

who knew?

# supergirls

These three **quick-thinking** teens use their **powers to save lives.** by **Laura Schiff**

## hot box

**W**ant to tell your friends ASAP about your math-class crush? Send live footage. The WAVEback 900Mhz wireless PDA has a unique built-in camera and microphone that lets you share pics and sounds with WAVEback-carrying buds within 1,000 feet. Use the address book and calendar to get your boy's digits and pencil him in! The PDA comes in pink, lime and electric blue; costs \$99; and hits stores in September. For more info, visit [Kesselusa.com](http://Kesselusa.com).

—Margaret Magnarelli

**E**rin Ashcraft, 15, from Dallas, will never forget the summer of 1999. She and her sister, Cara, 13, were flying without their parents for the first time. They were going to visit their grandparents in Little Rock, Arkansas. The plane was experiencing turbulence as it prepared to land during a violent storm. Battered by hurricane-force winds, the jet hit the rain-slicked runway nose first. It skidded through a fence, flipped over a 25-foot embankment, slammed into a steel light tower—and came to rest inches from the roaring Arkansas

River. Momentarily knocked unconscious, Erin awoke to find the plane split in half. She and Cara were trapped between a wall of fire and a mountain of wreckage. Their only exit was a fissure in the hull, no more than a foot wide. "I pushed Cara in front of me, thinking, If I don't get out, then *she* will," recalls Erin. "That was my goal: Getting her out." The girls climbed over broken seats to reach the opening, but Cara froze when it came time to squeeze through the jagged hole and make the 14-foot drop to safety. "I took things into my own hands and pushed her," says Erin.

That same year, in North Carolina,

I reacted without having to think," says Katie, who credits her quick response to the CPR class she took three years earlier. When she saw that Brodie had stopped breathing and was turning blue, Katie performed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on him—and saved his life.

"Everybody should learn basic first

**"I pushed Cara in front of me, thinking, If I don't get out, then *she* will," recalls Erin.**

Junior  
lifesaving:  
Katie  
Spencer  
with Brodie.

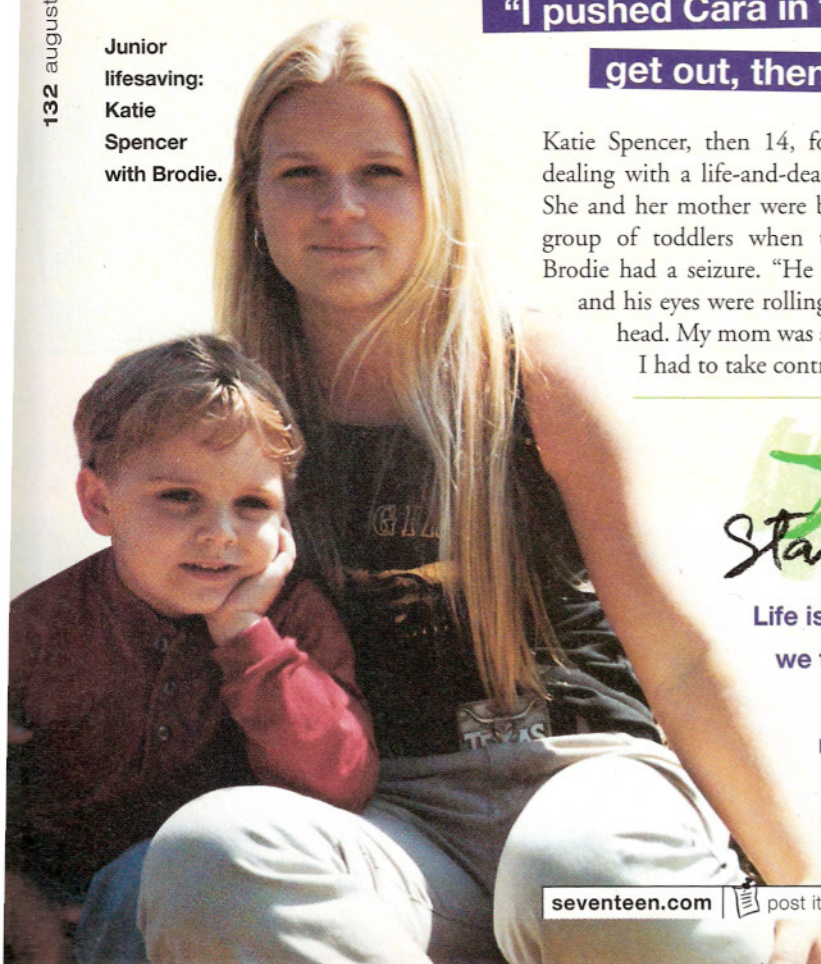
Katie Spencer, then 14, found herself dealing with a life-and-death situation. She and her mother were babysitting a group of toddlers when two-year-old Brodie had a seizure. "He was shaking and his eyes were rolling back in his head. My mom was scared, so I had to take control.

