



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Teaching Skills That Save Lives

PATTY RITCHIE | October 27, 2014

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

When you think about skills that are important for students to learn before graduating high school, things like time management and good study techniques might come to mind. However, there's another important skill that everyone—high school students included—should know: CPR.

CPR is a life-saving technique that helps to maintain blood flow to the brain and heart during emergencies. Often times, CPR helps to buy time for individuals until paramedics or other medical professionals arrive. As the following numbers demonstrate, it's a vitally important skill that can help save lives:

- 383,000: That's the number of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests that occur every year in the United States;
- 88 percent: The percentage of cardiac arrests that occur at home;
- 9 percent: The number of victims that die as a result—most likely because they didn't receive CPR in a timely fashion;
- 70 percent: The percentage of Americans that say they may feel helpless to act in an emergency because they don't know how to administer CPR;
- 3: That's how many times more likely someone is to survive when CPR is performed in a life-threatening situation; and

- 92,000: The number of people who are saved annually by CPR in the United States

Just recently, Governor Cuomo signed a law requiring that all students in New York high schools learn how to perform CPR and learn how to use automated defibrillators, also known as AEDs, before graduation. Groups like the American Heart Association have advocated for making this type of training mandatory and with this new law, New York becomes the 19th state to require students to learn these skills before graduating from high school.

Not only will this new training make our schools safer, it will result in thousands of New Yorkers armed with the skills necessary to save lives. If you're looking to get certified in CPR, your local Red Cross offers classes both in-person and online and in many cases, training can be done in just thirty minutes. For class information, visit www.redcross.org.