

1 in 100 Teens Found At Risk for Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Don't Take a Chance With Your Child's Heart

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is the #2 cause of death in youth under 25. Thousands of healthy teens die annually from this silent killer that often has no warning signs. In fact, the first symptom could be death—as it was with Eric Paredes. Research cites SCA as the leading cause of death on school property, with one student athlete falling victim every few days. Yet, teens are not screened for heart conditions that put 1 in 100 at risk. By contrast, newborns receive a battery of genetic testing for diseases that have a much lower incidence, followed by mandatory childhood testing for hearing, sight and BMI disorders.

Until heart screenings are standardized, Eric's foundation will seek out heart abnormalities that unknowingly put kids at risk. Here are just a few of the teens who are glad we do.



Spencer's Story

Spencer is an outgoing, athletic, life-of-the-party teen. Playing baseball since he was four and competitive tennis in high school, he never experienced any health issues. So it's not surprising that Scott, his firefighter/paramedic dad, was shocked when our heart screening detected Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome, an abnormal extra electrical pathway in the heart. Spencer was referred for an immediate cardiac ablation from a top pediatric cardiologist who said it was lucky Spencer's condition was caught early as he was at risk for sudden cardiac arrest. "I used to think annual physicals and sports exams were all that was required but they don't really check your heart," said Scott. "Thank you for saving my son so I could enjoy him for the rest of my life."



Kaelie's Story

Swimming since she was two and competitively since age nine, Kaelie's life is about school, homework and water. So when this teen began getting winded at practice with a tight chest and racing heart, she pushed through it without anyone recognizing these warning signs. When our free heart screening detected Atrial Septal Defect (ASD), a hole in her heart, it all made sense to Kaelie's mom, Jennifer, who now believes teen health care should be more proactive in heart monitoring. Kaelie's stent implant and closure procedure put her back in the pool with a new outlook on a life she is grateful to have. "Now we can know that she's safe, that she can swim without fear, and enjoy the rest of her life," said Jennifer.



Devin's Story

Devin is a healthy kid—the quintessential young athlete. From marathons, to soccer to baseball, to football, he shined in every sport. But when his mom heard about Eric Paredes' death, she followed her instinct to check Devin's heart. And it turned their world upside down. The screening detected ASD, and after a battery of tests, from magnetic resonance to nuclear imaging, a symptomless coronary artery anomaly (CAA)—the second leading cause of sudden death in young athletes, typically discovered during autopsy. "We were shocked and scared as we shut down all activities in preparation for Devin's open heart surgery," said Erin. "All went well and he's back to normal, but we can't imagine his future and ours had we never done a routine heart screening."

The EP Save A Life Foundation is committed to preventing SCA in teens through awareness, education and action. We provide free screenings to identify cardiac anomalies that may lead to SCA, with the ultimate goal of standardizing heart screenings among our youth, and equipping schools with readily accessible automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and CPR/AED training for students and staff. Eric's Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.

