

Policy Toolkit

CPR TRAINING FOR A NEW GENERATION OF LIFESAVERS

**COMPILING BEST PRACTICES TO ENGAGE
YOUNG PEOPLE TO LEARN CPR**



**EUROPEAN
RESUSCITATION
COUNCIL**

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Content

INTRODUCTION	2
Policy Toolkit	3
Key Takeaways	3
A Roadmap to Advocacy	4
CASE STUDIES	7
School Curriculum	7
Best Practices	7
Mandate and Integrate CPR Training into the Curriculum	7
Offer Tailored Training Courses to Teachers	8
Developing Public Partnerships to Strengthen CPR Training in Schools	8
Provide Free Engaging Training Resources	9
Adapt Training to Children's Context	10
Actively Involve Students in Training	10
Overcoming Challenges for CPR Education in Schools	12
CPR Awareness Campaigns	13
Best Practices	13
Develop Holistic CPR Campaigns	13
Leverage Social Media and Public Figures for CPR Awareness	14
Collaborate with Sports Club to Launch Campaigns	14
Organise Inter-school CPR Competitions to Foster a Spirit of Positive Competitiveness	15
Ensuring that Awareness Campaigns Provide Clear Pathways to Further Training	15
Securing Sponsorship from Private Companies to Support CPR Promotion	16
Conduct Awareness Campaign Targeted at Families Through Public Demonstrations	17
Overcoming Challenges in Awareness Campaigns	18
Other types of CPR Education Initiatives	19
Best Practices	19
Developing EU-Funded Initiatives to Support CPR Education Across Member States	19
Providing Accessible Learning Opportunities Supported by Self-Assessment Tools	20
Engage Youth-Led Organisations to Peer-to-Peer Training	21
Offering Volunteering Opportunities in Emergency Services	22
Investing into CPR Video Games and Other Virtual Learning Tools to Foster Youth Engagement	22
Incorporating Student and Teacher Feedback in CPR Training	23
Overcoming Challenges for Other Types of CPR Education	24
ANNEX	25

Introduction

The **European Resuscitation Council (ERC)** is committed to improving populations' readiness to respond to sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). While Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) can be taught at any age, the earlier individuals are trained in resuscitation, the more practice, awareness, and confidence they have in an emergency situation. Children from age six can make a difference in the survival of SCA victims, suggesting that the lifelong learning process should be started as early as possible.

Across Europe, initiatives have been launched to familiarise school-aged children with the necessary skills and knowledge to act in the face of an SCA. They can be taught how to recognise the signs of SCA, how to contact emergency services, and intervene by practicing CPR and using an AED. Schools, sports, and youth groups offer a convenient forum for this training as they

gather young people in an educational setting. CPR training fits naturally into the well-rounded education these institutions aim to provide, helping young people become responsible members of their community from a young age.

However, different countries have adopted various approaches to teaching CPR, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Educators and National Resuscitation Councils (NRCs) face diverse challenges based on their healthcare systems, educational frameworks, and cultural contexts. This highlights the importance of sharing best practices across borders and equipping NRCs with knowledge about successful strategies that can be adapted to their local conditions. By learning from each other's experiences, we can enhance the effectiveness of CPR education and training, ultimately improving the response to SCA across Europe.



Picture's source: Kids Save Lives in Hungary (KSLH), Hungarian National Resuscitation Council

Policy Toolkit

Our aim is for this toolkit to serve as a source of inspiration and information for developing new initiatives, facilitating connections with other national resuscitation councils to exchange ideas and share experiences. It also highlights a variety of approaches—whether legislative or project-based—that can drive meaningful change in improving CPR training for young people.

The following toolkit collects the insights and best practices of the ERC network and showcases a range of approaches for teaching CPR to young people. Input, data, and resources presented in this toolkit were collected from the National Resuscitation Councils' by way of workshops, bilateral meetings, and surveys.

The toolkit categorises youth education initiatives into three types of case studies:

CPR education integrated into the school curriculum, CPR awareness campaigns, and other educational programmes. Each section outlines best practices for teaching young people CPR in various contexts, along with the challenges to implementation and corresponding solutions. These guidelines are further illustrated by case studies of initiatives led by national resuscitation councils, providing real-world examples of effective approaches.

Key Takeaways

In examining the diverse approaches taken across Europe to engage and educate young people in CPR, several best practices and key challenges emerged consistently and should be considered in future strategies.

Best Practices

- **Integration in the school curriculum** to make it mandatory.
- **Repeated training** to reinforce learning and improve retention.
- **Tailored training methods** for different age groups (interactive sessions, digital media, real-life examples).
- **High-quality, free resources** and customisable online modules for teachers to enhance accessibility.
- **Engage youth-led organisations** (student council, youth groups, sports clubs) to promote peer-led initiatives.
- **Collaborate with influencers and public figures** to expand the reach of CPR awareness campaigns.

