



News Release

For Immediate Release:
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Electronic Press Release

Prevent Potential Tragedy During Spring Break

Stay safe in and around water using the ABCD's of water safety

Aquatic recreational activities are common during spring break. Sometimes leisure activities can turn tragic if the necessary precautions aren't taken. Try to be proactive and "water smart" by following the ABCD's of water safety.

A – Adult supervision

- Whenever infants and toddlers are in or around water, an adult should supervise within an arm's length of the children.
- In addition to parental supervision, designate an adult "water watcher" (using a distinguishable item such as a lanyard or funny hat) whose sole responsibility is to watch the pool area for 15 minutes and not read, talk on the phone or be influenced by other distractions. After 15 minutes, give the distinguishable item to another adult for 15 minutes, and so forth. Ensure that the water watcher is a sober adult who knows CPR and has basic swimming skills.
- Do not use flotation devices as a substitute for supervision. "Water wings," or "floaties," inflatable water rings and other pool toys are NOT safety devices. Only U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets are designed and tested for safety.

B – Barriers, beach safety and boating safety

- Have a properly working physical barrier around, on or in the pool (i.e. isolation fence, pool safety cover, pool alarm) that meets code requirements.
- Have window and door alarms that sound when breached.
- Always swim at a lifeguarded beach, and pay attention to the beach flags. Wear properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets while on a boat.

C – Classes

- Take a water safety course at a local aquatic facility to learn the skills necessary to survive in the water.
- Take CPR classes.

D – Drain Safety

- Have a pool professional check residential drain covers to determine whether or not they are safe.
- Encourage children to stay away from drains. Noncompliant drain covers can cause suction entrapment injuries and possible death.
- Those using a pool/spa should know where the cut-off switch is for the pump in case a suction entrapment incident occurs.

The Drowning Prevention Coalition (DPC) suggests that everyone uses the ABCD's of water safety to stay safe in and around water, but it is up to each individual to make sure a drowning incident does not happen. For more information on water safety lessons and water safety/drowning prevention education, please visit the DPC website at www.pbcgov.org/dpc or call 561-616-7068. The coalition is funded by the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners and the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County.

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