Toddler Deaths by Drowning in Volusia County

The Florida Department of Health defines drowning as the process of experiencing respiratory impairment from submersion / immersion in liquid. Drowning has three outcomes: death, morbidity, or no morbidity. In other words, someone can drown but survive.

In 2017, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) ranked accidental drowning sixth among the leading causes of unintentional injury death in the U.S. for residents age one and above. Nationally, about 10 people die daily from unintentional drownings. Excluding birth defects, more children ages one to four (toddlers) die from drowning than any other cause. Accidental drownings accounted for more than 18 percent of unintentional injury deaths in 2017 among children under age five.

Florida has led the country in the three-year rolling rate of drowning deaths of toddlers since 2007-2009. Volusia County ranks 13th in the three-year rolling drowning death rate in Florida. Eighty-four percent of Volusia County toddler drowning deaths occurred in swimming pools.

Drowning deaths by race/ethnicity and gender per 100,000 toddlers, Volusia County, 2008-2017

- Non-Hispanic white toddlers had the highest crude rate of drowning deaths, 14.1 per 100,000 toddlers compared to non-Hispanic black and Hispanic toddlers, 10.2 and 7.7 drowning deaths per 100,000 toddlers, respectively.
- Hispanic toddlers had the highest rate of drowning deaths among female toddlers.
- Non-Hispanic white male toddlers accounted for the highest rate of drowning deaths from 2008 through 2017.

Data Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Florida Department of Health Bureau of Vital Statistics, Death files
The Residential Swimming Pool Safety Act (Chapter 515, Florida Statutes) requires one of the following pool safety measures for pools built after October 1, 2000:

- A pool fence with self-closing, self-latching gate - enclosing the pool and providing no direct access to it
- An approved pool cover
- Alarms on all doors and windows leading out to the pool
- All doors providing direct access from the home to pool to have a self-closing, self-latching device with a release mechanism no lower than 54 inches above the floor

**NOTE:** The Florida Department of Health strongly recommends multiple barriers to help ensure safety and using “layers of protection” to help prevent drowning.

Volusia County

- Deltona had the highest percent (40.9 percent) and incidence (nine) of toddler deaths by drowning.
- Half of the 16 incorporated cities in Volusia County did not have a toddler die from drowning.
- Unincorporated areas in Volusia County did not have any toddler deaths by drowning.

Learn the steps you can take to protect Florida’s children. Pool safety is everyone’s responsibility.  
1-877-362-5033 | WaterSmartFL.com

For more information, contact the Florida Department of Health in Volusia County  
Office of Environmental Health at 386 274-0694 or visit VolusiaHealth.com