Key Challenges

- **Lack of political will** to mandate CPR training leads to inconsistent implementation across regions and schools.
- **Limited resources** (funding for materials, ongoing teacher training) hinder program effectiveness.
- **Lack of interest** in CPR education requires more targeted, engaging approaches.
- **Lack of standardised guidelines** create implementation disparities across regions.
- **Lack of systematic evaluation** hampers the ability to ensure uniform quality across initiatives.

A Roadmap to Advocacy

This Toolkit demonstrates that there are many different avenues to encourage young people to learn CPR. However, the steps to make these initiatives succeed are often similar. To get you

started on your advocacy journey, we've outlined a Roadmap with helpful steps to get started in this process.

GATHER YOUR SUPPORTERS

- There are **many people interested in improving emergency responsiveness among young people**. These people may have resources, data, anecdotes and motivation to help you in this process. For example:
 - School education staff
 - Sports centres/coaches
 - Youth organisations
 - Parents
- Express your intention to start a project to improve this and invite these stakeholders to a **meeting** to gather their support and build public awareness about this issue.
- Use this opportunity to **brainstorm different ideas** on what could be the best solution or approach in your community. Does it address the needs? What resources do you need to achieve this plan? Can it be scaled?

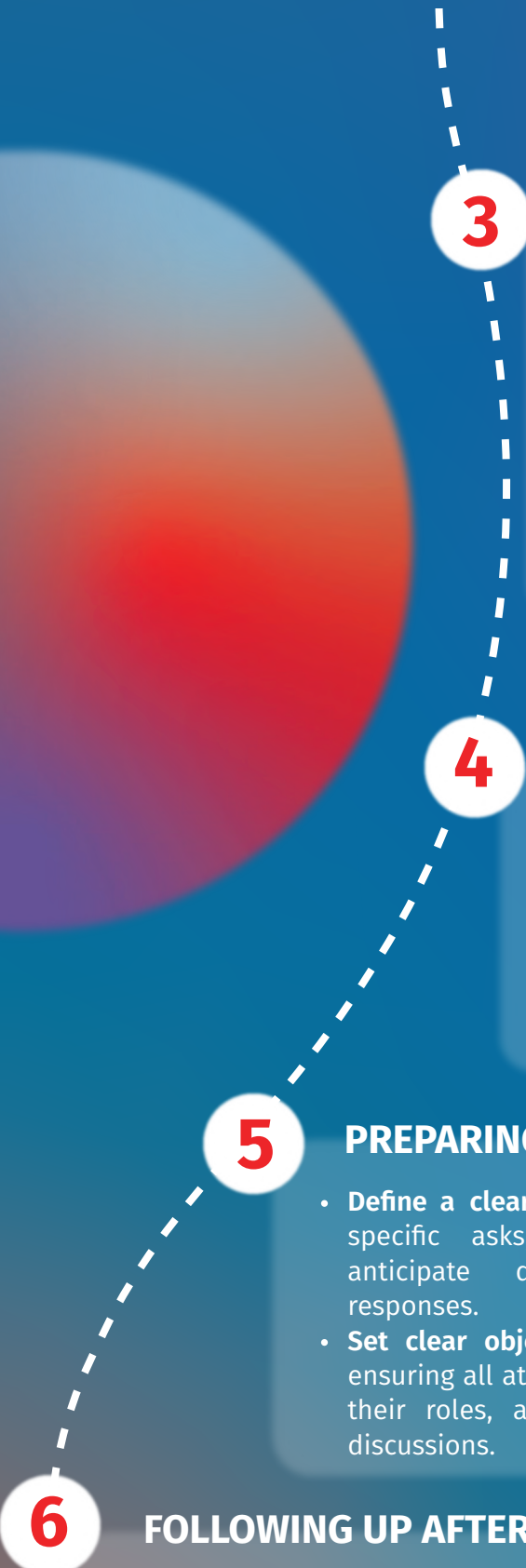
1



2

BUILDING YOUR CASE

- **Collecting national and regional level data** expressing the urgency and effectiveness of CPR training in your area.
- **Creating a resource to disseminate your argument for improved CPR training.** This should include an overview of the context, data, and a broad 'ask' to your policymakers. This ask may just be a jumping off point, as your policy proposals may adapt as you enter into conversation with your policymakers.



3

MAPPING OUT THE CHANGEMAKERS

- Who are the **decision-makers** in your area that you need to get on board for this initiative?
 - Local education officials**
 - Local and national policymakers**
 - Relevant ministries** (health, education, etc.)
- Map out **their interest**, the current role, their contact details, etc.
- Create an **email template** arguing your case in a concise and clear way. Use this to send personalised emails to the decision-makers you identified.

4

CONDUCTING OUTREACH

- Personalise and send the prepared **email template** to decision-makers.
- Follow up with **phone calls** to ensure receipt and emphasise meeting importance.
- Inviting the stakeholder to a **meeting** by clearly stating the meeting's purpose, agenda, and expected outcomes.

5

PREPARING MEETINGS

- **Define a clear, concise agenda** with key topics and specific asks; prepare relevant materials and anticipate questions/concerns with prepared responses.
- **Set clear objectives by identifying primary goals**, ensuring all attendees understand the objectives and their roles, and planning for structured, focused discussions.

