

MIAMI

Dramatic fire rescue saves girl, but not sister

■ A little girl died in an apartment fire, but her 2-year-old sister was rescued by her father and a neighbor. The fire's cause was unknown, but police called it suspicious.

BY KATHLEEN FORDYCE
kfordyce@MiamiHerald.com

A father himself, David Williams didn't think twice about bounding the duplex stairs and heading into the fire.

Inside a locked bedroom were his neighbor's two little girls.

He took the 2-year-old from her father and carried her out to safety. The children's father frantically searched for his other daughter.

But the older girl died in the blaze at 6307 NW First Ct.

The younger child was in sta-

ble condition at Jackson Memorial Hospital on Monday night, according to Miami fire-rescue.

Miami police have not released the girls' names or the names of their parents.

"I'm still down that I couldn't do anything for the other child," Williams said, sitting in his mother's apartment across the street from where the fire broke out.

Williams, 24, had just returned home about noon Monday from the doctor with his pregnant girlfriend and was showing his mother the sonogram photograph of his third child, expected in August.

He heard screams outside where a crowd of people were yelling, pointing to smoke that

•TURN TO FIRE, 2B

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Dramatic duplex fire rescue attempt saves girl, but not her sister

•FIRE, FROM 1B

billowed out of the second-story windows across the street. In the crowd: the girls' mother, who police say is eight months pregnant, and their father.

"They said there were two kids in there," Williams said.

The girls' father ran up the stairs with Williams and unlocked the apartment door.

"When I first went in, I had to come out to take a breath," Williams said. To help protect him from the smoke, Williams took off his T-shirt and used it to cover his mouth.

The girls were in the bed-

room and the door was locked, Williams said.

"We had to kick the door in," he said.

The girl's father picked up the youngest and handed her to Williams. He ran outside while the father searched for his other daughter, who police said was 3 or 4 years old.

"I came out, unwrapped my shirt and laid her on the ground," Williams said. "Her nose and mouth was covered in black stuff. I gave her mouth to mouth. She was breathing, but it was hard for her to breathe."

An emergency operator

Miami police are investigating where the parents were when the fire broke out and if the children had been left home alone.

gave him instructions over the phone on how to administer CPR.

With the fire blazing, the father came out the front door and tried to get back into the apartment through a bedroom window. But he couldn't reach it, Williams said.

Miami firefighters reached the girl, who was laying on the bedroom floor. She was unconscious and unresponsive, said Miami Fire-Rescue

spokesman Ignatius Carroll.

"They did perform CPR on the scene all the way to the hospital, where they continued to try to revive her, but she was pronounced dead a short time later," Carroll said.

The cause of the fire is unknown, but police are calling it suspicious.

Miami police are also investigating where the parents were when the fire broke out and if the children had

been left home alone.

"We did find some stuff that leads us to believe it is suspicious in nature," Carroll said of the fire.

Two adults and four children who lived on the first level of the duplex are being housed by the Red Cross.

Williams, who had a headache and chest pain, was taken to Jackson Memorial Hospital along with the children's mother and father. He was released hours later.

"I wouldn't say I'm a hero," he said. "I expect anyone to do that kind of deed, especially for children. That's why I did it, for the kids."