

School Cardiac Emergency Preparedness & Project ADAM Heart Safe School Designation

Background for School Administrators

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) – A Public Health Issue

- More than 350,000 out-of-hospital Sudden Cardiac Arrests (SCA) occur in the United States each year and approximately 10 percent surviveⁱ.
- Studies show that prompt bystander Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use could double or even triple survival ratesⁱⁱ.
- In a study of more than 2,000 schools over a two year time frame, the SCA survival rate in schools with AED programs increased to 71 percentⁱⁱⁱ.
- On any given day, as much as 20 percent of the entire United States population is in a school^{iv}.

Background on Project ADAMs Work

- Project ADAM began in 1999 after the death of Adam Lemel, a 17-year-old Whitefish Bay, WI, high school student who collapsed and died while playing basketball.
- Adam suffered a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) in which ventricular fibrillation occurred, a condition in which the ventricles cannot pump blood into the body. Defibrillation, or an AED, could have saved his life.
- Since 1999, Project ADAM has advocated for AED placement in schools and communities. The Heart Safe School program ensures equipment is maintained and there is a team of trained staff ready to respond to emergencies in schools across the country.

Evidence-Based Practice in School Cardiac Emergency Preparedness

- Over the past 20 years, school and community CPR/AED programs have become more commonplace, yet we continue to hear stories of tragic lives lost to SCA that could have been prevented.
- In 2016, like-minded national organizations including AHA and Project ADAM teamed up to develop a [Cardiac Emergency Preparedness in schools policy statement](#).

Justifying Staff Time for CPR/AED Training and Drilling

- Project ADAM recommends a designated emergency response team comprised of at least 10% of school staff trained in CPR/AED in the event there is a sudden collapse or medical emergency.
- An AED drill can be conducted in less time than a fire drill. Plan for 5-10 minutes, including a debrief with the team afterward.
- Some schools choose to conduct medical emergency drills which cover a multitude of possible medical emergencies that could occur, not solely cardiac. We recommend the AED is brought to the scene each time.

Project ADAM Heart Safe School Designation

- All Project ADAM educational material and Heart Safe School checklist program criteria reflect recommendations outlined in the [Cardiac Emergency Response Planning for Schools: A Policy Statement](#).

Project ADAM National, Updated January 2021

For an up-to-date version, please visit www.projectadam.com

- Since 1999, over 4,000 schools across the country have achieved this designation with hundreds more in progress.
- Project ADAM's Heart Safe School program ensures our schools have well maintained AED equipment, CPR/AED trained staff and a practiced plan to respond to a sudden collapse on campus, giving our students, staff and visitors the best possible chance to survive a SCA.

Stories of lives saved

[Student's life saved at Franklin High School - Franklin, WI](#)
[Athlete revived at school – Nashville, TN](#)

For More Information:

www.projectadam.com
www.facebook.com/supportprojectadam
<https://www.instagram.com/supportprojectadam/>

ⁱ Source: [American Heart Association Heart and Stroke Statistics - 2019 Update](#)

ⁱⁱ Source: [NIH article: Recent advances and controversies in adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ Source: [A 2-year prospective study from the National Registry for AED Use in Sports](#)

^{iv} Source: [A Statement for Healthcare Providers, Policymakers, School Administrators and Community Leaders](#)