



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
05/13/2021

Contact: Ronda Cerulli
(772) 462-3512
Ronda.Cerulli@flhealth.gov

Two-thirds of Drowning Deaths occur between May and August

Safe Kids Treasure Coast reminds parents of top tips to keep kids safe around water this summer

St. Lucie County, Florida — As the weather heats up and more children and families head to pools and beaches, Safe Kids Treasure Coast wants to remind parents and caregivers to keep an eye on their kids and actively supervise children at all times when they're in and around water.

For more water safety tips, visit: <http://bit.ly/1dysdUS>

Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for children ages 1-19. On average, about 1,000 children die each year due to unintentional drowning and more than 5,000 are seen in emergency rooms for injuries from near-drowning incidents. Already in 2021, two children in St. Lucie County have died as a result of drowning.

"A drowning child cannot cry or shout for help so simply being near your child doesn't always help," said Ronda Cerulli, coordinator of Safe Kids Treasure Coast. "Whether it's a trip to the beach or a dip in the community or backyard pool, you can ensure that swimming is as safe as it is fun by following a few basic safety tips starting with keeping your eyes on your kids at all times."

Studies show that although 90 percent of parents say they supervise their children while swimming, many acknowledge that they engage in other distracting activities at the same time such as talking, eating, reading or taking care of another child. Even a near-drowning incident can have lifelong consequences. Kids who survive a near-drowning may have brain damage, and after four to six minutes under water the damage is usually irreversible.

Safe Kids Treasure Coast recommends the following 5 tips to keep kids safe in and around water:

1. **Give kids your undivided attention.** Actively supervise children in and around water, without distraction.
2. **Use the Water Watcher strategy.** When there are several adults present and children are swimming, use the [Water Watcher card](#) strategy, which designates an adult as the Water Watcher for a certain amount of time (such as 15-minute periods) to prevent lapses in supervision and give parents a chance to read, make phone calls or take a bathroom break.

3. **Teach kids not to swim alone.** Whether you're swimming in a backyard pool or in a lake, teach children to swim with an adult. Older, more experienced swimmers should still swim with a partner every time. From the first time your kids swim, teach children to never go near or in water without an adult present.
4. **Learn CPR.** We know you have a million things to do, but learning CPR should be on the top of the list. It will give you tremendous peace of mind – and the more peace of mind you have as a parent, the better.
5. **Be extra careful around pool drains.** Educate your children about the dangers of drain entanglement and entrapment and teach them to never play or swim near drains or suction outlets.

For more information about drowning and water safety, please visit www.safekids.org.