

Life savers

Huron Heights students learn life saving skills like CPR, first aid and use of defibrillators

By Ryan Flanagan
Kitchener Post staff

Students at local high schools are getting a crash course in CPR and first aid protocol.

Last Friday, the Advanced Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation launched its high school CPR and defibrillator training program at Huron Heights Secondary School.

This school year, 6,500 students from across Waterloo Region will receive the training. Each school will receive 10 mannequins and two automated external defibrillator (AED) training units.

“We know that although our duty is to educate children, the safety and security of the children in our school system is absolutely paramount,” said Linda Fabi, director of education for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

In some schools, the training has already taken place.

“In gym class our teachers took us one on one, showed us the steps of what to do, and then we went through and got tested on it. All of us got certified,” said Courtney Tripp, a Grade 10 student at Huron Heights.

While the training might be done in-school, it’s one skill that will stick with students wherever they go.

“They’re equipped for life,” said John Shewchuk, chief managing officer of the Waterloo Catholic District School board.

“If they’re at a shopping mall and somebody keels over, they know what to do. It’s just incredible to see what’s going on here.”

As a summer camp counsellor, Huron Heights Grade 12 student Natalie Brown has seen the need for CPR knowledge and training.

“We once had a situation where a girl was knocked unconscious. I didn’t have to do any of the CPR because we had some people who were a little more qualified than I was, but I had to help with the ambulance,” she said.

Brown already knew a little bit about first aid, but was eager to upgrade her skills.

“I did the babysitters’ course so I was taught on babies, but this expands it because now I know how to do it on adults too,” said Tripp.

“I really love to help people, so any way I can save a life is really important to me.”

Across Ontario, the ACT program has trained 1.3 million students in CPR and 140,000 in the newer AED program.



Ryan Flanagan Photo

He’s no dummy. Colin Agotici, a Grade 9 student at Huron Heights Secondary School, takes part in first aid training. It’s all part of an effort to certify