

911 might not be enough to save a life

If you came across unconscious child, what would you do?

Of course, you'd call 911. Then what? In Whitchurch-Stouffville and in King Township, it takes about 13 minutes for an ambulance to arrive. In other York Region municipalities, it takes eight minutes and 59 seconds.

But if you're skilled in first aid, it only takes seconds for you to respond to a dying child.

On Sunday night, a 10-year-old Ajax boy didn't have eight minutes and 59 seconds or 13 minutes to get help. Rather, Shane Featherston had seconds. In the throes of an asthma attack, Shane stopped breathing. He lost consciousness, lost his pulse and his heart stopped beating.



Joan Ransberry

The attack hit when the child was on a hay ride at Stouffville's Magic Hill Farm. While his life was being threatened, Magic Hill employee Jennifer May was close by.

Skilled in life-saving techniques, including CPR, Jennifer responded to the emergency. The 20-year-old didn't stand there and wring her hands. She didn't feel that horrible sense of helplessness.

Jennifer took stock of the situation, recognized its seriousness and made a decision: Shane couldn't wait for an ambulance.

The boy was loaded into the back of a pickup truck with his mom, Lorraine, Jennifer and her co-worker Eve Latour.

Before they reached the gate, Latour had to perform mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. When Shane didn't respond, Jennifer applied full-blown CPR.

The truck met the ambulance two miles down the Ninth Line where paramedics took over. Treatment on the side of the road included inserting a breathing tube down Shane's throat. Further emergency care was administered at Markham Stouffville Hospital. Today, Shane is OK.

Had it not been for first aid administered by Jennifer May and Eve Latour, it's quite possible the treatment at the hospital would have been pointless. Shane could have arrived at hospital dead.

The story reminded me that I am long-overdue for a refresher first-aid course.

I know how to administer mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on adults, children and infants. As for CPR, I know the basics. But the basics aren't good enough. Had I been on the hay wagon with Shane, I would not have been nearly as capable as Jennifer.

This is an excellent reminder of the need to know first aid. Offered by the Red Cross or St. John Ambulance, courses are affordable and available in York Region.

In case of emergency, York Region's not a bad place to be.

York Region's emergency response service is multi-tiered and has many partners.

It involves private citizens administering first aid, including CPR, police officers and firefighters responding with their expert training, defibrillation and

treatment by qualified medical personnel, including advanced care paramedics. When all hands work together, lives are saved.

Be a Big Brother
it's kids stuff.

905-727-1251

This message brought to you as a community service of Economist & Sun/Tribune

beds are Not Enough

The elderly are the fastest growing segment of the population. The Ontario Government, anticipating the crunch, have allocated 20,000 new beds over the next few years. But beds aren't enough to care for our loved ones.

Concerned?

So are CLAC and its members. That's why a task force has been appointed to find out what needs to be done to ensure our seniors get the kind of quality care they deserve.

You can help by telling us your first hand experiences. All persons involved, caregivers, employers, family members and concerned individuals are invited.

Open Forum on Long Term Care
Monday, October 30
7:00 p.m.
Radisson Hotel
50 East Valhalla Dr.
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