

INCREASING CHANCES OF SURVIVAL

From active shooter scenarios to everyday injuries, survival often depends on the initial life-saving actions taken immediately after an incident. Citizen preparedness is increasingly important as first responders may not arrive quickly enough for the most seriously injured victims. When members of the public can provide immediate assistance to victims, it significantly increases their chances of survival.

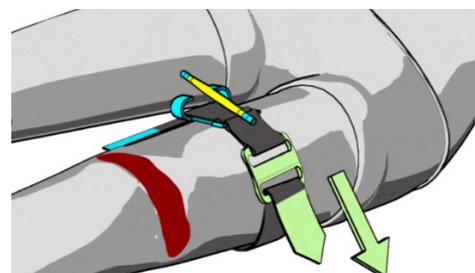
In 2018, the Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) and Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Individual and Community Preparedness Division (ICPD) offered a three-year grant that would provide trauma training for high school-age communities. The National Center for Disaster Medicine and Public Health (NCDMPH), organized within the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, was awarded the grant to develop the First Aid for Severe Trauma (FAST) training program, previously called School-Age Trauma Training program, to offer no-cost trauma training for high school students via the American Red Cross.

APPLYING COMBAT LESSONS LEARNED FOR CIVILIANS

From almost two decades of combat medicine lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan, medical professionals discovered that patients' survival rate increased as a result of immediate actions taken after the injury. Examples of immediate first aid include prioritizing the treatment of bleeding and the use of tourniquets for life-threatening bleeding from the limbs. Immediate actions taken to stop bleeding often saved wounded soldiers. FAST takes these first aid techniques and tailors them for civilian students. The first-aid training is expanded to include the best ways to communicate in the midst of a trauma event, such as how to effectively relay information to a 9-1-1 dispatcher and fellow rescuers.

TESTING DIFFERENT LEARNING APPROACHES TO REFINE FAST

As NCDMPH develops and refines the curricula, it is studying different approaches to determine the best ways to teach bleeding control skills and communication during a traumatic incident to high school students. The first aid curricula will be offered in different approaches: purely online learning, blended—online lessons followed by hands-on practical



FAST teaches to high school students proper use of tourniquet techniques with readily available items.

learning, and instructor-led sessions in a classroom. NCDMPH's preliminary findings have demonstrated that school children learned through all three approaches and were eager to learn the material regardless of the teaching method.

FAST RESOURCES

FAST is a free, self-sustaining, long-term program that will not require any future federal funds to continue. The program will offer:

- Multimedia training materials and digital applications available through various American Red Cross mediums and distribution channels;
- Online educational outreach to promote content and materials; and
- American Red Cross plans to implement and sustain the FAST program for high school students in a variety of settings, such as schools and youth organizations.

NEXT STEPS

NCDMPH will publish its findings on the learning approaches. The final training course will come with learning and delivery aids, including content in the American Red Cross First Aid mobile app. The FAST project is due for completion in October 2021.

PARTNERS

S&T and FEMA's ICPD have provided support and guidance to NCDMPH throughout this project. In addition, NCDMPH is collaborating with the American Red Cross, Health Occupations Students of America-Future Health Professionals and subject matter experts for the development of the curriculum and refinement of the teaching strategies.