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June 30, 2021

## **Cook Children's Releases New Drowning Prevention PSAs Ahead of Fourth of July Weekend**

*Seven 'Lifeguard Your Child' Videos Highlight Biggest Risks Based on Hospital Admission Data*

**Fort Worth, Texas** – Cook Children's Health Care System is releasing a series of drowning prevention PSA videos ahead of the Fourth of July weekend.

The videos, which are part of the [Lifeguard Your Child](#) initiative, feature simulations of some of the most common drowning scenarios we see, including children falling into swimming pools unnoticed and teens drowning in open water.

“Too often we see drowning patients who have fallen into water either at a pool party or after a swimming event when everyone is packing up to leave,” said Sharon Evans, trauma injury prevention coordinator at Cook Children's. “We're really hoping these videos illustrate the importance of 100% supervision and layers of protection, such as pool fences and locks.”

Cook Children's launched Lifeguard Your Child in 2015 after a record number of child drownings. Sadly, 2021 is on track to surpass recent years. Already this year, 35 children have been admitted to our hospital for drowning injuries. Two have died – both in May.

Of the 35 drownings this year, 22 occurred this month making this the worst June on record since 2016. The majority of the drownings we see occur in swimming pools, including the two recent deaths. With the holiday weekend ahead of us, our experts urge everyone to practice vigilance around water.

“Everyone is so eager to get back into a normal routine and have those gatherings as COVID-19 decreases,” said Dana Walraven, manager of community health outreach for the [Center for Children's Health](#), led by Cook Children's. “We're just hoping for a heightened sense of awareness. When people are so happy to get back together, there may be distractions.”

Walraven and Evans encourage adults to take turns as designated watchers, fully attentive and within arm's reach of kids in the pool. Designated watchers can spot trouble before it turns into tragedy.

“They don't talk, they don't drink, they don't look at their phones,” Evans said. “You have to have that person in charge of watching. That is your job for 10-15 minutes, then you pass it off.”

Highlights for drowning prevention include:

- Young children should know to never get in the water unless an adult is within reach and watching. Learn to swim and swim with a buddy.
- Teens should be alert for hazards lurking in murky lake water. No horseplay or risky stunts. Wear U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets.
- Caregivers should create barriers to the pool, such as four-sided fencing. Don't lose track of the kids during the transition from swimming to the next activity (a trip inside to the bathroom, loading the car, etc.).

The Lifeguard Your Child initiative has distributed 1,296 life jackets this year in drive-through events and through six loaner stations at area lakes. The program recommends only those life jackets approved by the U.S. Coast Guard. Proper fit is essential too.

For more information about steps to prevent drowning, go to [www.lifeguardyourchild.org](http://www.lifeguardyourchild.org).

### **About Cook Children's**

Cook Children's Health Care System embraces an inspiring Promise – to improve the health of every child in our region through the prevention and treatment of illness, disease and injury. Based in Fort Worth, Texas, we're proud of our long and rich tradition of serving our community.

Our not-for-profit organization encompasses nine companies – a medical center, two surgery centers, a physician network, home health services and a health plan. It also includes Child Study Center at Cook Children's, Cook Children's Health Services Inc., and Cook Children's Health Foundation. With more than 60 primary, specialty and urgent care locations throughout Texas, families can access our top-ranked specialty programs and network of services to meet their unique needs.

We've worked to improve the health of children from across our primary service area of Denton, Hood, Johnson, Parker, Tarrant and Wise counties for more than 100 years. Based on the exceptional care we provide, patients travel to Cook Children's from around the country and the globe to receive life-saving pediatric care built on leading technology, extraordinary collaboration and the art of caring.

For more information, visit [cookchildrens.org](http://cookchildrens.org).

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