



For Immediate Release

Laura M. Wall

801 531.0937

laura@sads.org

Long QT Syndrome Can Kill

Silent, Deadly Killer Continues To Go Undetected

Hundreds of volunteers across the country are participating in SADS Awareness Month in October

Salt Lake City, Utah --Young lives continue to be lost unnecessarily due to Long QT Syndrome and other genetic heart rhythm conditions that we call: *Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes (SADS)*.

Each year in the United States, 400,000 Americans die suddenly and unexpectedly due to heart rhythm problems. An estimated 4,000 of them are young people under age 35 according to CDC Reports. Sudden cardiac death (SCD) is one of the top five leading causes of death in young adults. According to the CDC, deaths from Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) increased 10% in people between the ages of 15 and 34.

These children and young people usually appear healthy and normal—until they have an episode. The good news is that early detection is possible, conditions are treatable and lives can be saved.

SADS is partnering to prevent the senseless deaths of more young people. Members and volunteers of both organizations, whose lives have been personally affected, are distributing materials, talking to local groups in their schools and communities and telling their personal story to the media this month to raise awareness and educate the public and medical professionals about the symptoms and warning signs of undetected conditions that cause SCA.

Warning Signs of SADS:

- Family history of unexpected, unexplained sudden death in a young person under the age of 40
- Fainting (syncope) or seizure especially during exercise, excitement or after being startled
- Consistent or unusual chest pain, dizziness and/or shortness of breath during exercise.

Parents and school personnel are encouraged to check to ensure that their school is ready to help a young person in a cardiac crisis.

- Do all children with health/heart conditions have a care plan?
- Does your school have an Emergency Action Plan that includes CPR/AED (Defibrillation) components?
- Does staff know the warning signs and have a process to refer youth with warning signs for further evaluation by their physician?

The vital links of the cardiac chain of survival will increase SCA survival rates; early access to 911, early CPR, early defibrillation and early advanced care. For every minute without defibrillation, a victim's chance for survival decreases by 10 percent.

Supporting Families. Saving Lives

Nineteen year-old Brian Falzon collapsed and died suddenly due to an undiagnosed heart condition called Long QT Syndrome. He had passed out a year earlier, sought treatment and was misdiagnosed. “If a child, teenager, or young adult suffers a blackout without an obvious cause, especially if it was during or immediately after exercise or a startle, I recommend asking the doctor about Long QT Syndrome (LQTS),” said Dr. G. Michael Vincent, a Long QT cardiologist. “Early detection and proper treatment of LQTS patients can save lives.”

September is **SADS Awareness Month**. Volunteers around the country are distributing materials, talking to local groups in their schools and telling their story to the media this month. Denise Falzon expressed the reason why all these volunteers are working so hard when she said, “I hope and pray that by educating the public and medical professionals about the symptoms and warning signs of SADS, we will be able to stop the senseless deaths of other young people”.

For more information about the climb or to sponsor a climber, please call the SADS Foundation at 800.STOP.SAD or go to www.StopSADS.org.

About the SADS Foundation

The SADS Foundation is a non-profit organization that was established in 1991 with the sole mission of saving lives and supporting the families of children and young adults who are genetically predisposed to sudden death due to heart rhythm abnormalities. The foundation facilitates medical decisions and early diagnosis and treatment of heart rhythm abnormalities that can cause sudden death by providing educational materials to more than 27,000 patients, doctors, and families around the world each year. In addition, the SADS Foundation encourages heart rhythm abnormality research and initiates public campaigns to increase the awareness about the warning signs of heart rhythm abnormalities that can cause sudden death.