



A Miami Children's Hospital Summer Safety Series, May 2007



'KEEPING EYES ON PRIZE (KIDS!)' IS KEY TO DROWNING PREVENTION

No scream. No splash or churning of water. Just silence. That's the sound of a child drowning.

"Most people think they'll hear sounds of distress when a child is in trouble in the water. But they won't. A drowning is a silent event," said Dr. Jeffrey Biehler, Associate Director of Trauma Services at Miami Children's Hospital. "In many cases the parents are sitting nearby, reading or talking. And in the blink of an eye, their lives are tragically altered forever."

So far in 2007, Miami Children's Emergency Department, the region's only freestanding pediatric Trauma Center, has received seven drowning victims. Two died from their injuries. Nationally, drowning is the second cause of unintentional injury-related death to children ages 1 to 14, claiming the lives of 900 children each year.

While drowning events can happen in Florida canals, lakes and oceans, the most common place is the family swimming pool.

"The majority of drowning and near drowning cases that we treat in the Emergency Department occur in backyard pools," said Brian Hannigan, Injury Prevention Specialist in the Division of Preventive Medicine at Miami Children's Hospital, who also serves as the Safe Kids Coordinator for Miami-Dade County. Safe Kids is an international organization dedicated to promoting safety messages to prevent injuries.

According to Safe Kids Worldwide, most children who

drown were last seen in the home, had been missing from sight for less than five minutes and were in the care of one or both parents at the time of the drowning.

Dr. Deise Granado-Villar, Director of Preventive Medicine and Community Pediatrics, said, "Constant adult supervision and adding layers of protection to restrict pool access remains the best means to prevent swimming pool drowning."

Pools should be outfitted with pool covers and fencing at least five feet high on all sides, with a self-closing latch. Also, locks and alarms should be installed on all doors and windows that lead to the pool, said Hannigan.



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Parents should not rely on flotation pool toys to keep children safe. These can lose air or float away from inexperienced swimmers. Children who cannot swim should wear a life jacket at all times in and around the pool and all children should be taught the importance of never swimming alone.

The most important way to keep your kids safe is to keep your eyes on them. Rachel Perry, a Coral Gables



mother of two, said. "If my husband or I start to become distracted by reading material or conversation while watching kids in the pool, one of us will remind the other to 'keep our eyes on the prize.' Nothing we have to do is more important than the safety of the kids," she said.

To keep adults focused on who is to watch young swimmers, Miami Children's Hospital and Safe Kids Worldwide have created a "Water Watcher Card." Adults can pass the large laminated card from one to another during a swim day to ensure that at least one adult at a time is monitoring swimming children. To receive a free card, call 305-663-8476.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Parenting Boot Camp

Saturday, June 16, 10 am - 1 pm

Parenting Boot Camp is a creative and interactive class for parents and soon-to-be parents. The goal is to help new parents learn the value and importance of interacting with their babies in ways that will ensure an attached and bonded relationship. Highlights of this program include diaper changing, feeding, bathing, appropriate dress, how to deal with crying, how to recognize when a baby is sick, developmental stages and child development activities. For more information, please call 305-662-8282.

CPR Class

Thursday, June 21 (Spanish) • Thursday, June 28 (English)
6 pm - 8 pm

This course in pediatric CPR teaches parents, grandparents and caregivers how to administer CPR to infants and children. Please call 305-662-8282 for further information.

Sibshops

These monthly fun-filled sessions for siblings of children with special needs provides opportunities for children to share personal feelings, experiences and concerns, while taking part in interesting activities. For more information, please call 305-669-7142.

Adolescent Depression/Anxiety Group

Mondays, 5:15 pm - 6:15 pm

The goal of this support group is to foster coping skills to alleviate and prevent feelings of anxiety and depression. This group is open to adolescents between the ages of 13 and 17. Please call 305-666-6511, ext. 2450 for further information.

Emergent Language Group for Children with Autism

Wednesdays, 5 pm - 6 pm

Music therapy is used to promote language development in children with autism. For more information, please call 305-666-6511, ext. 2434.

SUMMER = TRAUMA SEASON

Ah, those carefree days of summer... But parents, beware! Summer is the season when children ages 1 to 14 are most likely to experience traumatic injury. Unintentional injuries among children soar along with the temperatures during the sizzling summer months. And South



Florida with its many water hazards and traffic congestion has more than its share of perils.

During the next several weeks, Miami Children's Hospital and Safe Kids Worldwide will sponsor information on how to keep your children safe this summer.

NO ONE KNOWS CHILDREN LIKE MIAMI CHILDREN'S.

There's no greater love than a parent's love for a child. It's a love that we at Miami Children's Hospital share. It's why we've been caring for children for over 55 years, longer than any other children's hospital in South Florida. And it's why we've been ranked by *Child Magazine* among the best children's hospitals in the nation. MCH is renowned throughout the world. Nowhere will you find physicians more experienced, facilities as advanced, or a staff more devoted to children. We're South Florida's only licensed specialty hospital *exclusively* for children. And that means we have an understanding of children's physical and emotional needs that no other hospital can offer.

If you would like to learn more about us, visit mch.com. You'll see that no one knows children like Miami Children's.



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