

Ryan Williams' Emergency CPR Training Saved Baby's Life



Ryan Williams

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(April 13) Ryan Williams and his family were on their way home from church in Culver City the night of April 3 when life came into sharp focus at the corner of Bristol and Centinela.

Williams, 27, an MTA General Services custodian, spotted a young girl who was screaming and covering her face. Next to her, a woman was pounding the back of a baby she had cradled in one arm.

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"I knew they weren't just changing a tire," recalls Williams. "So, I pulled over and asked what was the problem."

The baby had something caught in her windpipe and had stopped breathing. The mother, Lori Holt of Los Angeles, was unable to dislodge the object that was choking her one-year-old daughter, Dajah. Williams sprang into action.

Baby coughed up blood

Taking the child from her mother, he placed a fist under her rib cage and pushed twice. The baby coughed up blood and some food. She began to cry. A hair barrette that had blocked her windpipe had moved just enough to allow her to breathe.

"I did two thrusts of the Heimlich Maneuver," says Williams. It was a skill he had learned only days before in an emergency response CPR class for MTA employees. "I was relieved that it had worked and was kind of shaken when I realized the child could have died."

A few minutes later, paramedics arrived and rushed the baby to Daniel Freeman Memorial Hospital in Inglewood. She later was transferred to Children's Hospital in Los Angeles where surgeons removed the barrette from the child's throat. Little Dajah is now at home and doing well.

Williams had arrived on the scene just in the nick of time. Holt had only a minute of time left on her cell phone and might not have been able to complete an emergency call.

Incident made deep impression

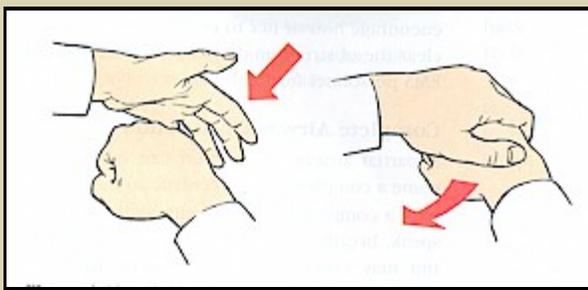
The incident made a deep impression on Williams, himself the father of a two-year-old son. "I could definitely put myself in the mother's place."

His feeling about the emergency response CPR training he received?

"It's a pretty simple procedure. I was just surprised I used it so soon after learning it," he says. "Knowing that anything can happen at any time, it's important to be prepared."

Ryan Williams joined the MTA in July 1996. A native of South Carolina, he is a graduate of Crenshaw High School in Los Angeles. Williams is studying Administration of Justice at Southwest Community College and hopes to become an LAPD officer. He and his wife, Tranee, live in Los Angeles with their son, Ameer, 2.

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CPR and First Aid training are conducted at MTA Headquarters every Tuesday from 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. First consideration for attendance is given those who require the training as part of their job duties. CPR training also is conducted at the operating divisions for groups of at least 10. For more information, contact Safety Trainer Pat Chism at 922-7314 or by e-mail at chismc@mta.net.

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