

Southcross Employee is Hero in Corpus Christi

Safety training pays off for child injured at Walmart

Lissa Sawyer, Sr. Communications Specialist for Southcross Energy, tells us about how one employee made a big difference in a child's life.

You never know when the skills you learn at work may be used in everyday life.

It was Friday evening and he was tired.

Ricardo Lopez, Pipeline Safety Specialist for Southcross Energy Partners, L.P., had just gotten back to his home in Corpus Christi after a day trip to San Antonio. There, he had completed CPR, First Aid and AED (automated external defibrillator) Instructor Training – classes that are part of the Southcross Safety Training Program.

He was glad to be home.

His wife, Sylvia, asked him to go to Walmart. “Normally, I wouldn’t go, but she wanted to get out of the house and for some reason, I decided to join them,” says the Corpus Christi-based employee. The couple packed up their four children, ages 14, 11, 9 and 4, and headed to the nearby store.

As the family stood at the check-out, Lopez saw a woman run from the produce area toward the front of the store. She had blood on her face and arms, and was asking the clerk three aisles over for help.

“The clerk didn’t know what to do and told her to talk to the manager,” Lopez recalls.

Quickly assessing the situation, Lopez asked other clerks if they had a first-aid kit to help her. They shook their heads no.

The frantic woman rushed to the Customer Service desk to talk to the manager. Lopez walked over and saw that the woman had a 3-year-old child in her arms and realized the child – not the mother – was bleeding. The boy had a 2-inch gash on the back of his head.

The store manager said he didn’t know what to do for her. Nobody knew what to do. But Lopez did.

Lopez immediately told a customer to call 911. He then grabbed a first aid kit from a shelf, put on gloves and used gauze to apply pressure to the laceration.

At the same time, Lopez started talking to the panicked mother to help calm her down. He discovered that the boy had slipped and hit his head on the corner of a produce stand. “I knew I had to prevent shock, so I just continued talking with the mother, asking simple questions, to calm her and the child.”



In 10-15 minutes, “what seemed forever,” he says, the EMTs arrived.

Lopez explained to them what happened, noting that the boy had a laceration and likely suffered trauma to the head. He then swapped holding pressure to the wound with the EMT.

The mother and boy were taken by ambulance to the hospital. Due to HIPAA laws, Lopez has been unable to follow up on the boy’s condition.

Lopez and his family left. He let Sylvia drive. “Yeah, it kind of hit me as we were driving home,” he says.

In the car, the Friday night hero took the ordeal as a teaching opportunity.

“I told my kids that the things I learn at work don’t just apply to work. It comes in handy outside work. You never know when those safety training skills might be needed on your family member or somebody close to you,” he recalls.

“Because of that training, I felt confident in what I was doing to protect myself and to help the child injured.”

The next day, Lopez took his new Instructor Training Certification a step further. At the urging of his family, he conducted CPR and First-Aid training with his wife and three older children. The Lopez family is prepared.

To learn more about Pipeline Heroes, [click here](#).