6

FOLLOWING UP AFTER THE MEETING

- Depending on the nature of the meeting and the agreed action points, **following up with the contacted policy-makers** will ensure progress on action items and maintain ongoing communication.
- **Ensure progress on action items** by monitoring progress, maintaining regular communication with stakeholders, scheduling follow-up meetings, and documenting and sharing updates for transparency and trust.



Disclaimer on the use and reproduction of the presented materials

This toolkit showcases a range of best practices and initiatives from National Resuscitation Councils across Europe to support youth CPR education, including examples related to school curricula, awareness campaigns, and training programmes. While some examples are presented in general terms, many materials, methods, or programmes featured are the intellectual property of the respective National Resuscitation Councils.

If you wish to replicate, adapt, or implement any of the highlighted initiatives, we ask you to first contact the relevant National Resuscitation Council to seek permission or guidance. This ensures proper attribution, respects copyright, and promotes collaboration.

Case Studies

School Curriculum

CPR education is offered in schools across Europe, either through the curriculum or external initiatives. However, there are significant differences in how countries approach this. Some have integrated it into subjects like health, safety, or physical

education, while others have annual modules by external trainers. Typically aimed at students aged 12 and older, CPR training varies widely in teaching methods, duration, and frequency.

BEST PRACTICES

Mandate and Integrate CPR Training into the Curriculum

Make CPR training a compulsory part of the school curriculum, incorporating it into subjects like health or physical education. In collaborating with the education system, training organisations can expand the reach of training, improve regularity of training, and ensure steady and equitable funding.

CASE STUDY



Réagis, Luxembourg

Background

- In 2015, the Luxembourg Resuscitation Council (LRC) launched a national initiative mandating CPR training in secondary schools to improve cardiac arrest survival rates.
- Aims to train teachers in Basic Life Support (BLS) and enable them to teach students in 2nd, 4th, and 6th years of high school.
- Integrated into the school curriculum in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Best Practices

- Ministry-funded courses ensuring long-term project implementation.
- Nurse coordinating programme with support of the LRC.
- Resuscitation professionals visit schools to support training implementation.

Outcomes

- 600 teachers trained in ERC BLS courses to instruct students.
- 8,000 students trained annually before COVID, with numbers returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Offer Tailored Training Courses to Teachers

To improve CPR training in schools, initiatives are capitalising on teachers' roles as educators by training them to teach CPR to students. This strategy leverages teachers' ability to present technical information in an engaging and effective way, making the training more accessible. For long-term success, health and safety officers should train teachers and ensure regular refresher courses to maintain up-to-date skills. Additionally, teachers should be provided with comprehensive resource packages, including slides, videos, and instructional materials, to enhance student learning and support effective teaching.

CASE STUDY



Vital Support Program for Educational Centers, Catalonia - Spain

Background

- The main objective of the Catalan School-Based Life Support Program is to train teachers and students to respond to sudden cardiac arrest by teaching resuscitation techniques and raising social awareness.
- The program, in place since 2007, has trained thousands of students and teachers using a spiral educational approach adapted to each school level.

Best Practices

- Proposes different educational levels depending on the age (from 3 to 15 years old).
- The teacher training course consists of five modules, including an introduction webinar, theoretical training with BLS+AED certification, a practical in-person session, a teaching methodology component, and classroom implementation.
- Includes yearly refresher courses and certification and evaluation tools to assess children's skills.
- Requires commitment from the school leadership and board, with one to two teachers per school trained. Certified teachers are authorised to train students aged 3 to 16. From the second year onward, the P-SVe is managed independently by each educational zone.
- The implementation process involves schools contacting the Pedagogical Resource Center (CRP), training teachers who then educate students, utilising training materials like manikins and AEDs, integrating the program into the curriculum, appointing a P-SVe coordinator, engaging in regional workgroups, and ensuring sustainability through school leadership involvement and annual monitoring.

Outcomes

- Since its launch, the P-SVe program has successfully trained thousands of students and teachers across Catalonia: 800 educational centers, 2600 taught courses, 300 000 formed kids.

Developing Public Partnerships to Strengthen CPR Training in Schools

National and regional authorities can play a key role in scaling CPR education by supporting teacher training initiatives. Through partnerships between education departments and medical organisations, structured courses can be developed to equip teachers with the skills and confidence to deliver lay resuscitation training in schools.



Teacher Training Programme in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

Background

- The Cologne District Government, in collaboration with the German Resuscitation Council (GRC), launched a regional programme to strengthen CPR education in schools by empowering teachers to provide lay resuscitation training.

Best Practices

- Teachers participate in structured CPR training courses designed to prepare them to confidently teach Basic Life Support (BLS) to their students.
- Each participating teacher received a personal resuscitation mannequin, provided free of charge by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, to facilitate ongoing classroom instruction.

Outcomes

- Strengthened teacher-led CPR instruction and laid the foundation for systematic integration of resuscitation training in schools across the region.

