INFORMATIONAL BROCHURE
EMPLOYEE SAFETY

Subject: Practical First Aid

Most district employees are not trained in multi-media first aid/CPR. Since there is usually a school nurse in the employ of the district and on site, few people have had to concern themselves with emergency response. Unfortunately, not all accidents happen in close proximity to the nurse or those services being readily available. From past experience, even if the nurse is in the same building, it may take several minutes for response to accident-injury event. So, what do you do until help arrives?

First, you need to follow some basic principles in emergency response even if you are not a trained first-aider. If you come upon an individual who has likely experienced an injury from an accident, send someone else for help. Then, check the area of the accident for any hazards – you don't want to expose yourself to danger if conditions are still present. Then you can begin to check on the injured person. If they are conscious, tell them help is on the way but I am here to help until they get here. You may ask them about injury, e.g. where it hurts, what happened, etc. The professionals will want to know this when they arrive. If the individual is not conscious or alert enough, you will need to do several examinations: head to toe body check for bleeding, broken bones, deformities, etc.; and, very important, ABC – airway, breathing, and circulation.

The ABC assessment is critical because if they are not breathing or their heart is not beating, you have about three minutes to get them re-started. That is scary and if you can't handle it, OK but you will need to find someone who can. After three minutes and no action to start their breathing or get their heart beating, it will be a recovery operation rather than rescue. Most airways can be opened by cocking back the head – watch if they have suspected head injury. To resuscitate, you will need a pocket mask. There is no skin to skin contact here because of bloodborne diseases so place a barrier between you and the individual. Listen first for sounds and feel air movement on your cheek – if nothing, then begin resuscitation. Then, check for circulation. Carotid artery in the neck is one of the best places. If no pulse, then you will need to begin CPR (cardiac-pulmonary resuscitation). If the individual is bleeding, you need to stop the bleeding. Direct pressure on the site of the wound is first choice. If that isn't effective, then you need to find a pressure point. Again, you don't touch any bodily fluids with your bare skin – maintain infection control procedures. If individual is in shock, raise the legs slightly and cover with blanket or other clothing. If person appears to be throwing up, need to get them on their side – this is a good technique for bachelor party casualties.

Overall, there is more to it than can be covered here. Sooo, I suggest that you take a first aid course. Operating an AED (automatic external defibrillator) even requires some training and it is nearly fool-proof! Nearly two-thirds of all accidents happen off the job and who are you with – family and friends. Nothing could be more of an incentive than to be able to respond to life-threatening situation, especially, when you could be miles from help. Take a course.

Be safe. And, take the time to do it right.