



# News Release

**Sunrise Fire-Rescue Department**  
(954) 746-3400  
www.sunrisefl.gov  
For Release: IMMEDIATE

## Practices to Keep Your Family Swim Safe

Spring in Florida has arrived and what better way to cool down in the warm weather than by spending a day at the pool. Swimming is a great activity to stay fit and active, but children around swimming pools without proper supervision can lead to disaster.

Drowning is the leading cause of death of children ages 1-4 in Broward County, according to the Florida Health Department of Broward County.

FACT: Among children in this age group, most drownings occur in the family swimming pool.

FACT: In Broward – which has more swimming pools than any other county in the state – an average of seven toddlers drown each year.

The good news is that drownings are preventable. One of the most effective ways to prevent drowning is to teach children how to swim, and having constant adult supervision in and near the water.

In the City of Sunrise, children as young as 10 months can begin swimming lessons through the Parent and Tot classes, and can be enrolled in private lessons at 18 months.

Swim classes at a young age aim to develop the child's comfort level in the water as the foundation to build on. Additional skills, such as immersion underwater while holding their breath and having their eyes open, floating on their front and back, and reaching and kicking to the wall are introduced at as early as 10 months old.

The City of Sunrise offers a session of free group swimming lessons beginning in April to Sunrise residents. These lessons are held at Village Pool and are offered in addition to the regular paid lesson programs offered at the Civic Center pools through the City lifeguard instructors and "Sunrise Swimming" contracted instructors.

Lessons and instruction are a great start, but continued exposure to the water and practice is needed to maintain skills. Remember, swimming lessons are not a substitute for adult supervision – especially for children four and under.

Don't let your loved ones become statistics. You can protect your children from water dangers. Here's how:

- One of the most effective drowning-prevention devices you can install is a four-foot-tall safety barrier (known as a pool isolation fence) with a self-closing, self-latching gate. Other options include door alarms that sound when a pool-access door or gate is opened and pool alarms that detect when a person or object enters the water.
- If your child is missing, check the pool area first.

- Designate a responsible adult to supervise children at all times during water-related activities, including swimming and bathing.
- Keep rescue equipment – such as a life preserver – near the pool.
- Have a phone handy, but use it only for emergencies, not casual conversation.
- Remove all toys from the pool immediately after use. Floats and other objects could attract a child to the pool area.
- Learn CPR, and post CPR instructions near the pool. Performing CPR while paramedics are on the way could make the difference between a drowning and a near drowning.

For more safety tips and information on swimming lessons, visit the City of Sunrise website at [www.sunrisefl.gov](http://www.sunrisefl.gov).

###