

Project S.A.V.E. Heart Safe School

Cardiac Emergency Response Plan: Drill Reference Guide

The best way to determine if your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) works is to run a drill. Drills allow you to test your communication system and your response team's readiness.

Getting Started

The drill will involve your designated Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT), the front-office staff, a facilitator, a recorder and a witness.

Drill team recommendations

- Cardiac Emergency Response Team
- Facilitator: A member of the school staff who leads the drill (we recommend the School Site Coordinator)
- Recorder: An objective observer who completes the drill form during the practice drill (the recorder may or may not be someone on the CERT)
- Witness: A member of the school staff who starts the drill by activating the Cardiac Emergency Response Team (the witness should not already be part of the CERT)

Communication

- Let your team know a couple weeks ahead of time that the drill is coming to give them the opportunity to review the plan.
- Do not tell the team exactly when it will happen.
- Make sure the person designated to call 911 knows about the drill.

Planning

- Identify an empty classroom (or another low-traffic area) to perform the drill; try to pick a new place for each drill.
- Secure a mannequin (wearing at least a T-shirt), AED training unit and the [drill form](#).
- Create a short scenario, including the age of the victim and what you "witnessed." For example:
 - A student's grandparent was leaving after volunteering, complained of not feeling well and then appeared to faint.
 - A student [insert age or grade level] received permission to come inside from recess to use the restroom. Another student ran in to alert a teacher the student was on the floor in the hallway.
- Keep your AED in its usual location.

Leading the Drill

- The facilitator and observer begin the drill. The observer should have the [drill form](#) to document throughout the drill.
- The facilitator places the mannequin on the floor and then calls the front office to inform them about an unresponsive victim in the chosen location.
- The CERP will go into effect, and the CERT will be notified using the communication plan (e.g., intercom, walkie-talkies, etc.).
- The observer records the times each event happens, including when the call goes out to alert first responders, when the first rescuer arrives, when CPR starts, the number of rescuers responding, time of AED arrival and pad placement, time of first shock, etc.
- When the first rescuer arrives, the facilitator shares the scenario, or says, “We have someone down. Can you help them?” as if they were the witness.
- When your school AED arrives, the facilitator exchanges the school AED with the trainer AED to complete the drill. Encourage staff to continue the drill as if it’s a real cardiac arrest event.

Consider testing your all-staff awareness and have the first person coming into the room (who is not the first responder) react as if they’re the witness and initiate the first call.

After the Drill

- Before conducting the debrief, return the school AED to its original location.
- Congratulate everyone and take a few minutes to review the drill form together and to complete the debrief discussion questions.
- Ask everyone involved how they felt about the drill and discuss any concerns.
- Evaluate the drill form and staff response to determine if there are any action steps that need to be taken.
- If the drill indicates any needed changes, discuss these with your response team and administrator, make the changes, and communicate them clearly to your team.
- Plan to conduct another drill soon to test the new plan.
- If the drill indicates that everything went well, staff members will have a great feeling of confidence in their ability to work as a team and save a life. Often the staff will agree that this was very helpful and should be practiced regularly.