Provide Free Engaging Training Resources

Distribute high-quality CPR training materials, such as online modules or videos, to schools for free to lower the threshold of training and helps teachers overcome the financial and time barriers to CPR training.



Hjerne Hjert Hjaelp, Denmark

Background

- Danish initiative teaching CPR and stroke response to students (ages 12–16).
- Provides free educational materials, including CPR mannequins.
- Supports teachers in delivering effective first aid training.

Best Practices

- Offers a comprehensive suite of resources via its website, including instructional videos, downloadable guides, and interactive modules designed to enhance understanding and practical skills.
- Provides structured lesson plans and materials for mandatory first aid education. Includes tools for engaging parents and integrating first aid training into schools.
- Schools can order packages containing resuscitation manikins and defibrillator trainers, facilitating hands-on practice for students.

Outcomes

- Positive teacher feedback on ease of use and accessibility.
- Initial questionnaires from before and after our courses show that teachers feel confident in teaching their students after completing a course.

Adapt Training to Children's Context

Tailor CPR training to children's age and learning abilities, using diverse formats such as live demonstrations, interactive activities, and digital media (e.g. videos and games) to improve engagement and skill retention. Link the training to real-life scenarios, such as recognising the signs of SCA at home or playing sports, to improve relatability. Training should be age-appropriate, with younger children learning to recognise emergencies and call for help, while older students are taught full CPR techniques.

CASE STUDY



Call 112 Fibrillu Book, Malta

Background

- Call 112 Fibrillu is an illustrated book teaches life-saving skills through a story about Katrina and Fibrillu responding to an emergency.
- Published by the Malta Resuscitation Council (MRC) to raise CPR awareness among schoolchildren.

Best Practices

- Provides a step-by-step guide to CPR, covering breathing assessment, calling for help, and chest compressions, explained in language and a context accessible to school children.
- Designed for children with engaging illustrations, a simple step-by-step CPR guide, and a relatable story featuring young characters.
- Available in both Maltese and English for wider accessibility.
- Distributed in print to primary schools and digitally via educational tablets.
- Part of a larger MRC initiative training teachers and students in public schools.

Outcomes

- Successfully used by school aged children in their CPR classes, with ongoing integration into school curricula.

Actively Involve Students in Training

Actively involving children in CPR training builds their confidence to respond in emergencies while fostering social responsibility. Hands-on practice enhances retention and empowers them to help others, reinforcing a sense of independence and community awareness. Encouraging them to share their knowledge further strengthens their skills and promotes a culture of preparedness.

CASE STUDY



From CPR Trained to CPR Trainer, Belgium

Background

- CPR training is mandated in Belgium for children in both primary and secondary school, however strategies differ according to region.

Best Practices

- In Belgium, children receive CPR training after which they are expected to teach the steps to their parents. As confirmation of their lesson, parents will sign an attestation form.
- The approach uses active learning by encouraging children to demonstrate and teach CPR, thereby reinforcing their skills.

Outcomes

- Teaching others reinforces children's CPR knowledge and competence, while also boosting their confidence in contributing to society as life-saving agents.
- Involving parents expands the program's reach, creating a ripple effect that enhances community preparedness.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES FOR CPR EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Challenge

Possible Solution(s)

Limited political will to implement training initiatives

Invite public authorities to collaborate on devising achievable initiatives within scope and budget. Showcase best practices from abroad – sometimes, inspiration or competition can get the needle moving.

Inadequate guidelines for engaging young participants

In cases of where CPR training initiatives were planned without expert consultation, gather information on how the existing system is missing the benchmark to engage young people and provide practical improvements.

Regional differences in implementation

Investigate why inequities in implementation have occurred (resources, requirements, priorities) and tailor outreach and material distribution accordingly.

Lack of insight in initiatives' impact

Implement systematic evaluation mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of existing CPR courses and identify areas for improvement.

Limited resources (financial and human)

Collaborate with civil society to develop a cost-effective, adaptable resource package for teachers, including reusable materials such as instructional slides and videos. Seek sponsorships or partnerships with stakeholders to secure funding for essential tools and ensure ongoing support for educators.

Inconsistent availability of AEDs in schools

Map of available AEDs in schools and public buildings to evaluate the need for more installation. Implement regular check-ups to test and maintain the AEDs functionality.

Lack of time during school hours to teach CPR training

Integrate into existing classes, such as public health or physical education. Encourage shorter 10 to 15 minute sessions teaching basic steps. Refer students to extra-curricular opportunities to learn CPR.

CPR Awareness Campaigns

CPR awareness campaigns targeting youth are vital for building a safety-conscious society. Using popular social media platforms with appealing visuals and accessible content can effectively teach life-saving skills to young audiences. For instance, engaging CPR tutorials or videos with subtitles can make these skills more relatable and widely shared.

Student-led initiatives and collaborations with schools and sports clubs further strengthen these efforts by integrating CPR education into every-

day activities. Teachers, coaches, and peers can inspire young people to learn CPR and pass on this knowledge to their families and communities, creating a lasting impact.