aid, CPR and resuscitation," says Karlie Dunsky, 17, from Ohio. When an 11-year-old neighbor accidentally fell into the Dunsky family pool, Karlie called upon emergency training from a health class. She immediately pulled the girl out of the water, then checked her vital signs. Karlie remembered learning that one person

needs to take control and maintain calm by assigning tasks. So she told her little sister to call 911, and asked her brother to find the girl's parents. "Then I gave her mouth-to-mouth," says Karlie. She was honored as a hero by her local sheriff's department, the American Red Cross and the Montgomery County Medical Association. In spite of the accolades, Karlie insists, "I did what I had to do." ▶

**Standout**

**Life is really special and we take it for granted. I feel like I saved my own life just by realizing this.**



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**Bravehearts:** Erin Ashcraft (far left) with her sister, Cara. Below: Karlie in front of the family pool.



After all, as Erin points out, the true rewards of heroism go way beyond public recognition. "I helped my sister, but I feel like I'm my *own* hero," she says. "This experience has given me a new perspective. Things that I thought mattered—like the way you dress—no longer matter. Life is really special and we take it for granted. I feel like I saved my own life just by realizing this."

### How to be a hero-in-training

**Take a first-aid course.** Would you know what to do if someone in the cafeteria were choking? If not, sign up for a first-aid class. "You'll learn how to prevent and respond to emergencies," says Connie Harvey, national health and safety expert for the American Red Cross. "Being prepared takes away some of the panic that goes along with an emergency situation."

**Become a lifeguard.** Help solve the nation's shortage of lifeguards. Some high schools offer lifeguard training—sometimes, it'll even count as a physical class. To be eligible for the 28-hour training course, you have to be at least 15 years old and pass a swimming test, which includes doing the crawl and the backstroke for 500 yards. No pool at your school? Your local Red Cross can help find one. "Lifeguarding is a very rewarding job," says Harvey. "It's a wonderful opportunity to learn leadership skills and make a difference in your community."

**Donate blood.** This is the quickest and easiest way to be a hero: A single blood donation can save up to three lives. To donate, you must be healthy, weigh at least 110 pounds and be 17 or older. If you or your red blood cells aren't up to the task, then organize a school blood drive and help recruit donors.

**Prepare for the unexpected.** As Karlie points out, "You never know when an emergency is going to sneak up on you." But if you don't have first-aid training, remember the Red Cross' 3C's: Check, Call, Care. "Check the victim," explains Harvey. "Call 911. Then, if possible, provide care." ■

To learn more, visit [Redcross.org](http://Redcross.org).

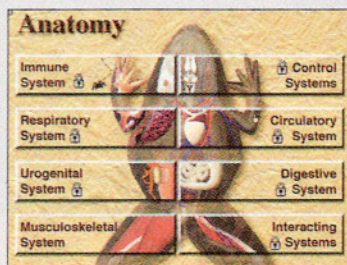
## heads-up

### ace this course

If the only iron you're planning to use in college is a nine, you might want to try a new wrinkle: golf. At nine colleges across the country, more than 1,400 Tiger Woods-wannabes are studying swing analysis and club repair as part of the professional golf management major. And you wondered if golf was even a sport!

### leapfrog

It's not easy being green, especially during bio class. Thankfully, virtual dissections are a reality. This fall, the Dallas school system will use frog CD-ROMs courtesy of The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. To get a formaldehyde-free program for your school at no cost, contact The Humane Society of the United States at [Cross@hsus.org](mailto:Cross@hsus.org).



### cheat sheet

In a recent Rutgers University survey of 4,500 high school students, 74 percent said they had cheated at least once. Some of the excuses: laziness and the pressure to get good grades. What's the real answer to passing a test? Study. Duh!

### food for thought

Don't trash your school's cuisine—that mystery meat could serve hungry people in your community. That's why New York City public schools are donating lunch-line leftovers to food banks and shelters. To get your district to share the bread, contact the USDA at 800-GLEAN-IT. —M.M.

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