

## Students learn to save lives

by Neil Corbett - Maple Ridge News  
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Marc Dalton could have been one of the statistics.

The Maple Ridge-Mission MLA suffered a heart attack earlier this year, he told students at Thomas Haney secondary on Wednesday while announcing a new program.

The Advanced Coronary Treatment Foundation will train 1,000 students in six Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows public schools in CPR and how to use defibrillators.

Dalton said heart disease is the second leading cause of death in Canada, killing approximately 50,000 Canadians every year. About 1.6 million people have heart disease country-wide.



“I had a heart attack earlier this year, and there was no signal beforehand,” said Dalton.

During the spring, he had pain in his chest and nausea.

“It was not going away, and it was not good.”

An associate of his had ignored symptoms and suffered a fatal heart attack.

Dalton went to hospital, and it was determined one of his arteries was 80-90 per cent blocked.

He had a stint installed, and was released from hospital the next day.

It’s important to recognize symptoms and get medical help, he said.

“It was easier than having dental work,” Dalton added.

“I’m happy there was no damage to my heart.”

Sandra Clark, coronary foundation executive director, said that B.C. paramedics volunteer their time to train teachers in CPR, so they can instruct students.

“Our goal is to see every young person throughout B.C. empowered with the skills of CPR and how to use a defibrillator.”

Each school will receive 30 training mannequins and four Automated External Defibrillator training units.

“It’s very easy, and that’s the beauty of it – even the defibrillator,” she said.

The training units have voice prompts for users, and cannot do harm, because they will not shock a beating heart.

They can be found in arenas, gymnasiums and sports fields.

“They are going up in more and more public places, but many people will not pull them down, because they don’t know how to use them,” said Clark.

Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows MLA Doug Bing runs a dental practice and requires his staff to train in CPR. He said one of them saved someone in a vehicle collision.

“You could be in the right place at the right time to save someone’s life,” Bing told the Thomas Haney students.

The coronary foundation is a charitable organization establishing free CPR and defibrillator training programs in secondary schools throughout B.C. and across Canada.

To date, the program has been established in 228 B.C. public secondary schools.

“Our front-line paramedics and dispatchers know bystander CPR saves lives. That’s why we’re so invested in helping to prepare future generations on how to help someone suffering from a sudden cardiac arrest,” said BCEHS vice-president Dr. William Dick.

Early CPR, combined with early defibrillation can increase the chance of surviving cardiac arrest victims by up to 75 per cent, according to Heart and Stroke Foundation.