Partnering with influencers and athletes boosts the reach and credibility of these campaigns. Public figures can normalise CPR as an essential skill, while collaborations with authorities and sponsors ensure access to hands-on training, turning awareness into action.

BEST PRACTICES

Develop Holistic CPR Campaigns

Developing a comprehensive CPR awareness campaign through partnerships with schools, sports clubs, workplaces, and public transportation will enhance reach, promote a broader perspective, and attract support from diverse sectors.

CASE STUDY



Holistic CPR Awareness Campaign, Italy

Background

- Launched in 2013 by the Italian Resuscitation Council the holistic awareness campaign aimed to raise CPR awareness beyond the tradition school environment and engage multiple sectors.
- The campaign was supported by 15 partners and received formal backing from the Italian president, Giorgio Napolitano.

Best Practices

- Promotes CPR through viral videos with actors, survivors, and rescuers.
- Partners with schools, workplaces, homes, public transport, and sports leagues like Train Italia to improve reach.
- Offers free and downloadable teaching resources for schools.
- Engages PR companies to support CPR training legislation for sports clubs.

Outcomes

- Increased CPR awareness across multiple sectors, engaging the public and policymakers.

Leverage Social Media and Public Figures for CPR Awareness

Use social media platforms to engage youth with visually appealing content, including short videos and images with concise text. Collaborate with influencers, athletes, and public figures to promote CPR training, inspiring wider participation through relatable and engaging content.

CASE STUDY



'Get Trained, Save Lives' Campaign – Europe (UEFA & ERC)

Background

- Launched in 2023 by UEFA and the European Resuscitation Council (ERC), the 'Get Trained, Save Lives' campaign aims to educate over 100,000 football fans and staff in CPR skills ahead of UEFA EURO 2024.
- The initiative addresses the urgent need for immediate response to sudden cardiac arrest, the third leading cause of death in Europe.

Best Practices

- Multi-level training: Delivered CPR education to 2,700+ players, referees, staff, and 12,000 in-person participants, plus fans via an interactive digital course.
- Fan outreach: Training extended to fans at EURO 2024 fan zones in 10 host cities.
- Public figure collaboration: Campaign supported by football legend Ruud Gullit and chatbots featuring famous players to boost visibility and engagement.
- Medical standards: UEFA now requires ambulances and AEDs at every match; 1,000+ medical staff trained annually.
- Sustainability: Funded by UEFA's HatTrick programme to ensure ongoing medical training across Europe.

Outcomes

- Raised CPR awareness among fans and professionals.
- Embedded emergency preparedness into football culture.
- Created a scalable, engaging model for life-saving education through sport.

Collaborate with Sports Club to Launch Campaigns

Partner with national sports associations, such as football federations, can help expand awareness by encouraging local clubs to incorporate CPR training for their members.

CASE STUDY



Collaborating with Swedish Football Association, Sweden

Background

- Developed in collaboration with the Swedish Resuscitation Council and the Swedish Football Association (SvFF), this free online CPR course aims to equip individuals with life-saving skills and increase interest in practical training.
- The initiative targets a wide audience, including children aged 10+ and adults, leveraging the football community's reach to raise CPR awareness and preparedness.

Best Practices

- Offers a free 15-minute online course suitable for ages 10 and up.
- Requires minimal tools—only a mobile phone or computer and a pillow or stuffed animal for practice.
- Designed to fit easily into daily life, whether at home, work, or football training.
- Complements practical CPR training and aligns with SvFF's broader safety campaign in football.

Outcomes

- Empowers individuals to respond quickly to cardiac emergencies while highlighting the importance of community-led efforts in improving survival rates and fostering a culture of preparedness across Sweden.
- Statistics are obtained for 1) number of participants who completed the online course and 2) participants self-confidence (reported at the beginning of the course and at the end).

Organise Inter-school CPR Competitions to Foster a Spirit of Positive Competitiveness

Encourage schools to host annual cross-school competitions, fostering student engagement, collaboration, and friendly competition while motivating CPR learning.

CASE STUDY



First Aid Competitions, Slovakia

Background

- The Slovak Red Cross has introduced a First Aid competition for schools, fostering enthusiasm and engagement in life-saving skills.
- This initiative encourages schools to integrate first aid training into extracurricular activities and emphasises practical learning.

Best Practices

- Involves teacher-trainers who lead student interest groups working throughout the school year to prepare for the competition.
- Provides an opportunity for students to develop teamwork and problem-solving skills while mastering first aid techniques.

Outcomes

- Raising awareness about first aid among young people while creating a culture of preparedness in participating schools.

Ensuring that Awareness Campaigns Provide Clear Pathways to Further Training

Ensure that awareness campaigns offer clear directions for further training, such as listing organisations or resources for CPR education. This will continue building on the momentum created by the campaigns. Form partnerships with organisations (e.g. National Ambulance Associations) that can provide hands-on training, reinforcing awareness with practical experience.

