



PAULDING COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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For Immediate Release

Drowning Awareness

(Paulding County, GA) With the official first day of summer literally days away, pools, lakes, and oceans will be full of people of all ages. Unfortunately, every summer we see the same headlines about another child drowning. How could this happen in the age of technology, real time news, and social media? It is incumbent on us to put the phone down and pay attention to our children. It is very easy to get distracted with phones, text messages, and social media which is why it is vitally important to pay attention while your children are in the water.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2017), children ages 1 to 4 have the highest drowning rates. In 2014, among children 1 to 4 years old who died from an unintentional injury, one-third died from drowning. Among children ages 1 to 4, most drownings occurred in residential swimming pools. Drowning is responsible for more deaths among children 1-4 than any other cause of death except congenital anomalies (birth defects). Among those, fatal drowning remains the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death behind motor vehicle crashes.

Why is This Happening?

- **Lack of Swimming Ability:** Many adults and children report that they can't swim. Research has shown that participation in formal swimming lessons can reduce the risk of drowning among children aged 1 to 4 years.



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- **Lack of Barriers:** Barriers, such as pool fencing, prevent young children from gaining access to the pool area without caregivers' awareness. A four-sided isolation fence (separating the pool area from the house and yard) reduces a child's risk of drowning 83% compared to three-sided property-line fencing.
- **Lack of Close Supervision:** Drowning can happen quickly and quietly anywhere there is water (such as bathtubs, swimming pools, buckets), and even in the presence of lifeguards.
- **Location:** People of different ages drown in different locations. For example, most children ages 1-4 drown in residential swimming pools. The percentage of drownings in natural water settings, including lakes, rivers and oceans, increases with age. More than half of fatal and nonfatal drownings among those 15 years and older (57% and 57% respectively) occurred in natural water settings.
- **Failure to Wear Life Jackets:** In 2010, the U.S. Coast Guard received reports for 4,604 boating incidents; 3,153 boaters were reported injured, and 672 died. Most (72%) boating deaths that occurred during 2010 were caused by drowning, with 88% of victims not wearing life jackets.

Rules:

- No children in the pool, lake, or ocean without a responsible adult present and attentive.
- No pools constructed without a barrier. Even the inflatable or plastic kiddie pools are a danger.
- Life Jackets and other flotation devices are a staple to safe summer time fun.
- Always account for children in the water. It only takes a minute or two for a child to drown.



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The Paulding County Sheriff's Office wants you and your family to have a safe and summer; so remain vigilant and keep an eye on your children when they are around the water.

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