In-School Preventative Heart Screenings

“Screening Hearts... Saving Lives!”

Lifesaving heart screenings are conducted in your school to protect your students. Your school district is leading the way in a movement towards proactive prevention!

What is SafeBeat? SafeBeat is a National Initiative that establishes local Heart Screening and Emergency Action Planning programs in an effort to prevent sudden death in youth and adolescents throughout America’s public school systems.

Do my students have to participate? No, this is simply a service that will be offered to parents. Screenings are voluntary and parents will make the decision to opt-in when they register their child.

How do parents register for a screening? Registration is fast and easy. Parents can register online at www.safebeat.org or via hard copy that will be collected at the school and picked up by a SafeBeat representative.

What does a screening consist of? A Preventive Heart Screening consists of a Personal and Family Heart Health Questionnaire, Blood Pressure Reading, Body Mass Index Measurement, and an Electrocardiogram.

What is an Electrocardiogram (ECG/EKG)? An ECG or EKG is a test that measures the electrical activity of the heart. It has been proven to be the best initial indicator of a heart abnormality. In most cases, children do not exhibit symptoms of a heart problem, so a preventive EKG can help to detect a condition before it has become an emergency.

Where do the screenings take place? Screenings will take place at your school, during the school day. Students who are registered for a screening will receive a hall pass when their parents complete the registration. The hall pass will indicate the specific date and time the student is to be screened. (We can tailor this portion of the program to meet the needs of your school.)

Where do students get the hall pass for their screening? The pass is generated via the SafeBeat online registration (www.safebeat.org) and can be printed by the parent. If registration is completed via hard copy, a pass will be mailed to the household along with the appointment confirmation.

Who conducts the screenings? The screenings are done by a licensed EKG technician who is employed by the screening contractor working with The SafeBeat Initiative. All screenings are then over-read by a board-certified age-appropriate cardiologist.

How long is SafeBeat at my school and where will they set up? Each school will be allotted between 3-5 days for their SafeBeat screening program. The number of days is based on the size of your high school. SafeBeat staff will handle all operations of the screening and will set-up in a location designated by the school, for instance, the gymnasium, lobby or a vacant classroom.

How long does each individual screening take? How long will students be out of class? Each screening takes approximately 12 minutes. Teachers can expect that a student will be out of the classroom for 15-20 minutes for the individual appointment. Hall passes will be signed by a SafeBeat representative with the time in which the screening was completed and students will be expected to return to class promptly.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) - The Facts:

Approximately 20 children between the ages of 6 & 18 will die today from sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) caused by a cardiac arrhythmia syndrome (CAS).

Each year, approximately 7,000 young Americans ages 6-18 die from SCA.

1 out of every 143 children has a cardiac arrhythmia syndrome.

Two thirds of SCA deaths occur in people without any prior indications of heart disease.

In 80% of cases the first symptom is the fatal collapse.

The sensitivity of an ECG/EKG when looking for hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM), the leading cause of sudden unexpected death in a adolescents, is 95%.

Sudden Unexpected Death is three times more prevalent in young athletes than non-athletes.

African Americans are more likely to have a SCA than Caucasians and have less than a 1 percent chance of surviving, vs. a 5 percent chance in the general population.

A defibrillator must be used within 4 minutes of someone having a coronary episode in order to save their life. For every minute that passes without defibrillation, a person’s chances of survival decrease by 10%.

Cardiac arrhythmia syndromes (CAS) are genetic and hereditary.

Once a CAS is detected and 1st and 2nd degree family members are tested, an average of nine additional cases are found.

Once diagnosed, these syndromes are treatable, and individuals can have normal life spans and lifestyles.
**Who receives the results of the screening?** Screening results will be made available through a secure link on the SafeBeat website or mailed directly home to the parent or guardian of the student. Parents are encouraged to share the results with their Primary Care Physician and speak with their PCP about any follow-up that may be needed.

**What if a student is uninsured/under-insured?** Local medical institutions have agreed to provide follow-up care for any uninsured or under-insured students who need follow-up testing. Expedited appointments will be made available for all students requiring follow-up care at one of the local medical institutions or clinics. Information regarding follow-up testing will be mailed with all screening results.

**Does the school see the results?** No, the school will not receive a copy of student's screening results. A parent may choose to share their results with the school at their discretion.

**What does an abnormal result mean?** An abnormal result simply means that the EKG indicated something that may need further evaluation for a diagnosis or to rule out a problem. The vast majority of possible conditions are treatable if detected and students can continue to lead healthy active lives.

**Are in-season athletes able to continue playing sports if an abnormal result is found?** Continuing with athletic participation will be at the parent’s discretion. Parents will be able to make a personal decision on whether they choose to stop their child's athletic participation during any follow-up care and after a diagnosis. Detection of a possible condition does not necessarily mean ineligibility from sports.

**Is there any liability on my school?** No, the school does not hold any liability in regards to this screening. This is simply a service we are offering to parents. The SafeBeat Initiative holds their own insurance policies and will be contacted directly if any circumstances arise that requires legal action.

**What are the costs to the students or the school?** There are no costs to the school, the students, or parents to have this test. It is being offered as a FREE service thanks to the generosity of SafeBeat sponsors.

**What about AEDs? Are they a solution for Sudden Cardiac Arrest?** An AED is crucial when a child or adult collapses with an arrest. They must be used within critical moments after the arrest to be effective and even then, it is not assured that the person can be revived. SafeBeat is a proactive preventive approach that can prevent a tragic situation from even arising.

**What is required by my school if we choose to offer a SafeBeat screening?** SafeBeat screening programs are Turn-Key operations and require minimal input from the school participating.

**As a host school some responsibilities would include:**

- Appoint a school representative(s) to work closely with our SafeBeat Coordinator.
- Select a location that provides easy access to the screening event and coordinate the opening and preparation of the screening location.
- **Actively support the promotion of the screening event by:** (information, links, and email notice will be provided)
  - Posting information on your website and linking it to the SafeBeat Registration website. Distributing email notices to your students, families, and staff.
  - Distributing informational materials to families via your backpack program.
  - Making announcements via your tele-information system, as well as public announcements at sporting events, theater arts presentations, and/or concerts.
  - Assisting with scheduling presentations before your school, athletic teams or parent organizations to allow for question and answer sessions about the screening program.

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**Screening Hearts, Saving Lives!**

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