CASE STUDY



Restart a Heart, UK

Background

- Restart a Heart (RSAH), led by Resuscitation Council UK, aims to improve survival rates from out-of-hospital cardiac arrests by promoting CPR and defibrillation training.
- Launched every October, it brings together partners like UK Ambulance Services and first aid organisations to offer training events and digital learning resources.

Best Practices

- Events are held both in-person and online, ensuring wide access to CPR training.
- Engages numerous partners to host events and spread awareness across the UK.
- Includes a program (ResusReady) that encourages individuals and organisations to stay CPR- and defib- trained, with an interactive map to track community readiness.
- The campaign also shares [powerful survivor stories](#) to inspire and motivate individuals to learn CPR, emphasising that knowing life-saving skills could help save a life tomorrow.

Outcomes

- Increased engagement and high participation in events and training, both in-person and digitally.
- Promoting continued CPR training beyond October, ensuring year-round preparedness.
- Highlighting issues like resuscitation inequalities and provides opportunities for everyone to learn lifesaving skills.

Securing Sponsorship from Private Companies to Support CPR Promotion

As funding is often a barrier in awareness campaigns, partnering with companies (e.g. insurance, advertisement, etc.) that align with the goal of promoting CPR can be beneficial. These companies can sponsor materials (e.g. banners, pictures) or support initiatives, driven by the shared public health benefit of CPR training. Companies are generally willing to offer support due to the topic's strong appeal.

CASE STUDY



Collaborative Efforts with Insurance Company, Hungary

Background

- In Hungary, the Groupama Insurance Company, in partnership with the Hungarian Resuscitation Council, has implemented a program to enhance CPR education in schools.
- Recognising the importance of equipping young people with life-saving skills, this initiative aims to train both teachers and students in Basic Life Support (BLS) techniques.

Best Practices

- The program operates in 10 schools and focuses on a cascading training model.
- Teachers and students are trained to effectively teach BLS.
- Each participating school commits to teaching BLS to at least 300 students.

Outcomes

- Laying the groundwork for large-scale CPR education in Hungary, empowering schools to become hubs of life-saving knowledge.

Conduct Awareness Campaign Targeted at Families Through Public Demonstrations

Awareness campaigns can effectively reach youth through their parents. By involving parents in CPR awareness activities—such as organising public demonstrations where children showcase CPR skills in community spaces such shopping malls and public areas—campaigns can promote CPR as a vital life skill that parents should prioritise for their children.



Picture's source: Kids Save Lives in Hungary (KSLH), Hungarian National Resuscitation Council

CASE STUDY



Kids CPR Flashmob in Shopping Mall, Austria

Background

- On the occasion of Restart a Heart Day, [Kids Save Lives - Salzburg](#) has hosted a CPR flashmob at the Europark shopping mall aimed at raising awareness on the life-saving skill by involving kids, teenager-

Best Practices

- Demonstrates CPR in a public setting, making the skill accessible to the public and fostering community action.
- Encourages families to join the flash mob and activities, creating broader awareness and ensuring CPR skills extend into the home.

Outcomes

- Empowering the community by educating students, parents, and mall-goers on responding to cardiac emergencies.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES IN AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Challenge

Possible Solution(s)

Young people lack of enthusiasm to participate in trainings

Engage youth in CPR education through interactive formats like gamification and peer-led activities, emphasise community impact to foster responsibility, and use social media to deliver relatable awareness campaigns.

Insufficient funding to create impactful training materials

Secure funding through partnerships with private companies with similar goals (e.g. insurance companies, AED manufacturers).

Limited access to centralised resources that can be adapted to local settings and contexts

Develop an EU-wide resource database, from the European Resuscitation Council, where materials such as comic books or videos can be shared and adapted by National Resuscitation Councils (NRCs) to local needs.

Limited human resources to lead campaigns

Secure more manpower through empowering student organisations (e.g. medical and nursing students) to take leadership roles, supported by trained professionals, in leading campaigns in higher education settings.

Unclear leadership roles in awareness campaigns

Strengthen coordination through clear leadership frameworks and partnerships while promoting cross-border collaboration among NRCs for EU-wide youth and educator-focused CPR campaigns.

Other types of CPR Education Initiatives

CPR education for youth can extend beyond school programs and awareness campaigns. By partnering with student organisations, young people can lead awareness efforts, train peers, and teach CPR, fostering a sense of responsibility. Integrating CPR training with extracurricular activities,

like volunteering with emergency services, provides hands-on experience in real emergencies, strengthening CPR skills. Mobile technology also enhances response time, contributing to a culture of preparedness and civic responsibility, ultimately saving lives in critical situations.

BEST PRACTICES

Developing EU-Funded Initiatives to Support CPR Education Across Member States

EU funding programmes, such as Erasmus+, offer valuable opportunities to develop and scale innovative CPR training initiatives across Europe. By bringing together partners from different Member States—such as schools, universities, hospitals, and NGOs—these projects can produce high-quality, multilingual educational materials and pilot new approaches tailored to specific age groups or learning needs. This collaborative and cross-border model supports knowledge sharing, ensures wide accessibility, and strengthens the long-term integration of CPR education into national systems.

