

A Heart Revived



INDIANAPOLIS—Fifteen-year-old Austin Taber has a lot to celebrate. No, it is not a celebration that school is finally out for the summer... it is a celebration that in May 2009 this Franklin Township Middle School student suffered sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) during class and his heart was brought back to life by CPR and an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). “The school, the staff and the AED are the reason Austin will be a freshmen next year”, says Lisa Tabor Austin’s mom.

Standard CPR techniques were applied by both nursing staff and non-nursing staff at the school followed by an electrical shock from an AED that was housed in the school. CPR is the first-line treatment for SCA, but it does not start the heart rather circulating oxygenated blood keeping the brain alive until advanced care, especially defibrillation, can be initiated.

Used alone, CPR will result in few complete recoveries and those that do survive often develop serious complications. Studies have shown the importance of immediate CPR followed by defibrillation within 3-5 minutes of SCA improves survival. Where CPR training is widespread and an Automated External Defibrillator is utilized, the SCA survival rate is about 30 percent up from 1-2 percent where an AED is not available.

Franklin Township Middle School East was awarded an AED from The Reviving Hearts Program in 2008 and CPR and AED training was provided by the CPR Institute of Indiana. The Reviving Hearts Program, an initiative of the Cardiovascular Research and Education Foundation of Indiana, began with four founding sponsors: Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Indiana, Fifth Third Bank, St. Vincent Heart Center of Indiana and Peyton Manning Children’s Hospital at St.Vincent. Over a five-year period of time, The Reviving Hearts Program’s mission is to place over 400 AEDs into Indiana high schools. For more information regarding the program or to make a donation please go to www.cardiofoundation.org.