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## Students learn how to save lives

### Belleville News

By Steve Jessel

News -Students at Centennial Secondary School in Belleville had a potentially life-saving experience this past week, and soon, more than 1,600 students from across the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board, the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board and the Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario will also have that chance with the local launch of the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundations' High School Defibrillator Training Program.

"These are simple life saving skills that students can take home and use," said ACT Foundation operations manager Jennifer Boissonneault. "They also learn how to recognize signs of a heart attack, healthy eating habits and what to do in an emergency situation."

While the ACT Foundation has been present in Belleville area schools for about the past four years teaching CPR, this past week's launch of the High School Defibrillator Training Program was significant as it was only made possible by local area sponsors. Together with the support of Belleville Tim Hortons, the Bancroft Lions Club, Kiwanis Club of Trenton, Kiwanis Club of Tweed, Madoc Kiwanis Club, and ACT's provincial partners, 52 mannequins, 41 AED training units and a teacher training program have been donated to local high schools to support the program. Provincially, the ACT Foundation partners with the Government of Ontario, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Hydro One.

"This enhancement of the AED program is an important addition to youth CPR training," said Health Minister Deb Matthews in a release. "We are empowering youth with the skills and knowledge to save lives, which is an incredible asset to the health of our communities."

The ACT Foundation is the national charitable organization that is establishing CPR and defibrillator training programs in Canadian high schools. To date, the ACT Foundation has set up the ACT High School CPR Program in more than 1,600 schools nation-wide, reaching more than 2.6 million youth.

"This is just one example of entrusting our future to the youth of today," said Mark Hanley, owner of Tim Hortons. "We will know that every high school student is trained and more knowledgeable than their elders when it comes to using such an important lifesaving device - the defibrillator. We are very proud to play a small part in that development."

Four in five out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur at home or in public places. Early CPR, combined with the use of an AED within the first few minutes, can improve survival rates for cardiac arrest victims by up to 75 per cent, according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation.



### Students learn how to save lives– Image 1

Submitted

*Centennial Secondary School students demonstrate the lifesaving skills taught by the ACT High School CPR and Deffbrillator Training Program during the official launch event on Friday, November 22.*