



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

## MI HEARTSAFE SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

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**Welcome** to the first edition of the MI HEARTSafe Schools Newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a forum for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and our school partners to discuss and address issues involving Michigan schools with a goal of trying to make our Michigan schools safer for all those who attend. One of our main goals is to encourage and work with all of our Michigan schools to become MI HEARTSafe Schools.

A HEARTSafe designation recognizes a school's efforts to prevent sudden cardiac death of the young (SCDY) by screening its athletes for inherited syndromes that predispose to sudden cardiac arrest and preparing for a cardiac emergency. Members of this school community know how to recognize the signs of sudden cardiac arrest and respond quickly by calling 9-1-1 and using CPR and an automated external defibrillator (AED) until EMS arrives.

The MI HEARTSafe School Award Program was started in 2013 by the Michigan Alliance for the Prevention of Sudden Cardiac Death of the Young (MAP-SCDY). MAP-SCDY works to prevent death due to sudden cardiac arrest by encouraging communities to be prepared to provide the best possible response to a cardiac emergency.

### Is your school HEARTSafe?

If someone in your school community suffers a sudden cardiac arrest, would you know what to do? Did you know that early recognition of a cardiac arrest, calling 9-1-1, bystander response with hands-only CPR, and the use of an AED greatly increases the chance of survival?

Important questions for you to consider for the new school year:

- Does your school have a cardiac emergency response plan?
- How many students and staff can recognize the symptoms of cardiac arrest and know how to get help "on the way, right away"?
- Who knows CPR in your school and is ready to use it when necessary?
- Where are the automated external defibrillators (AEDs) located in your school building, are they properly maintained and inspected, and who knows how to use them?

Please visit <https://migrc.org/miheartsafe> for more information about the MI HEARTSafe Schools Award Program and how to qualify and apply for the MI HEARTSafe designation. Schools meeting the minimum criteria will be awarded the MI HEARTSafe School designation, receive a HEARTSafe banner to display, receive a letter of commendation, and be spotlighted on our website, all at no cost to the school. Applications will be available for the 2018-2019 school year in January 2019. You can also email any questions to [MDHHS-MI-HeartSafe@michigan.gov](mailto:MDHHS-MI-HeartSafe@michigan.gov).

Please join us in making our Michigan schools **HEARTSafe!**

**BEST PRACTICES—BY MONICA MARTIN GOBLE, MD**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN CONGENITAL HEART CENTER—LANSING PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGY

**Background:** Without immediate CPR to help maintain blood flow to vital organs and the shock of an AED to reset the heart's natural rhythm, sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) victims usually die or may have permanent neurologic damage. The chance of survival decreases by 10 percent with every minute defibrillation is delayed. Immediate CPR and AED use, after a witnessed collapse, can double or triple chances for survival. Bystander CPR and survival rates have increased since the implementation of hands-only CPR in 2008, but we still have a long way to go. Survival from an out-of-hospital SCA is only about 10 percent, with significant regional variability.

**Planning for SCA:** While good starting points, the mere presence of an AED and/or bystanders with CPR training is not adequate should a SCA occur. Ideally the school (or other community location) has a SCA plan and has practiced drills, to be well-positioned to deal with a SCA quickly. To be effective, these plans need to be coordinated and practiced, with input from local Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Usually, EMS is supportive, recognizing that ambulances can't get to every arrest within the critical 3-minute window, and that bystanders can help fill that gap.

**Core elements of a cardiac emergency response plan (CERP) include:**

- Establishing a cardiac emergency response team
- Activating the team in response to a SCA
- Implementing AED placement and routine AED maintenance within the school (similar to fire extinguisher protocols)
- Disseminating the plan throughout the school campus or organization
- Maintaining ongoing staff training in CPR/AED use
- Practicing using drills (akin to fire and lockdown drills)
- Integrating local EMS with the plan
- Ongoing and annual review and evaluation of the plan

**Resources:** Appropriations should be made available to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of CERPs in schools. However, where related appropriations are lacking, school-based CERPs can be helped by indirect sources of community—or EMS-related support.

