



# Parent Heart Watch

PROTECTING YOUTH FROM SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

February 25, 2009

## STATE OF CONNECTICUT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH

Honorable Chair and Committee Members:

On behalf of Parent Heart Watch members, we urge you to support the enactment of Senate Bill 981, an act concerning the availability of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in Connecticut schools.

Each year, an estimated 400,000 people die from Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA); thousands are children. SCA is the leading cause of death on school property and among student athletes. Many victims have no prior history of heart disease and are stricken without warning. When SCA strikes, every minute counts; every minute that a victim goes without defibrillation the chances of survival decrease by 10%.

The placement of AEDs in public places is saving countless lives across the nation. Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) programs are based on the premise that the first person on the scene of a cardiac arrest is in the best position to save the victim's life if the rescuer is equipped with an AED. Expanding defibrillation access to schools and school sponsored athletic events will increase the chances of survival for youth and adults alike.

Having a reasonable number of school personnel trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and AED use at each school can implement the vital links of the cardiac chain of survival and will increase SCA survival rates dramatically. The links in the cardiac chain are early access to 911, early cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), early defibrillation and early advanced care.

Parent Heart Watch is the national voice protecting youth from Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) and preventable Sudden Cardiac Death (SCD). Parent Heart Watch leads and empowers others by sharing information, educating and advocating for change.

The time is now to protect and save young lives by passing Senate Bill 981!

Very truly yours,

Martha Lopez-Anderson  
Chair, Board of Directors