CASE STUDY



CASE STUDY – LIFEFORCE Project: Engaging Young Learners Across Europe – Germany, Greece, Italy and Cyprus

Background

- The LIFEFORCE (Learning Initiative For Elementary School Fun Oriented Resuscitation Coaching Europewide) project was developed through a consortium of universities and health institutions from Greece, Germany, Italy, and Cyprus. Recognising that traditional BLS protocols may be too complex for young children, the project developed a child-friendly BLS algorithm and interactive learning materials suitable for children aged 6–10.

Best Practices

- Development of inclusive and accessible materials: teacher manuals, student booklets, colour-coded flashcards, songs, videos, and e-learning modules tailored to various learning needs.
- Free online access to all materials in multiple languages (English, German, Greek, and Italian), promoting wide and equitable distribution.
- Strong cross-border academic collaboration fostered the sharing of expertise and harmonisation of educational strategies.

Outcomes

- Successful pilot use in schools across partner countries has shown high engagement and knowledge retention in young learners.
- Establishes a replicable model for early CPR education and positions young children as future life-savers.

Providing Accessible Learning Opportunities Supported by Self-Assessment Tools

Enhancing course accessibility by offering brief, online CPR trainings that are compatible with mobile devices and computers. Using simple practice tools like a pillow ensures inclusivity. Self-assessments before and after training help track confidence gains and encourage course sharing within communities.

CASE STUDY



Boosting Public Confidence Through Interactive Online Course – Sweden

Background

- An online interactive CPR Course was launched in 2023 by the Swedish Resuscitation Council, based on the European Resuscitation Councils guidelines 2021 and inspired by the British Heart Foundation's course.

Best Practices

- Offers a free course that only takes 15 minutes to complete.
- Suitable for both adults and children (from age 10).
- Requires only a mobile phone or computer and a pillow for practice.
- Includes a simulated conversation with an emergency dispatcher, recognising cardiac arrest, initiating chest compressions with feedback, and placing AED electrodes.
- Participants rate their self-confidence in CPR on a scale of 1-5 before and after completing the course.

Outcomes

- 62,654 participants started the online course between October 2023 and May 2024.
- 26,478 participants (42%) completed the entire course.
- Participants reported a 22% increase in confidence to perform CPR and a 37% increase in confidence to use an AED.
- 11% of participants shared the course link with others.



Picture's source: Swedish National Resuscitation Council.

Engage Youth-Led Organisations to Peer-to-Peer Training

Empowering youth-led organisations to lead initiatives, such as training students in giving CPR training in schools. Collaborate with student organisations, for instance nursing or medical students, to drive awareness campaigns in universities, colleges, and local communities.

CASE STUDY



Taskforce QRS, the Netherlands

Background

- Taskforce QRS is a non-profit initiative led by students, including medical students, in the Netherlands, aiming to increase CPR awareness and education.

Best Practices

- Organises short CPR training sessions in schools, complemented by public CPR courses open to all.
- Undertakes local and national activities to raise awareness about the importance of resuscitation education.
- Operates with strong support from professors and experts, while maintaining a student-led approach.

Outcomes

- Since its establishment in 2004 in Maastricht, Taskforce QRS has expanded nationwide, teaching CPR to over 15,000 high school students annually in seven cities.
- The initiative has sparked a cultural shift in CPR awareness across the country.

Offering Volunteering Opportunities in Emergency Services

Combine CPR education with extracurricular activities like volunteering with local emergency services and improve response rate of volunteers through mobile technology.

CASE STUDY



There is a Hero in Every One of You, Romania

Background

- The Bucharest-Ilfov Ambulance Service, empowers community volunteers to assist in emergencies before professional responders arrive using a mobile app.

Best Practices

- Volunteers are trained in first aid and alerted via the app with emergency details.
- Community engagement is fostered through social media storytelling.

Outcomes

- Reduced emergency response times and improved survival rates for critical conditions.
- The program promotes a culture of preparedness and civic responsibility.

Investing into CPR Video Games and Other Virtual Learning Tools to Foster Youth Engagement

Using virtual reality games in CPR education boosts engagement and accessibility. With free, multilingual downloads and features like school tournaments and peer challenges, these tools create a more inclusive and impactful learning experience.

CASE STUDY



Innovative Virtual Reality Games for CPR Awareness, Italy

Background

- To make CPR education engaging and widely accessible, two innovative games - [A Picnic... Breathtaking VR](#) and [RELIVE](#) - were developed with the support of the Italian Resuscitation Council and various collaborators.
- These initiatives aim to teach CPR through immersive and interactive experiences, reaching children, adolescents, and families.

Best Practices

- Uses virtual reality and motion detection to teach CPR and the importance of timely intervention via storytelling and interactive experiences.
- Both games are free, multilingual, and have over 10,000 downloads. Encourages interactive learning with competitive features, allowing players to compete with friends. Promotes school engagement with tournaments, where winners earn a Basic Life Support (BLS) course for their school.

