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Dad Performs CPR on Young Daughter, Saves Her Life

By Cathy Tyson



Karen Rose and a very thankful Marco Ortiz, with 2-year-old daughter, Jacqueline, at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce offices. Photo provided

Rose, director of events at the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, who teaches classes to staff at the hotel in her free time. The hotel likes to have several people on every shift with this training, says director of human resources Linda Anderson. We need to get the word out about the importance of knowing CPR, said Anderson, adding that Ortiz was humbled by all the attention, "He's our real life hero."

Ortiz has been with the hotel for almost 12 years and is now a room service supervisor.

CPR, or cardio pulmonary resuscitation classes will be held in late February at the Lafayette Parks and Recreation department, and are also offered through the American Heart Association. For details, visit www.heart.org.

It's every parent's nightmare, finding your lifeless child face down in the pool. Still shaken by the ordeal, Lafayette Park Hotel employee Marco Ortiz had that unfortunate experience, but wanted to get the word out to the many homeowners in Lamorinda with pools that CPR training can save a life.

Getting ready for a family dinner out on a recent Sunday, Ortiz took a quick shower while his two older children, ages 14 and 5, and wife were home. Upon arrival in the living room, he started looking for 2-year-old Jacqueline. Panicked, he saw her lifeless body in their pool, and took "the biggest jump of my life" into the cold water. Lifting little Jacqueline out, Ortiz immediately started giving her CPR, remembering the instructions he received at a work-sponsored class. The quiet afternoon turned to chaos as his wife was screaming, but Ortiz continued compressions and mouth to mouth.

In a few minutes he could tell she was faintly breathing and eventually started crying and throwing up the pool water. Paramedics and police arrived after about 10 critical minutes, praising Ortiz for his quick response.

After a 24-hour stay at Kaiser hospital in Walnut Creek to check out heart and lung function, Jacqueline is doing just fine and has no lasting injuries from her near drowning. Thankful father Ortiz still has poignant memories of the event.

Recently he and Jacqueline made a visit to give flowers and heartfelt thanks to his CPR instructor, Karen

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