions," said Carter who co-ordinated the training of 450 Grade 10 MBSS students last year. Another 500 Grade 10s will get the training during phys ed classes starting in January.

In 2006, someone who had a cardiac arrest outside a hospital's front door had only a six per cent chance of survival, added Dr. Nick Balfour, an emergency room physician.

So, health-care officials looked at cardiopulmonary resuscitation, revised the technique to make it easier and more effective, and then taught all B.C. paramedics during the next six months.

Today, the survival rate for that patient outside a hospital's front door has doubled to 12 per cent, Balfour said.

"These students are learning how to save lives," said Mary Adams, B.C. project manager for the ACT High School CPR Program. ACT stands for advanced coronary treatment.

"There is only approximately 15 per cent of the population in B.C. that knows how to perform CPR, which is a huge gap. We're working to fill that gap.

"It's a great opportunity for the students to learn CPR. It empowers them. They learn the risk factors, they learn how to recognize emergency situations, they learn how to react without being nervous and they learn how to resuscitate people if need be." Tami Crawley, external affairs manager for Bristol-Meyers Squibb Canada, one of the national sponsors, noted the Canada-wide goal is to train 900,000 students at 12,000 secondary schools each year.

Eighty-five per cent of cardiac arrests occur in the home or family setting, and the survival rate increases by four times if CPR is performed, said B.J. Chute, public education director for the B.C. Ambulance Service.

Envision Credit Union Foundation donated \$19,360 to buy the 245 mannequins and resource materials for the training. December is CPR Awareness Month.

© 2008 The Okanagan Valley Newspaper Group. All rights reserved.