**Liability:** Federal and state Good Samaritan laws provide protection to laypersons who voluntarily provide care during an emergency with the use of an automated external defibrillator. More often, legal cases revolve around failure to summon medical assistance, start CPR, or not use an AED after a SCA. Even if bystanders do something “wrong”, or start CPR when SCA isn't the actual diagnosis, bystanders can significantly increase the chance of survival simply by acting quickly. Some CPR is always better than none and sooner is better than later.

**Project ADAM Michigan—Saving lives in schools** — [www.mottchildren.org/projectadam](http://www.mottchildren.org/projectadam)

## FROM A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Hello! My name is Danielle Davis and I am a Senior at Fennville High School. When this traumatic event took place at our school (the tragic death of Wes Leonard in 2011), I was young and unaware of what had just occurred. However, over the years I have come to know exactly what happened.

Through this terrible, heartbreaking occurrence I was able to see my community come together as one. I saw a community become a family. A group of people became one.

This was absolutely breathtaking to me and had changed the entire culture of Fennville.

Mrs. Leonard, my choir teacher, is one of the most inspiring people I have ever met. Despite the struggles she has been through, she has made the best out of what has happened in her life. Her impact on this community and so many more, is truly incredible.

I am proud to say I go to Fennville High School and have such an amazing

heart team that is saving lives every single day. Not only has our community become united from what has happened, we have responded and made a positive impact to insure that we are doing all we can to make this problem stop.

Our community and Mrs. Leonard have truly changed the way I see Fennville.

For more information about The Wes Leonard Heart team, please visit [www.wesleonardheartteam.org](http://www.wesleonardheartteam.org).



**Wesley James Leonard**  
1994—2011

## TURNING TRAGEDY INTO PURPOSE

Thomas Noah Smith was a 17 year old star athlete who was excelling in his senior year of high school when he suffered a sudden cardiac arrest at home one evening. He had an undetected heart condition known as hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.

Thomas was given CPR soon after his collapse and paramedics arrived within minutes, but he never regained consciousness.

Thomas' parents formed the Thomas Smith Memorial Foundation to try to prevent this tragedy from happening to other families.

The purpose of the Foundation is to make sure middle and high school students have access to free heart screenings by raising funds to provide local hospitals with mobile cardiac equipment.

To date they have screened 3,049 students

and found 29 with serious heart ailments, all while saving families over \$4,500,000 in medical costs.

The Thomas Smith Memorial Foundation has also donated 8 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and are aware of at least 2 adults that have been saved with these devices.

For more information, please visit [www.tommysheart.org](http://www.tommysheart.org).



**Thomas Noah Smith**  
1993—2011

## MI HEARTSAFE SCHOOLS SAVE LIVES!

Earlier this year, an 8 year old boy had a cardiac emergency in gym class at Woodland Meadows Elementary School in Saline. At first the school believed it was a seizure, but the school's emergency response team was trained and ready for a possible cardiac event.

They followed their procedures, applied the AED, and administered CPR as necessary. Obviously this was a scary event, but his family is so thankful that he survived.

While at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital he was

diagnosed with a cardiac condition that will require further treatment. They also determined his seizure-like activity was most likely caused by an irregular rhythm issue. He had an ICD implanted to keep him safe and 2 1/2 weeks after the event he returned to school.

As scary as the original incident was, it was also scary sending him back to school without being able to watch over him. The family takes comfort in knowing that the school has a plan now to handle any future incidents. They

are so thankful that Saline Schools has the right equipment, the right training, and the right people to react to this type of event. Without it, he may not be alive, or there would be a constant concern about his safety while at school.

*"While we will always be worried about him, we know he is in good hands while at school and are hopeful he can go back to being a fun loving 8 year old boy."*



## MICHIGAN SCHOOLS CPR/AED DRILL WEEK

The next CPR/AED Drill Week is scheduled for **November 5-9, 2018**. We are encouraging all schools to make a commitment to hold a practice drill during this time.

Regular training is essential to hone the

skills necessary to increase the probability of a student's survival from a cardiac arrest. Without opportunity to practice, responders may not be able to perform at an optimal level when an emergency arises.

Routine practice drills are

also a great way to test the effectiveness of your emergency response plan.

Please visit [www.AEDDrill.com](http://www.AEDDrill.com) for more information.



## HELPING TO PREVENT SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH OF THE YOUNG

<https://migrc.org/miheartsafe>