



ACT

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HAMILTON STUDENTS TO BE EMPOWERED TO SAVE LIVES

HAMILTON, ON – The Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation, in partnership with FirstOntario Credit Union, and the Government of Ontario and other key provincial partners (Hydro One, Shoppers Drug Mart and The Ontario Trillium Foundation), is launching the ACT High School CPR Program in Hamilton, Ontario. The launch will take place April 9, 2008 at 10:15 a.m. at Delta Secondary School, 1284 Main Street East. Schools from the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board and le Conseil scolaire de district du Centre-Sud-Ouest are embracing this award-winning program.

More than 4,400 Grade 9 students from 20 high schools will now be empowered to save lives every year. Eighty physical education teachers have been trained as CPR instructors and will train their students using the 660 mannequins that have been donated to their schools. The students will then take their life-saving skills to the local community.

The ACT Foundation is a national charitable organization dedicated to establishing CPR as a mandatory program in every Canadian high school. The ACT High School CPR Program is built on ACT's award-winning community-based model of partnerships and support. Through this model, ACT raises funds for CPR mannequins for schools and guides schools in program set up. The lead community partner in Hamilton is FirstOntario Credit Union. The company is playing a key role in helping to bring the CPR Program to this community. The print partner for ACT's High School CPR Student Manuals in Hamilton is *The Hamilton Spectator*.

“FirstOntario Credit Union is committed to working towards the betterment of our communities,” says FirstOntario Credit Union President and CEO Kelly McGiffin. “The ACT High School CPR Program in the Hamilton area is a very valuable program and one we are proud to support. It is truly a privilege to play a key role in the empowerment of local youth and afford them the opportunity to learn the skills and knowledge to save lives.”

Research indicates citizen CPR response can improve survival rate for victims by almost fourfold. With eight in 10 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occurring at home, empowering youth with CPR training as part of their high school education will help increase citizen CPR response rates over the long term.

“As an Emergency Physician in Hamilton, unfortunately I have seen too many deaths due to cardiac arrest and choking,” says Dr. Michelle Welsford, Medical Director at the Hamilton Health Sciences Centre. “Early CPR and the Heimlich maneuver save lives and what better gift can you give than the training on how to save someone’s life. Due solely to this program, I will see more people saved by the youth and educators in our community.”

The ACT Foundation’s goal in Ontario is to expand the CPR Program to every high school throughout the province. To help make this possible, ACT has secured a provincial commitment of \$650,000 from the Government of Ontario through its public / private funding partnership. Through this partnership, the Foundation seeks matching funds for program resources at the community level.

"I am very pleased to see a program such as the ACT CPR High School Program be implemented in our schools," says Hamilton Mountain MPP Sophia Aggelonitis. "It is so important to teach our kids life saving skills. I commend everyone on their hard work and dedication for making this program possible."

The ACT Foundation also receives provincial-level funding for the program from Hydro One, Shoppers Drug Mart, and The Ontario Trillium Foundation, and its national partners are AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb Canada, Pfizer Canada and sanofi-aventis.

“We are thrilled with the support of ACT’s partners. Without them, the Hamilton program would not be possible,” says ACT Foundation Executive Director Sandra Clarke.

To date, the ACT High School CPR Program is in over 500 Ontario high schools and more than 700,000 Ontario students have been trained. Nationally, 900,000 students from more than 1,200 schools have been empowered to save lives through the CPR Program.

About the ACT Foundation

The ACT Foundation is a national, award-winning charitable organization dedicated to promoting health and empowering Canadians to save lives. ACT is driving a national campaign to establish CPR as a mandatory program in every Canadian high school. ACT raises funds for CPR mannequins for schools and guides schools in program set up. The Foundation has already established the CPR program in over 1,200 high schools across Canada and over 900,000 youth have been trained to date. The Foundation and its core partners are winners of Imagine Canada’s “New Spirit of Community Partnership” Award. Core partners are companies in the research-based pharmaceutical industry: AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb Canada, Pfizer Canada and sanofi-aventis. They provide ACT’s sustaining funding and are committed to the Foundation’s national goal of promoting health and empowering Canadians to save lives. For more information visit: www.actfoundation.ca.

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