

Project ADAM®

SAVES LIVES



Just imagine ... You're 16, in great physical shape and enjoying some warm-up time before your cross country practice. Suddenly, after running just one lap, you feel really awful. When you go indoors to call mom for an early ride home, you drop to the floor, slip into a seizure and stop breathing.

You are a 41-year-old teacher, playing in your elementary school's annual alumni softball game. You are proud that you've managed to stay in better shape than many of your friends. But, right in the middle of the game, your heart stops – and you collapse.

You are 65, watching your granddaughter's high school basketball game. You're applauding. You're jumping up and shouting. You're smiling and laughing and having loads of fun. Then you fall forward. Your heart isn't beating, your face is blue.

These snapshots are from real experiences. Each story is about a Wisconsin resident who was saved while in a school served by Project ADAM (Automated Defibrillators in Adam's Memory). Project ADAM's mission is to serve children and adolescents through education and deployment of live-saving programs that help prevent sudden cardiac arrest.

(over)



2009 Project ADAM highlights

- More than 3,000 schools across the country benefit from Project ADAM resources, including training grants, consultations and step-by-step instructions for creating and growing public access defibrillator initiatives.
- Two new state affiliates – Alabama and Illinois – were fully indoctrinated into the program.
- An analysis of the program's recently released training support video revealed a statistically significant increase in viewers' knowledge about sudden cardiac arrest and reported willingness to respond to an emergency as a result of viewing the video.
- Project ADAM forged a new partnership with a physician at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to study the prevalence of public access defibrillators in Wisconsin high schools.
- The National Institutes of Health now is helping to promote Project ADAM's program and mission by sharing the program's resources through their education website.
 - Most importantly, the program helped to save 15 lives (seven adolescents and eight adults) in just one year (August 2008 – August 2009).
 - CAN members took action and helped pass a law requiring Wisconsin schools to offer CPR/AED instruction.

Project ADAM began in 1999 after a series of sudden deaths among high school athletes in southeastern Wisconsin. Many of these deaths appeared to be due to ventricular fibrillation. After Adam Lemel, a 17-year-old Whitefish Bay, Wis., high school student, collapsed and died while playing basketball, Adam's parents – Patty Lemel and Joe Lemel – along with David Ellis, a childhood friend of Adam's, collaborated with Children's Hospital of Wisconsin to create the program in Adam's memory.



Adam Lemel

Each year more than 2,000 young people have a sudden cardiac arrest. A person's chance of surviving drops by 7 to 10 percent for each minute a victim has to wait before his or her heartbeat is restored. If defibrillators are used within the first few minutes of a collapse, the survival rate can be as high as 70 percent. On-site public access defibrillator programs often mean the difference between life and death, even in areas with the fastest-acting ambulance and emergency response services.

The Acevedo family of Milwaukee understands the importance of public access defibrillator programs. In January 2010, their 11-year-old granddaughter, Maria, experienced a cardiac arrest in her classroom at Milwaukee Public School's Grant Elementary. Thanks to collaboration with Project ADAM, as well as other community partners, Grant School's defibrillator team was able to respond to the situation immediately by giving CPR and using their defibrillator to shock her heart back into a regular rhythm. Maria was then taken to Children's Hospital for further care. She now is healthy and happy. The Acevedo family remains forever grateful the school was prepared to respond appropriately.



How you can help

Children often are impacted by local, state or federal policies that affect their health care. They need others to be their voice, which is why these efforts rely on the strength and action of people who want to make a difference for children.

Join Children's Hospital of Wisconsin's Children's Advocacy Network today and help us make a difference in the lives of children and families in our communities. Through CAN, you help ensure that children's concerns are heard when policies are being made. The network sends members action alerts and legislation updates and provides tools that you need to help you take action on issues important to children's health.

Join CAN at chw.org/can.