

Script – Print - "Handy" Heart Lesson

OSF program teaches teens 'hands-only' CPR

More than 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in the US annually and, according to the American Heart Association, ninety percent of those people will die.

That's a startling number and it's why OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital of Illinois (CHOI) has been on a campaign to teach as many people as they can, particularly teens, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or 'hands-only' CPR.

For the past 18 months, CHOI, along with OSF HealthCare clinical staff, have conducted training classes at numerous high schools. Recently they visited Ottawa Township High School. Nearly every student was instructed on "hands-only" CPR.

"When you're out in the community you're not always around nurses and doctors," says Stephanie Miles, program coordinator for OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital of Illinois. "If somebody goes down, it's really important that we know how to, potentially, save someone's life. And the good news is, with 'hands-only', is we don't have to put our mouth on people we don't know. We just need to know how to do an effective compression."

'Hands-only' CPR, especially if performed immediately, can double or triple a cardiac victim's chance of survival. However, statistics show less than half of those people receive that immediate help before professional help arrives.

Training for the Ottawa students also included the proper use of an automated external defibrillator, or AED.

"A lot of times they see them on their walls at schools and they just assume that those are for EMT's - as I did before I took the training," says Stephanie Miles, program coordinator for OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital of Illinois. "I think they come away with the knowledge of saying 'Oh my gosh, these are actually a lot easier to use - it's a lot - it's not that hard to do.' And, hopefully, they come away with they learned something and help save a life, potentially."

Ottawa Township High School senior Chloe Sibert is well aware of the importance of 'hands-only' CPR training, she's a certified lifeguard and assisted with the training of her classmates.

She wants her peers to know that while you'll never know when you may use it, knowing 'hands-only' CPR is helpful and important.

"It's a serious matter," says Chloe Sibert, Ottawa Township High School senior. "Many people actually die from the heart failure. And CPR is one way that we can prevent all these deaths from happening."

CHOI's Stephanie Miles says student response to the 'hands-only' CPR training has mostly been positive. To those teens who question why they need to know it, Miles points out that cardiac arrest is the number one killer of people over 40 - that would include these student's teachers, coaches and, of course, their parents.