



NEWS RELEASE

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American Red Cross Advises Families to Follow Water Safety Rules

EL PASO, Texas – June 17, 2010 – With summer upon us many plan to combat the heat by staying cool in pools, or at water parks, lakes and beaches. It is important however that families make it a priority to observe and follow water safety rules, especially since drowning is found to be the second leading cause of accidental death in children in the United States. “Individuals should learn how to swim and take water safety, first aid and CPR/AED training so they will know what to do in an emergency,” said Amanda Pagán, American Red Cross El Paso Manager of Preparedness Health & Safety Services.

4 LIFESAVING STEPS-

Step 1: Wear a Lifejacket: Never go out on a boat, river, stream, or other body of water without a lifejacket. For young children even in a backyard pool, a lifejacket should be used. “Floaties” or “Water Wings” are not sufficient replacements. Look for U.S. Coast Guard approved flotation devices.

Step 2: Watch your Children: Never take your eyes off your children, even if it's only for a short period of time. Contrary to popular belief children don't flail and yell for help when trouble occurs. In pools for instance they fall in and silently sink to the bottom. When around water be sure to know exactly where your child is and what they are doing.

Step 3: Know CPR: Ensure that you or whoever is watching your child knows how to properly perform CPR in case of emergencies.

Step 4: Know how to swim: Enroll your child in a Learn to Swim class. Contact the city or your local swimming pool for class schedules. Infants and Adults can enroll in Learn to Swim classes as well.

ADDITIONAL WATER SAFETY TIPS-

- Never Swim Alone. No one should ever swim alone. Adults should practice “reach supervision,” which means to be within arm’s length of a child in case an emergency occurs.
- Keep basic lifesaving equipment and know how to use it. A first aid kit, cordless phone, phone list with emergency contact information, and reaching pole or ring buoy with a line attachment are recommended.
- Swim in supervised areas only.
- Obey “No Diving” signs.
- Be aware of the dangerous “*too*’s.” Take a break at the point of being *too* tired, *too* cold, *too* far from safety, *too* little hydration, receiving *too* much sun, and participating in *too* much strenuous activity.
- Don’t mix alcohol and swimming. Alcohol impairs your judgment, balance, and coordination, affects your swimming and diving skills, and reduces your body’s ability to stay warm.
- Pack a “safety bag” for a day at the beach or lake. Water-proof sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher should be applied and water shoes should be worn to protect feet from sharp objects. All containers should be plastic to prevent injuries which may occur due to broke glass. Additionally a hat and sunglasses are suggested for protection against harmful UV rays.

- Pay attention to local weather conditions and forecasts. Stop swimming at the first sign of potential bad weather.

About the American Red Cross:

100-Year Anniversary of Red Cross First Aid Program

When it comes to first aid training, the American Red Cross continues to set the standard for excellence, as it has since 1910. Today, you'll find the American Red Cross in communities, schools and businesses across the country, teaching every day people to save lives. And that means a safer tomorrow for us all. For more information, please visit www.redcross.org or join our blog at <http://blog.redcross.org>. The American Red Cross El Paso website is at www.redcrosselpaso.org.

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