Outcomes

- Makes CPR education more engaging and accessible, especially for young audiences.
- Combines technology, storytelling, and competition to raise awareness and preparedness for cardiac emergencies, engaging communities through school-based and peer-driven activities.



Picture's source: Italian National Resuscitation Council.

Incorporating Student and Teacher Feedback in CPR Training

To make CPR training in schools more effective, it is key to understand and study how schoolchildren and teachers would improve a standard Basic Life Support (BLS) course. From existing research, students value the hands-on approach and more practice time, smaller groups, and relatable content. Teachers highlight the need for consistent, simple language and better integration of theory. Both groups have shown support towards increasing realism and excitement in the course—such as through realistic scenarios, familiar locations, and child protagonists.

CASE STUDY



Kids Save Lives Feedback Study, Zurich – Switzerland

Background

- A study, led by experts from the University Hospital Zurich and the University of Zurich, explored how schoolchildren and teachers would improve a standard Basic Life Support (BLS) course.
- Using video-stimulated recall interviews after a 90-minute training, 24 students (aged 12–16) and 24 teachers shared their insights.
- While the training was rated highly, both groups identified ways to make it more engaging and relevant.

Best Practices

- Provides more practice time in smaller groups, with clearly defined learning objectives.
- Delivers relatable scenarios through child protagonists and summary slides for better retention.
- Boosts motivation with positive feedback tools and competitive features.
- Enhances impact with added emotional depth and situational realism.
- Prepares teachers to confidently lead future CPR training sessions.

Outcomes

- The findings informed updates to course materials, including a new training video and better integration of theory and practice.
- The study supports the potential for teachers to lead school-based CPR training effectively.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES FOR OTHER TYPES OF CPR EDUCATION

Challenge

Possible Solution(s)

**Inconsistent CPR training quality
in student-led initiatives**

Develop standardised training curricula and involve experts to supervise and certify trainers.

**High costs of developing and
updating CPR training
technology**

Collaborate with universities, tech companies, and crowdfunding initiatives to reduce development costs and ensure regular updates.

**Unequal access
to virtual CPR training tools**

Offer mobile-friendly, offline, or low-tech alternatives to ensure wider accessibility.

**Difficulty reaching
diverse community groups
outside schools**

Partner with local organisations, religious groups, and workplaces to deliver CPR training in accessible and familiar environments.

**Lack of confidence
in performing CPR
in real emergencies**

Include scenario-based training, hands-on practice, and refresher courses to build confidence and muscle memory.

Annex

Example of outreach email

Subject: Advocating for CPR and First Aid Education in Schools

Dear [Minister's Name],

I hope this message finds you well.

I am writing on behalf of [Resuscitation Council Name], an organisation dedicated to **improving survival rates from cardiac arrest** through the promotion of life-saving skills such as CPR and first aid. Our mission is to ensure that individuals of all ages are equipped with the knowledge and confidence to act in emergencies, ultimately saving lives and improving public health outcomes.

In [Country], cardiac arrest remains a leading cause of death, with over [X] people dying each year due to sudden cardiac events. Tragically, **the survival rate for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in [Country] is only 8%**, which highlights the urgent need for immediate action in these critical moments. The benefits of CPR training extend not only to those in need of help but also to the broader community. Parents, teachers, and students themselves stand to gain significant confidence and skills in emergency situations. Training provides individuals with the ability to step in when every second counts, **significantly improving survival rates for those who experience cardiac arrest.**

Currently, **CPR training is not a mandatory part of the school curriculum in [Country]**, leading to inconsistent skill levels across the population. This gap in training results in missed opportunities to save lives, especially in critical moments when bystanders could make a difference. The absence of uniform training leads to a disjointed approach to resuscitation and leaves many unprepared to act in emergencies.

We believe that **introducing mandatory CPR and first aid education in schools** would be a powerful step toward addressing this issue. By equipping young people with these essential life skills, we can create a generation of confident and capable responders, ultimately increasing survival rates and fostering a safer, more resilient society.

Considering your role as [X], we would be happy to meet with you to discuss this proposal in further detail and explore how we can collaborate to make this initiative a reality. **Would you be available to meet in the upcoming weeks?**

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how we can work together to save lives and improve public health through CPR education.

Kind regards,

[Your Name], on behalf of the [Resuscitation Council Name]

Example of policy-maker mapping

Name	Party	Position/ Role	Relevant Committee / Ministry (e.g. education, health)	Relevant information (e.g. position on the importance of CPR and First Aid, previous support on similar initiatives, political priorities)	Angel for engagement	Contact Information	Engagement Status	Engagement Outcome
John Smith	Greens	Member of the Federal Parliament	President of the Committee on Education	Held a public speech on the importance of increasing CPR training in Belgium to reduce deaths due to sudden cardiac arrest	Stressing the role children can play in saving lives. Provide data on the number of kids that could be trained each year if CPR is part of school curriculums	Phone number, email address	Email Sent	Secured as political supporter of the Belgian Resuscitation Council
			2					



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