

# CPR In Schools in South Dakota



## ***What would this legislation do?***

- Most people who experience cardiac arrest at home, work or in a public location die because they don't receive immediate CPR from someone on the scene. This legislation would train the next generation of bystander CPR responders in South Dakota.
- Ensure all students learn hands-only CPR before they graduate high school.
- Connect local emergency medical technicians and paramedics with students to help grow the future EMS workforce in South Dakota.
- Has the potential to train more than 11,000 students every year statewide. Many of these students are located in very rural communities and homes which have much longer EMS wait times than the state average of ten minutes.

## ***Why do South Dakota students need to be required to learn hands-only CPR?***

If every South Dakota high school student learned hands-only CPR before graduating high school, we could train more than 10,000 people in communities across our state how to be lifesavers. Hands-only CPR is a skill that young adults can carry with them throughout their lives and use if they find themselves in an emergency situation. We have a strong network of emergency medical responders throughout South Dakota, but it can take some time for an ambulance to reach someone in rural areas of our state. With thousands more people trained in hands-only CPR, the odds of someone surviving a sudden cardiac arrest can improve.

## ***What is hands-only CPR?***

Hands-Only CPR is CPR without mouth-to-mouth breaths. It is a psychomotor skill recommended for use by people who see a teen or adult suddenly collapse in an “out-of-hospital” setting (such as at home, at school or at work). Less than one-third of out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest victims receive bystander CPR. Effective bystander CPR, provided immediately after sudden cardiac arrest, can double or triple a victim’s chance of survival.

It consists of two easy steps:

1. Call 9-1-1 (or send someone to do that).
2. Push hard and fast in the center of the chest.

Hands-Only CPR performed by a bystander has been shown to be as effective as conventional CPR (CPR that includes breaths) in the first few minutes of an out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest. Any attempt at CPR is better than no attempt.

## ***Will hands-only CPR increase the chance of a bystander taking action in a cardiac emergency?***

Yes. In a national survey, Americans who have not been trained in CPR within the last five years stated that they would be more likely to perform Hands-Only CPR than conventional CPR for an adult who collapses suddenly. In addition, Hands-Only CPR offers an easy to remember and effective option to those bystanders who have been previously trained in CPR but are afraid to help because they are not confident that they can remember and perform the steps of conventional CPR.

***Who will train South Dakota students in hands-only CPR?***

In addition to the schools already teaching CPR in schools, we have a ready and willing EMS workforce across South Dakota in our rural and more urban areas who are already offering their time and expertise to come into their local middle and high schools to train students. This is a win-win for our state - it provides the needed training for students to learn a lifelong, lifesaving skill, and it's a fantastic and needed workforce development opportunity for our local volunteer ambulance services, especially in the most rural parts of our state.

***Isn't CPR already taught in schools?***

We have been working hard over the last four years to increase the number of schools in South Dakota that offer hands-only CPR training, but it's not required. The Department of Education is required to survey schools annually to determine how many school districts teach CPR to students. Thanks to that data, we know that just under half of schools offer CPR training, and it's offered on a largely voluntary basis. Many areas are being left underserved, and we find that in many cases the offered training falls to the wayside if school administrators or teachers who championed the effort leave. This represents a key gap in the chain of survival – the series of actions that, when put into motion, reduce the chances that someone will die if they suffer a cardiac arrest. Like any chain, the chain of survival is only as strong as its weakest link.

***Would this be costly for schools?***

As our research on CPR has evolved, it has gotten both easier and affordable. It is no longer just the “traditional” certified 4-6 hour course. There are many inexpensive options to learn CPR that do not entail taking a certified course. CPR training can be incorporated into the school curriculum without recurring costs for schools. Local emergency medical service providers and rural ambulance services are currently providing training free of charge to many schools and will expand their services to more schools if this bill becomes law.

***Why doesn't the legislation require students to become certified in CPR?***

Recognizing that CPR certification for every student would be costly, this bill simply requires students to learn hands-only CPR. Studies have shown that trainees, including school children, can achieve acceptable levels of CPR in 30 minutes or less. The legislation sets the minimum standard – any school that already certifies students in CPR can continue to do so.

***Do schools have time to teach hands-only CPR in addition to core curriculum?***

According to the latest science, students can achieve acceptable levels of skills proficiency in hands-only CPR in 30 minutes or less. Most students age 13 or older have the physical size and strength necessary to deliver effective chest compressions. The ability to assess a medical emergency and call 9-1-1 can be taught to younger students. We believe schools can find one class period or assembly to teach this lifesaving skill.

***Why now? What has changed with CPR guidelines that make this easier for schools to do?***

The American Heart Association's 2010 revised CPR guidelines make it even easier for more people to perform CPR. A greater emphasis is now placed on the simplest step - chest compressions. Hands-only CPR is an effective life-saving skill. Thirty-five states now require students to learn hands-only CPR before children graduate high school.

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