



## **ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GIVE MPPS A LESSON IN LIFESAVING**

**TORONTO – February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Queen’s Park, Committee Room 2, First Floor, West Wing** - At 11:45 a.m., the Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Education and the Honourable Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, will address MPPs, students and guests about the important addition of AED training to the ACT High School CPR Program in Ontario – a first in Canada.

The Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation will then pair high school students with MPPs for a lesson in lifesaving.

An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is an easy-to-use device that can tell when a heart stops beating effectively and deliver an electric shock to help it restart. In 2008, the Government of Ontario committed \$1.4 million to help the ACT Foundation enhance the CPR program it was already setting up in all high schools, with AED training for students and AEDs for high schools.

To date, more than one million Ontario youth have been trained in the ACT High School CPR Program. Now, as ACT brings the AED enhancement to Ontario high schools, more than 27,000 students have been trained in both CPR and AED.

“I’m proud of our partnership with the ACT Foundation, and the work we are doing together to bring this important CPR and AED training to Ontario high schools,” said Minister Dombrowsky. “This program is a valuable learning opportunity for youth, and today will be a valuable learning opportunity for MPPs.”

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

According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, for every one minute delay in defibrillation, the survival rate of a cardiac arrest victim decreases by seven to 10 per cent. Defibrillation, when used with CPR, can improve cardiac arrest survival rates to more than 50 per cent if delivered in the first few minutes.<sup>1</sup>

“We want to thank the Government of Ontario for their support of this important program,” said Sandra Clarke, Executive Director of the ACT Foundation.

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<sup>1</sup> Heart and Stroke Foundation Statistics:  
<http://www.heartandstroke.com/site/c.iklQLcMWJtE/b.3483991/k.34A8/Statistics.htm>

The Government of Ontario grant supports the training of teachers as CPR and AED instructors for their Grade 9 students, the purchase of AED training equipment and the placement of defibrillators in high schools. Other funding partners for this program include The Ontario Trillium Foundation, community partners and ACT's four core partners, AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb Canada, Pfizer Canada and sanofi-aventis, which provide sustaining funding for the ACT Foundation, and are committed to ACT's efforts to establish this program in Ontario.

"The continued support from our committed partners at the provincial, community and national level has been the driving force behind this program – but we still have a long way to go," said Ms. Clarke. "The partners recognized today have provided a large portion of the funds needed, but we are still fundraising in communities across Ontario to complete the set-up of this important training program."

### **Chase McEachern Act**

In 2007, the Government of Ontario passed the Chase McEachern Act, which provides liability protection to individuals who use an AED in an emergency. To read the Heart Defibrillator Civil Liability Act visit <http://www.ijcan.org/en/on/laws/stat/so-2007-c-10-sch-n/latest/so-2007-c-10-sch-n.html>.

### **About the ACT Foundation**

The ACT Foundation is a national, award-winning charitable organization driving a national campaign to establish CPR training in all high schools across Canada. ACT raises funds to donate mannequins, teacher training, manuals and other materials to schools. ACT also guides schools in program set-up to ensure long-term sustainability of the program. Teachers then train their students as a regular part of the curriculum. More than 1.4 million youth have been trained in CPR across Canada to date through the ACT High School CPR Program. ACT is currently enhancing the CPR program in Ontario with Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training and AEDs for schools. Core partners behind ACT's campaign in Ontario and across Canada are AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb Canada, Pfizer Canada and sanofi-aventis.

To learn more about ACT visit [www.actfoundation.ca](http://www.actfoundation.ca) . To view videos of some of ACT's incredible student heroes visit [www.youtube.com/theactfoundation](http://www.youtube.com/theactfoundation) .

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