

Another Time Critical Success Story

It was a long holiday weekend for some. The morning of Friday, July 3, 2009 was a beautiful sunny day, with a promise of relaxing festivities with family and friends. But, first a family in Bourbonnais, Illinois needed to finish the household chores before relaxation could begin. The younger children were put down for a nap with the older ones keeping themselves amused in the living room. Mom started on the riding lawnmower to cut the long grass from the summer rain. Dad would trim with the walking mower. The chores were almost finished and the beginning of the weekend looked promising. Priorities changed quickly. In a blink of the eye, the two year old managed to get through the sliding door and needed Mom. Unaware of the dangers, she was soon under the riding mower's blades and received traumatic injuries to both of her left extremities. Her left arm was amputated at the forearm and her left leg was mangled up to her thigh area. The neighbors learned by the sound the trauma made. Instinct kicked in and Dad immediately picked the young child up to run to the car. A neighbor in his back yard jumped over the fence to

stop him. He had Dad place the young child down on the asphalt driveway and applied direct pressure, a procedure taught to him as a First Responder in the industry world. Paramedics from Bourbonnais Fire Protection District and Provena St. Mary's arrived in four minutes after the call was dispatched. During this time, the radio dispatcher called the hospital and told them they may want to consider helicopter transportation for this call due to the nature of the pediatric trauma. The Emergency Room doctor for Provena St. Mary's Hospital in Kankakee went on trust. The area did not have a pediatric trauma surgeon and requested a helicopter from Lifestar. Its expected travel time from Joliet to Bourbonnais was fifteen to twenty minutes. The young child, still very alert and fighting for her life, was packaged and transported by way of ambulance to the landing site, about a mile away with police escort. The child

was airlifted to Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, IL, a sixteen minute ride.

After extensive surgery and blood transfusions to replace her loss, the child came through with flying colors. Every minute counted to save her life and it was a call where everything went as perfect as a trauma call could. The helicopter ride gave her at least forty extra minutes she would have lost being transported further south via ambulance to the hospital first.

She is a fighter, as she has proven through her recuperation period. She has since received a prosthesis leg and arm just prior to Christmas and according to her mother, is "getting used to them". She received a second chance at life through the quick thinking of EMS professionals and the availability and quick response of the helicopter. ■

About the Author:

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